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**FOURTH REGIONAL INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE  
ON AGEING AND THE RIGHTS OF OLDER PERSONS  
IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

Asunción, 27-30 June 2017

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## A. ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

### Place and date of the meeting

1. The Fourth Regional Intergovernmental Conference on Ageing and the Rights of Older Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean was held in Asunción, from 27 to 30 June 2017.

### Attendance<sup>1</sup>

2. The Conference was attended by representatives of 18 States members of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean: Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Germany, Japan, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Plurinational State of Bolivia, Saint Lucia and Uruguay.

3. A representative of Curaçao, an associate member of the Commission, was also present.

4. On behalf of the United Nations Secretariat, the meeting was attended by a representative of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

5. Representatives of the following United Nations bodies also attended the meeting: the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

6. The following specialized agencies of the United Nations were also represented: the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)-World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Bank.

7. The meeting was also attended by representatives of the Andean Community, the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America – Peoples' Trade Agreement (ALBA-TCP), Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) and the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR).

8. Non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and other non-governmental organizations, universities and academic centres also attended the session.

### Chair

9. The following countries were appointed to serve as presiding officers of the Fourth Regional Intergovernmental Conference on Ageing and the Rights of Older Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean:

Chair: Paraguay

Vice- Chairs: Argentina, Costa Rica, Peru, Plurinational State of Bolivia and Uruguay

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<sup>1</sup> See annex 2.

## **B. AGENDA**

10. The Conference adopted the following agenda:
  1. Election of officers.
  2. Adoption of the agenda.
  3. Report by the secretariat on the implementation of the San José Charter on the Rights of Older Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean.
  4. Statements by the countries.
  5. Dialogue with civil society on the implementation of the San José Charter on the Rights of Older Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean.
  6. Thematic panel discussions on ageing and the rights of older persons in Latin America and the Caribbean.
  7. Round table “Contribution of institutions for older persons to the protection of human rights and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”.
  8. Consideration and adoption of agreements.
  9. Other matters.

## **C. SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS**

### **Opening session**

11. At the opening session, statements were made by Antonio Prado, Deputy Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC); María Teresa Barán, Vice-Minister of Public Health of Paraguay; and Antonio Barrios, Minister of Public Health and Social Welfare of Paraguay.

12. The Deputy Executive Secretary of ECLAC welcomed those present and thanked the Government of Paraguay for its help in hosting the Fourth Regional Intergovernmental Conference on Ageing and the Rights of Older Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean, at which the progress made and the challenges in the implementation of the San José Charter on the Rights of Older Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean would be assessed, gaps in the protection of the rights of older persons in the region and ways to address them would be identified, as would the steps to be followed to increase the number of countries that had ratified the Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons, and how best to implement it. The Conference would also provide input for the discussion of the United Nations Open-ended Working Group on Ageing, which would be held at United Nations Headquarters, when it would agree the regional contribution that would be submitted to the Commission for Social Development at its fifth-sixth session, which would be held in February 2018. He welcomed the

decision by the United Nations Human Rights Council to create in 2013 the special procedures mechanism on the matter, the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons, whose mandate was reaffirmed in 2016.

13. ECLAC would present to the Conference the document *Challenges to the autonomy and interdependent rights of older persons*,<sup>2</sup> which addressed various matters related to the protection and exercise of older persons' rights. Population ageing, a global trend that was affecting the economy, development planning, social policies, families, communities, large cities and indigenous localities, was the most significant change of recent years. He invited the countries to strengthen their national statistical systems and to include old age as an obligatory variable in the production, analysis and dissemination of information for the development of planning strategies, the follow-up of human rights indicators and the design and implementation of public policies. Lastly, he reiterated the call made by Alicia Bárcena, Executive Secretary of ECLAC, to those States parties of the Organization of American States (OAS) that had not already done so, to ratify the Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons.

14. The Vice-Minister of Public Health of Paraguay said that it was an honour for Paraguay to receive the representatives of countries of the region and of civil society and governmental and non-governmental organizations, who would broach the lessons learned from public policies on the issue of ageing. In that connection, societies faced unprecedented demographic changes the posed multiple challenges. Steps must be taken to guarantee the fair distribution of resources to meet the needs of all age groups, based on intergenerational solidarity. Public policies on ageing could not be adopted unless governments were willing. In that regard, she stressed that the Government of Paraguay was fully committed to fighting for the human rights of older persons.

15. The Minister of Public Health and Social Welfare of Paraguay thanked ECLAC, on behalf of his Government, for the work it had done on population matters, particularly in the area of ageing. The Government of Paraguay had established institutional mechanisms to care for older persons, particularly the most vulnerable, and had developed public policies on various matters, such as care, social security and health. He said that the Conference was an opportunity to find solutions to the many challenges that arose when addressing the problems faced by older persons. Lastly, he wished the participants success in the important work that they would undertake during the Conference.

## **Work**

### Report by the secretariat on the implementation of the San José Charter on the Rights of Older Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean (agenda item 3)

16. The Chief of the Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE)-Population Division of ECLAC presented the document *Challenges to the autonomy and interdependent rights of older persons*. It provided an overview of the population ageing process and the status of older persons in the region and drew attention to the different effects of demographic change on the age structure of the population. Those aged 60 or over were projected to become the predominant group in the region in 2052, overtaking the groups aged 0-19 (children and adolescents), 20-39 (young adults) and 40-59 (adults), which would usher in the era of an aged society. Each country would reach that turning point at different times, owing to the heterogeneous progress in demographic transition. By 2060, when practically all the

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<sup>2</sup> LC/CRE.4/3 (see [online] <http://repositorio.cepal.org/handle/11362/41643>).

countries of the region would have an ageing population, older persons would make up 30% of the population of Latin America and the Caribbean, numbering some 234 million.

17. Noteworthy sociodemographic characteristics of older persons included the predominance of women, the increase in the population aged 75 or older, the lower education level of women and relatively widespread labour market participation of older persons in general. He said that while the sociodemographic status of older persons had improved, they still faced serious and widespread problems, specifically long-term care, poorly adapted health programmes and limited access to them, inadequate pensions, age-based discrimination and elder abuse. Among the emerging issues, he drew attention to palliative care, which would significantly improve older people's quality of life and autonomy, and noted that access to such care was highly unequal. Referring to different options for expanding coverage, he said that access to palliative care would enable people to live a good life until the end. With regard to long-term care, he reiterated its benefits, but warned that providing such care should not undermine, let alone impinge on, the potential autonomy of older persons. He noted the financial cost of training personnel and of designing institutions that would be involved in establishing a care system and drew attention to the need to recognize caregivers' rights, including wages, and the gender biases that existed in care services, both domestically and institutionally.

18. He welcomed the shift in focus on old age and older persons and said that, in response to the complex array of problems and new challenges, progress already made should be acknowledged and bolstered, and older persons' rights should be promoted and included in the State's agenda, permeating all public activities in an effort to overcome lags and address emerging challenges that affected older people.

19. The representative of the ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean reported on the conclusions of the Caribbean preparatory meeting for the Fourth Regional Intergovernmental Conference on Ageing and the Rights of Older Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Port of Spain on 1 and 2 June 2017.<sup>3</sup>

20. The outcome document of that meeting gave an overview of the status of implementation of the San José Charter in 14 policy areas relevant to older persons in the subregion. Over the preceding five years, numerous countries had strengthened laws, policies and programmes for older persons, with the greatest focus being on health and social care; social protection; the inclusion of older persons in disaster risk management plans; and awareness-raising on topics such as elder abuse. Nevertheless, gaps remained and, as the population continued to age, those areas would continue to be central to the further implementation of the San José Charter. The report also indicated that less attention had been paid to the wider spectrum of human rights, for example safeguards for free and informed consent for medical treatment; decision-making; legal capacity; access to justice and rights to work and culture. More attention must also be paid to older persons experiencing multiple forms of discrimination.

#### Statements by the countries (agenda item 4)

21. The representatives of the following countries made statements setting out the main national developments in implementing the San José Charter on the Rights of Older Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean: Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Curaçao, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Germany, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, the Plurinational State of Bolivia and Uruguay.

<sup>3</sup> See "Caribbean synthesis report on the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and the San Jose Charter on the Rights of Older Persons in Latin American and the Caribbean" [online] [http://conferenciaenvejecimiento.cepal.org/4/sites/envejecimiento4/files/caribbean\\_synthesis\\_report\\_ageing.pdf](http://conferenciaenvejecimiento.cepal.org/4/sites/envejecimiento4/files/caribbean_synthesis_report_ageing.pdf).

22. The representatives agreed that significant progress had been made in the period 2012-2017 at the national and regional levels. At the national level, they identified areas of work that had been promoted or strengthened based on efforts to build institutions that dealt with matters related to older persons in the different countries, which included adopting laws on older persons; developing national plans on the matter; institution-building for local governments; preventing and punishing violence against older persons; facilitating their access to justice; treating mental illnesses, including Alzheimer's disease; and improving long-term care services, among other things. At the regional level, Argentina, Costa Rica, the Plurinational State of Bolivia and Uruguay reported that they had ratified the Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons, while other countries detailed the steps that had been taken towards that end.

23. The Plurinational State of Bolivia and Peru had passed Older Persons Acts, Laws Nos. 369 and 30,490 on 1 May 2013 and 21 July 2016, respectively. Action plans on the matter had been drawn up in Barbados, Colombia and Uruguay, with the Colombian plan covering the period 2014-2024 and the Uruguayan one, 2016-2019. In Argentina, the 2017-2020 action plan was being drafted. Colombia and Uruguay had also devoted efforts to improving data production. In Colombia, the national survey on health, well-being and ageing (SABE) had been carried out in 2015, and in Uruguay, the National Institute of Older Persons (INMAYORES) compiled information on ageing and old age, which was included in the national statistical system. In Mexico, the National Council for the Prevention of Discrimination (CONAPRED) and the Centre for Economic Research and Teaching (CIDE) had developed an approach to identify discrimination, which included a section on the discrimination faced by older persons.

24. Local institutions had also been strengthened. In Brazil, 2,868 subnational councils for older persons' rights had been set up at the state, district and municipal levels. In Argentina, 92% of local governments had institutions dedicated to caring for older persons, most of which had the status of a provincial department or the equivalent. Meanwhile, in the Plurinational State of Bolivia, the departmental autonomous governments were spearheading actions in favour of older persons.

25. With regard to access to justice, Paraguay and Peru had taken steps to eliminate barriers to older persons' access to justice in criminal and civil cases. The Attorney General of Paraguay had issued a specific instruction in August 2016 and a warning system had been established in Peru in June 2016 that alerted judges to legal proceedings involving older persons. On the matter of violence, a specialized unit had been created in the Dominican Republic in 2015 to prevent violence against older persons that worked in coordination with the National Council for Older Persons (CONAPE) and other agencies, such as the National Directorate for the Comprehensive Care of Victims, public prosecutors' offices and other specialized offices. In Chile, Law No. 21,013 of 6 June 2017 made elder abuse an offence, which protected older persons from violence outside the family unit, including care outside the home, or from abuse in long-term residential care centres. That complemented Law No. 20,609 of 2012 on discrimination, which made it illegal to discriminate against someone on the basis of their age.

26. On the matter of mental health care, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba and Peru had developed national care plans. In Peru, Law No. 30,020 had been passed, establishing the National Plan for Alzheimer's Disease and Other Dementias. In Cuba, where population ageing was more advanced than in the rest of the region, older persons had been provided with comprehensive health care following the implementation of strategies in all areas of society that addressed every aspect of ageing, including issues related to long-term care, social security and a culture of respect for older persons. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Health of Barbados had expanded its HIV care and treatment programme to include older persons, who could be treated at community polyclinics, as well as the Ladymeade Clinic, which was the central hub of clinical HIV care in the country.

27. With regard to caring for people in disaster situations, the National Emergency Commission (CNE) of the Dominican Republic had set up a gender- and age-sensitive protection advisory team to develop a protocol to care for older persons in emergency situations and disasters. In Barbados, the Vulnerable Persons Committee met on a monthly basis and was in charge of vulnerable persons, including older persons, during and after natural or man-made disasters.

28. Long-term care was an area of work that countries were developing, albeit with differences among them. In addition to the progress made in Argentina and Costa Rica, Uruguay had set up the National Comprehensive Care System in 2015, which provided tele-assistance services as part of home-based care, day centres, long-term care centres and personal assistance services, among other things. In Chile, 15 communes offered home care services and, in 2017, four new long-term care centres and four day centres had been built. Paraguay had opened the Residential Centre to Support and Help Older People in December 2016 which provided social and health care to 175 retirees and recipients of benefits from the Social Security Institute (IPS), who lived there permanently. The Undersecretariat of Intergenerational Care of the Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion of Ecuador provided direct care to older people in 14 geriatric care centres.

29. The Unit for Comprehensive Victim Support and Reparation of Colombia had developed a new practice that sought to further mainstream the differential approach when implementing the Victims and Land Restitution Act of 2014, through activities to help older victims that allowed them to face the consequences of the armed conflict. The Plurinational State of Bolivia was implementing the principles of preferential treatment in 80 public institutions, which, in addition to managing care time and staff training efficiently, included using the mother tongue of older people who came to request help, among other measures.

30. The representative of Germany reflected on the usefulness of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and its regional follow-up for the design of complementary strategies for the benefit of older persons. In addition, the representative of Curaçao said that the Conference was a suitable forum for exchanging good practices and mutual learning.

Dialogue with civil society on the implementation of the San José Charter on the Rights of Older Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean (agenda item 5)

31. The Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons stressed the importance of civil society participation in international processes aimed at increasing protection of older persons' human rights.

32. She said that the world urgently needed a paradigm shift with regard to older persons. The exercise of fundamental rights by that group must be guaranteed, age discrimination combated and national strategies designed to give effect to those rights. She welcomed the Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons. She said that older peoples' right to autonomy was one of the most important rights and defined autonomy as the ability to make personal decisions on how to live according to one's own rules and preferences. The more autonomy older people had, the greater their well-being. Autonomy was closely linked to legal capacity, which allowed older people to exercise their civil, political, economic and social rights. The Inter-American Convention had strengthened measures for the legal recognition of older persons and their legal capacity to exercise their rights. The role of civil society in that process was to promote recognition of older people's contribution to society; include more older people's organizations in the process of implementing the Inter-American Convention; develop awareness-raising programmes on ageing and old age; and promote the creation of older people's organizations. Lastly, she said that for any country to come up with a suitable policy, civil society, the State, communities and families would have to work together.



33. Civil society organizations made statements and read out the Ypacaraí Declaration “From the civil society of Latin America and the Caribbean on the human rights of older persons”, adopted at the Regional Meeting of Civil Society on Ageing Madrid+15: The Human Rights of Older Persons Here and Now, held in Ypacaraí, Paraguay, from 24 to 27 June 2017.<sup>4</sup>

34. The following organizations also made statements: Asociación Cartaginesa de Atención al Ciudadano en la Tercer Edad (ASCATE) (Costa Rica), Coordinación Regional de Organismos de la Sociedad Civil de América Latina y el Caribe sobre Envejecimiento y Vejez (CORV), Asociación Gerontológica Costarricense (AGECO) (Costa Rica), Junta de Pensiones y Jubilaciones del Magisterio Nacional de Costa Rica (JUPEMA) (Costa Rica), Forum Nacional Permanente da Sociedade Civil pelos Direitos da Pessoa Idosa (Brasil), Red Continental de Personas Mayores, Mesa Coordinadora por los Derechos de las Personas Mayores de Chile (Chile), Fundación Sinergia Humanitaria (Chile) and the International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (INPEA). A set of demands drawn up by Brazilian civil society, signed by 17 organizations, and the declaration issued by the second International Interdisciplinary Congress on Old Age and Ageing, organized by the Postgraduate Unit of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), were also read out.

35. The participants expressed appreciation for the forum that the Conference had provided for older persons’ organization to draw attention their main demands and the assistance that they had given older people on a daily basis. That forum was needed to establish constructive relationships between civil society and governments, and its flexibility allowed a variety of voices and opinions to be heard. In their statements, they stressed the need to bolster respect for and protection of older people’s human rights, particularly with regard to social protection, notably the coverage and quality of social security and health care. They drew attention to specific groups of older people, particularly older women and older indigenous persons. They called for greater participation by older people and their organizations in public affairs and for the elimination of barriers that restricted their activities, preventing them from playing a greater role in shaping public policy. They called on the member States of the Organization of American States (OAS) to ratify the Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons as quickly as possible. The Conference was a good opportunity to celebrate the progress made in the implementation of the San José Charter on the Rights of Older Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean, although they said that much remained to be done. Some organizations expressed their disagreement with the policies followed to date and asked governments to pay more attention to the problems that really affected older people.<sup>5</sup>

Thematic panel discussions on ageing and the rights of older persons in Latin America and the Caribbean (agenda item 6)

36. Under this agenda item, four thematic panel discussions took place.

37. The first panel, entitled “The value and importance of the Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons”, was moderated by Guillermo Acuña, Legal Adviser and Chief of Protocol of the Office of the Executive Secretary of ECLAC, and involved the following participants: Valentina Perrotta, Director of the Division for Empowerment and Studies on Ageing and Old Age of the National Institute for Older Persons of Uruguay; Susana Rubinstein, National Director for

<sup>4</sup> See [online] [http://conferenciaenvejecimiento.cepal.org/4/sites/envejecimiento4/files/declaraciondeypacarai\\_paraguay.pdf](http://conferenciaenvejecimiento.cepal.org/4/sites/envejecimiento4/files/declaraciondeypacarai_paraguay.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> See the civil society statements on the implementation of the San José Charter on the Rights of Older Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean [online] <http://conferenciaenvejecimiento.cepal.org/4/en/programme/dialogue-civil-society-implementation-san-jose-charter-rights-older-persons-latin-america>.

Policies for Older Persons of the National Secretariat for Children, Young Persons and the Family of the Ministry of Social Development of Argentina; Nehemías Vidal Serrano, Head of the Older Persons Unit of the Vice-Ministry of Equal Opportunity of the Ministry of Justice and Institutional Transparency of the Plurinational State of Bolivia; and Zulema Villalta, Chair of the Governing Board of the National Council for Older Persons (CONAPAM) of Costa Rica.

38. The Director of the Division for Empowerment and Studies on Ageing and Old Age of the National Institute for Older Persons of Uruguay reflected on the contribution of the Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons to developing the concept of older persons as subjects of human rights. She also noted that the Convention had expanded the public policy concept to institutions and regulations tasked with upholding the rights of older persons. She said that in order to achieve equality in that matter, the design and implementation of public policies must acknowledge the specificities of older people. The Convention served as a starting point for States with regard to policies and regulations on the human rights of older persons.

39. The National Director for Policies for Older Persons of the National Secretariat for Children, Young Persons and the Family of the Ministry of Social Development of Argentina said that her country's parliament had recently ratified the Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons, taking a further step towards full implementation at the national level. She highlighted the Convention's role in stipulating States' general obligations and helping to pass affirmative measures, a multidimensional and wide-ranging task. She cited an example of inter-institutional coordination and effort in Argentina that had involved nine national State mechanisms, together with representatives of civil society, whereby working groups had been set up to address the issue of special housing for older people, among other things. She also drew attention to the role older people played in child care. She noted that the digital divide posed a challenge to society as a whole in an era of rapid development of information and communication technologies, but particularly to older people, for that reason her country had developed a digital literacy manual for older persons. She also mentioned the trial undertaken in Argentina to register older people's carers, which by establishing a searchable register sought to overcome the challenge of providing care for older persons.

40. The Head of the Older Persons Unit of the Vice-Ministry of Equal Opportunity of the Ministry of Justice and Institutional Transparency of the Plurinational State of Bolivia drew attention to the importance of the Convention in the work related to older persons carried out in his country. He noted that the Convention complemented public policy and the international law framework and said that the Conference of States Parties was a mechanism for following up the commitments made by States. He highlighted the Convention's impact on the introduction and amendment of legislation related to the content of the Convention and underscored the importance of the concept of preferential treatment for older people. Lastly, he mentioned the complementarity between the rights and duties contained in the text of the Convention and other areas of public policy, such as health, the provision of basic services and housing.

41. The Chair of the Governing Board of CONAPAM of Costa Rica noted the Convention's contribution to defining the identity of older persons and the need for a differential approach to specific public policies for that group. She said that —after many years of shortcomings in that area— the issue of older people's mental health was a priority in her country. In particular, she drew attention to the use of anti-discrimination measures when prioritizing health care. She said that citizens were often unaware of their social security rights, an issue that must be remedied if access to social services was to be expanded. A good strategy for redirecting public initiatives in support of older people was to work with civil society organizations. On legal matters, her country had established legal aid clinics, in conjunction with the University of Costa Rica, which facilitated older people's access to justice on specific issues and were a notable example of inter-institutional coordination. With regard to challenges, she spoke about the need to

set up a telephone helpline, Línea Dorada, a comprehensive care mechanism based on a successful experiment in Mexico City, as well as the need to further mainstream the gender perspective in public policies designed to help older people. Lastly, she said that the concept of an inclusive environment helped to improve the situation of older persons, an area in which the State, private sector and civil society should interact.

42. In the discussion that followed, attention was drawn to the links between the various international instruments in force, such as the agreements arising from global conferences, notably the International Conference on Population and Development and its Programme of Action. The representative of Chile said that the adoption of the Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons by both houses of the legislative branch of his country marked a turning point in the activities undertaken by the government in connection with older persons. The task required a long-term approach and responsibilities should be undertaken with the rigour demanded by a binding instrument. He said that, in Chile, a study was being devised to identify legislative gaps and work towards the standards established by the Convention. Lastly, participants recalled that the Brasilia Declaration of 2007 had provided the basis for a legally-binding instrument on protecting the rights of older persons and that the Organization of American States had agreed to be the depositary for it; however the existence of the Inter-American Convention did not mean that a similar instrument could not be adopted under the aegis of the United Nations, especially when the countries of the region had identified the need for such an instrument.

43. The second panel on older person's autonomy and independence in old age, was moderated by Enrique Peláez, Regional Advisor on Demographic Analysis, Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE)-Population Division of ECLAC, and involved the following participants: Enrique Vega, Regional Advisor on Aging and Health of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO); Elizabeth Lewis, Director of the Human Services Department of the Ministry of Health and Wellness of Saint Lucia; Verónica Montes de Oca, President of the Latin American Population Association (ALAP); and Rafael Rofman, World Bank Program Leader for Education, Health, Social Protection and Labor, and Poverty, covering Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay.

44. The Regional Advisor on Aging and Health of PAHO argued that the cost of health care for older people was not an expense and that old age did not mean that a person was dependent. He set out the PAHO vision for healthy ageing and defined it as a process that built functional capacity, understood to be the health-related aspects that allowed individuals to be and do what they wanted. He referred to the WHO Global strategy and action plan on ageing and health 2016-2020, which called for environments to be tailored to older persons and health systems adapted to their needs. It also called for sustainable and equitable health-care systems to be established and the measurement, monitoring and research of chronic illnesses to be improved. Emphasis was placed on equity and human rights and, particularly, on involving older persons in all decisions that affected them. All those issues would be central to the WHO Decade of Healthy Ageing 2020-2030.

45. The Director of the Human Services Department of the Ministry of Health and Wellness of Saint Lucia said that meeting the basic needs of older people with regard to their surroundings, social relationships and autonomy to control their lives, would promote their development and well-being. She noted that no one enjoyed full autonomy over the course of their lifetime and that, in old age, older people should be able to make decisions by having access to support mechanisms that strengthened their knowledge and abilities when needed. Older people should receive timely, appropriate and comprehensible information on all aspects that affected their daily lives. An enabling balance should be struck to provide them with respectful support to express their thoughts and feelings. Lastly, she said that more should not be asked of older people than the rest of society; making mistakes was part of the human condition, but unlike other population groups, older people were excluded from decision-making processes and their choices were undermined.

46. The President of ALAP referred to the major contribution of academics to the definition of the concepts of older people's autonomy and independence. She said that older people should not be treated as a homogenous category and that the diversity within that social group should be embraced. Age discrimination and cumulative disadvantages based on gender, social class and ethnicity were evident in the social representations and perceptions of older persons and old age, which directly affected their well-being and quality of life and determined issues such as the support and care that the community received. It was therefore necessary to shift existing social perceptions and to reverse the narratives that disqualified older people and that led to isolation and the loss of autonomy. To that end, the role of universities and education was crucial, as education professionals were key to the process of promoting autonomy in old age and empowering older persons.

47. The World Bank Program Leader for Education, Health, Social Protection and Labor, and Poverty, covering Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay said that the problem was not population ageing, but rather that institutions and policies had not been adapted to demographic changes. The main fiscal challenges were the rising health costs and wider pension coverage; in the labour market, dependency rates had increased, despite women's greater economic participation and growing demand for new services, especially care. While population ageing could reduce the supply of labour, technological change should dampen demand, so the main public policy challenge was how to maintain per capita income growth and redesign institutions to ensure that it was well distributed. The countries of the region must boost national savings; invest in good quality and relevant education that would prepare students for cognitive-intensive jobs; and improve productivity by investing more in research and development. Lastly, he said that while fiscal challenges were serious in a context of population ageing, it was crucial to address the resulting economic and social complexities.

48. Participants expressed different concerns related to the issue of autonomy of older persons. Their autonomy must be respected in spite of the limitations on functional capacity that had arisen over time. There were two approaches: that of tutelage, which was still in use in some countries of the region, and that of support for decision-making. It was pointed out that the second approach was the most appropriate for older people because physical dependency did not always mean that someone was incapable of making decisions. In that connection, older people's autonomy must always be respected. One of the strategies identified, in addition to legal protection, was lifelong learning in order to exercise autonomy. Reference was also made to the diversity among older adults and to how social differences were incorporated into the concepts of autonomy promoted by public policies. Participants also drew attention to the effects of migration from the countryside to the city on ageing in rural areas, the impact of technology and demographic change on labour markets' productivity, and the importance of managing the social protection system problems caused by population ageing.

49. The third panel, entitled "The multiple forms of discrimination that affect older persons and their economic, social and political inclusion", was moderated by Jorge del Campo, Chair of the Coordinating Committee for the Rights of Older Persons of Chile, and involved the following participants: Tania María Abdo Rocholl, member of the Human Rights Committee of the United Nations; Rubén Valenzuela, Director of the National Service for Older Adults (SENAMA) of Chile; Bahij Amin Aur, Vice-Chair of the National Council for the Rights of the Older Persons (CNDI) of Brazil; and Clara Rolón de Beraud, Director of the Human Rights Directorate of the Office of the Attorney General of Paraguay.

50. The member of the Human Rights Committee of the United Nations referred to the definition of age discrimination in old age used in the Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons, "Any distinction, exclusion, or restriction based on age, the purpose or effect of which was to annul or restrict recognition, enjoyment, or exercise, on an equal basis, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, cultural, economic, social, or any other sphere of public and private life", and said that "older person" was defined as a person aged 60 or older, except where legislation had

determined a minimum age that was lesser or greater, provided that it was not over 65 years. That concept included, among others, elderly persons. In addition to discrimination, the denial of older people's rights also took the form of restricted access to legal protection, information and health and social services. She said that there was no reason why there should not be a legally-binding international instrument on the matter because, although older persons had the same rights as other human beings, more needed to be done to ensure that they were able to fully exercise them.

51. The National Director of SENAMA of Chile said that the Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons had contributed to the definition of "age discrimination in old age" and "multiple discrimination". According to the results of the National Socioeconomic Survey (CASEN) of 2015, three out of four older persons in Chile could provide for themselves; 85.6% of the older adult population was self-sufficient, in other words they did not report any difficulties in carrying out everyday activities, while 14.4% had some degree of functional dependence. However, public perception was very different; 95.8% of the population, including older people themselves, believed that older people could not take care of themselves. For SENAMA, older people's participation in their communities was central because they were the most active. Community associations of older people had been set up in seven regions of the country. Without older persons' organizations it was impossible to fight discrimination, so a cultural change was needed to break with the discriminatory image that people had of old age. Legislation was not enough and should be adopted in conjunction with mechanisms that truly helped to empower older people.

52. The Vice-Chair of CNDI of Brazil also welcomed the contribution of the Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons to the definition of age discrimination and multiple discrimination. He explained how the issue of older persons and their rights had evolved in Brazil since 1994 and underscored the competencies of CNDI, a bipartite body (government and civil society), which developed guidelines, oversaw and regulated the implementation of national policies and supported state and municipal councils, among other tasks. He said that equality and non-discrimination were guiding principles of the country's efforts, in accordance with Law No. 8,842 of 1994 and the Older Person's Statute (*Estatuto do Idoso*) of 2003. One of the mechanisms used to uphold those principles was access to justice. In Brazil, acts of discrimination against older people persisted despite the fact that offences against rights enshrined in the Statute were considered serious crimes and prosecuted by the Federal Public Prosecutor's Office, without the victim or anybody else having to institute proceedings. In his opinion, one way to combat that discrimination was to implement article 3 of that law, which stated that families, communities, societies and public authorities must, as a matter of priority, ensure that older people could exercise the rights established therein.

53. The Director of the Human Rights Directorate of the Office of the Attorney General of Paraguay set out the measures that Paraguay had taken to facilitate older people's access to justice. She said that the judicial system could and should remove inequalities, and that non-discrimination depended on the performance of social and legal institutions. In her country, the Public Prosecutor's Office had responded to the challenge of mainstreaming all citizens' human rights without any distinction and of creating the conditions for equal access to the courts through affirmative action, where appropriate. The instruction of the Chief Public Prosecutor of 25 August 2016 regulated the activities of public prosecutors in all criminal cases involving older persons as the victim or perpetrator of the crime. Public prosecutors must comply with that instruction and failure to do so could lead to charges being brought. The instruction also set out the Office's actions at every stage of the criminal proceedings, including how the case should be dealt with in the event that an older person was deprived of his or her liberty or held in pretrial detention and the use of a Gesell chamber to reduce revictimization and ensure due process and equity.

54. The participants gave examples of different forms of discrimination that affected older persons. They said that older workers experienced age discrimination and criticized mandatory retirement ages and the fact that retirees were unable to receive social security benefits while in paid employment. They called for equal opportunities and treatment for older workers. They also referred to the discrimination that older people experienced with regard to sexual health care and protection, in particular older women, who were at greatest risk of and most vulnerable to contracting sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS.

55. The fourth panel on the care needs of older persons in the context of solidarity and interdependence was moderated by Jorge Rodríguez Vignoli, Senior Research Assistant of the Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE)-Population Division of ECLAC, and involved the following participants: Alberto Fernández, Director of the National Care Programme for Older Adults of the Ministry of Public Health of Cuba; Tania Pastrana, President of the Latin American Association of Palliative Care (ALCP); Carmen del Pilar Estela Benavides, Director General of the Family and the Community and Director II of the Older Persons Department of the Ministry for Women's Affairs and Vulnerable Populations of Peru; and Ix-Chel Poot, Executive Director of the National Council on Ageing of Belize.

56. The Director of the National Care Programme for Older Adults of the Ministry of Public Health of Cuba spoke about the rapid ageing of the Cuban population, as evidenced by official data, and the general policy approach that was used in the country, which promoted older people's autonomy and had been mainstreamed in all State institutions. He said that ageing was linked to new challenges in the areas of economic security, health and care, among others, and mentioned a wide range of measures taken by the Government of Cuba to address them. Steps had been taken to strengthen primary care by offering preventative and health promotion and care services, adapted to older people, which included a regular check-up. Self-care had also been promoted through community centres and organizations, such as senior citizens' associations and retirement homes. With regard to care, he said that 88% of the country's healthcare zones had training institutions for carers; there were 280 retirement homes, 149 nursing homes (almost 12,000 beds) and 50 geriatric healthcare centres that tailored care to the needs of older people. Lastly, he acknowledged that home care was a major challenge, although it was crucial to older people's autonomy and quality of life and was a valid alternative to long-term residential care.

57. The President of ALCP said that the definition of palliative care given in the Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons was a good starting point on the matter.<sup>6</sup> She then noted the benefits of palliative care, as opposed to what she called "therapeutic cruelty", and said that such care should be provided early, rather than waiting until the situation had become unsustainable. Care should continue even after the death of the patient in the form of psychological counselling for relatives and close friends to help them through the reparative mourning process. She provided data and figures on the requirements, costs and coverage of palliative care and concluded that there was a serious lack of such services and that access to them was very unequal within and among countries. She referred to some of the international instruments that addressed palliative care, including WHO plans and the Inter-American Convention. Lastly, she identified the main challenges in that area, including training palliative care specialists and service providers, incorporating palliative care into primary care and making medicines available.

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<sup>6</sup> Active, comprehensive, and interdisciplinary care and treatment of patients whose illness is not responding to curative treatment or who are suffering avoidable pain, in order to improve their quality of life until the last day of their lives. Central to palliative care is control of pain, of other symptoms, and of the social, psychological, and spiritual problems of the older person. It includes the patient, their environment, and their family. It affirms life and considers death a normal process, neither hastening nor delaying it.

58. The Director General of the Family and the Community and Director II of the Older Persons Department of the Ministry for Women’s Affairs and Vulnerable Populations of Peru gave a brief historical overview of care and said that in the Inca civilization, care had been largely community-based, something that had been lost with the Spanish conquest and colonization. She then described some of the milestones in the care of older persons since Peru’s independence, both in terms of setting up hospitals, centres and services, and of enacting laws or creating institutions. She listed the principles and requirements of care for older people and described the interdependent relationship between caregiver and patient. She also referred to national policy guidelines on the matter and the clinical classification protocol for older persons and said that less than 5% of older people were classed as complex geriatric patients. Progress had been made in national programmes to create comprehensive care centres for older people—which were managed by municipalities and provided primary health care—and that population group’s access to specialized services had been improved, both of which were pillars of the National Network for Older Persons. Lastly, she said that there were three key challenges: the ageing of women; the shift towards an approach that maintained functional capacities in old age; and intersectoral coordination to address imminent challenges in the area of pensions and health care.

59. The Executive Director of the National Council on Ageing of Belize spoke about population dynamics and the ageing process in Belize, which was still in the early stages (6.1% of the population), and the weaknesses in the protection of older persons. She set out different options to support older people, in terms of economic security, health and care. She said that the healthcare and residential care centres for older people, whether run by the public sector, communities, non-governmental organizations or private entities, were insufficient and that there were whole regions of the country that did not have any such centres. Turning to the matter of training caregivers as part of a national programme that ensured quality standards, she said that the goal was to modernize or professionalize the work of domestic caregivers in order to expand care options, both in residential facilities and at home. She described the content, length, cost and achievements of the courses, which had been implemented in two phases (more than 100 graduates in two years). Lastly, she discussed the lessons learned—including the value of certification for employment opportunities and of inviting health care professionals to training sessions to raise awareness about caring for older persons—the impact of the programme, including generating public interest, the need to improve data collection systems and the possibility of expanding the training programme, in particular to nurses and other health professionals.

60. Participants drew attention to the need to bolster the three stakeholders that provided care—society, family and the State—; reflect on caregivers’ wages and protecting their rights; raise awareness of and eliminate the gender bias in the provision of care at home (caregivers were, for the most part, women); recognize the ethical and political dimensions and complexities associated with palliative care; and train many more caregivers and improve that training. They shared their countries’ experiences with regard to caregivers’ pay, the concept of compassionate cities in the area of palliative care, the importance of primary care and regulations on caregivers’ rights.

Round table “Contribution of institutions for older persons to the protection of human rights and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” (agenda item 7)

61. The panellists involved in the round table were: Marcelo Scappini, Director-General for Human Rights of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Paraguay; Christian Courtis, Human Rights Officer, Sustainable Development Goals Section, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR); Emiliana Rivera, Executive Director of the National Council for Older Persons (CONAPAM) of Costa Rica; Patricia Giménez León, Director General of the General Directorate of Planning and Evaluation of the Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare of Paraguay; Pablo Salazar Canelos, Regional Advisor

on Population and Development issues of the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA-LACRO); Patricia Chemor, Secretary-General of the National Council for Population (CONAPO) of Mexico, in her capacity as Chair of the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean; and Luis Fidel Yáñez, Officer-in-Charge of the Office of the Secretary of ECLAC.

62. The Director-General for Human Rights of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Paraguay provided background information on how the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was developed and its significance. He said that the Agenda was people-centred and focused on human settlements, taking into account the social, economic and environmental dimensions of development. The 2030 Agenda contained minimum standards that States Members of the United Nations must observe to ensure that no one was left behind, particularly vulnerable people, including older persons. However, the 2030 Agenda seemed to place less emphasis on older people than on other vulnerable groups. That weakness could be overcome by implementing and following up the Agenda at the national and regional levels. He called on ECLAC to show leadership so that older people were included in the regional implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Goals. Older people's organizations had an important role to play in that regard and all existing platforms should be used to discuss the development of comparable measurements, with steps taken to facilitate the involvement of older people. The cooperation between society and the State had created a mutual interest in identifying governments' achievements, as well as implementation gaps, at both the national and regional levels.

63. The Human Rights Officer of the Sustainable Development Goals Section of OHCHR said that the fact that only three Sustainable Development Goals referred to older persons could not be justified, specifically target 2.2 to end all forms of malnutrition and address the nutritional needs of older persons, under Goal 2 to end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture, and targets 11.2, to provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to needs of older persons, and 11.7, to provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular older persons, both under Goal 11, to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. Nevertheless, there was an opportunity to include older people in the follow-up of the Sustainable Development Goals by implementing target 17.18, to enhance capacity-building support to developing countries to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by age, among other characteristics relevant to national contexts. The theme of the 2030 Agenda, "leave no one behind", also meant identifying groups and people who were vulnerable and discriminated against, including older persons. States should commit to take more steps and more effective measures, in accordance with international law, to remove obstacles and restrictions in that regard.

64. The Executive Director of CONAPAM of Costa Rica spoke about the role that national older persons' institutions played in guaranteeing international commitments on the human rights of older people in the context of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. According to the Constitutional Court of Costa Rica, administrative units and courts must respect and enforce older persons' rights. That meant that different government agencies should coordinate with the governing body on matters concerning older people in order to include them in the follow-up and implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals. That was an imperative that Costa Rica guaranteed by applying national laws and regulations, and by ratifying the Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons. National older persons' institutions were therefore key to national implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.



65. The Director General of the General Directorate of Planning and Evaluation of the Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare of Paraguay said that in order to include a rights-based approach in the public policies of her country, particularly those aimed at older people, an inter-institutional working group had been set up. Steps had been taken to help older people obtain identity cards so that they could claim available benefits. She acknowledged that while those efforts did not go far enough or quickly enough to address the changes, they were sustained. For example, social security coverage had been extended and 150,000 non-contributory pension beneficiaries accounted for 20% of the population without income in retirement.

66. The Regional Advisor on Population and Development issues of UNFPA-LACRO said that the lack of access to human rights was a cause and consequence of poverty. Poverty was not only a lack of material goods and opportunities, but also the paucity of social goods, such as health, respect and dignity. The rights-based approach was a result and a process in which stakeholders must participate as subjects. He stressed that it was important to have data that could be properly disaggregated, such as those from censuses and administrative records, in order to know for certain who was being left behind. The socioeconomic impact of population changes must be studied and policies designed that would encourage institutions to work together to promote intergenerational well-being. Some of the evaluation benchmarks were the chapter on ageing, social protection and socioeconomic challenges of the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development, adopted at the first session of the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Sustainable Development Goals. It should be noted that on regional issues, such as the rights of older persons, Afrodescendent populations, indigenous peoples and migrants, the Montevideo Consensus was more ambitious than the Sustainable Development Goals. He suggested that one of the aims of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development should be to follow up the Montevideo Consensus, as well as the Sustainable Development Goals.

67. The Secretary-General of CONAPO of Mexico, in her capacity as Chair of the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, spoke about the contribution of the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development, in particular, chapter C of the Consensus, on ageing, social protection and socioeconomic challenges, which included 15 priority actions on participation, social security, education, health, care, dignified death, work, discrimination and violence, among other matters. In addition, that chapter had contributed to the follow-up and implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by identifying and defining monitoring indicators. On the one hand, the priority actions of chapter C were closely linked to those of the Sustainable Development Goals, and on the other, several indicators established to follow up the Consensus had been adapted from the global indicators for the Sustainable Development Goals. At the regional level, the Montevideo Consensus was an essential part of the follow-up to the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development, which in turn provided a platform for peer-to-peer discussions and experience sharing. She also spoke about the national transfer accounts project, involving Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Jamaica, Mexico, the Plurinational State of Bolivia and Uruguay, which would allow population trends to be monitored and build countries' capacity to formulate policies for socioeconomic development.

68. The Officer-in-Charge of the Office of the Secretary of ECLAC said that the 2030 Agenda was transformative and that in order to achieve it, behaviours must be changed. Unlike the Millennium Development Goals, the 2030 Agenda had been drawn up by the countries and its goals, targets, deadlines, means of implementation, implementation plans and new follow-up and review bodies applied to all the countries. With regard to the indicators, he said that they were a major challenge, as, in the region, only 20% of the 232 current indicators could be measured in a manner that allowed for

comparison; even with feasible methodological developments only 45% could be measured. That lack of measurement had opened spaces for international and South-South cooperation. He stressed that the comprehensive and cross-cutting nature of the agenda made dialogue among bodies linked to development necessary, bodies which had to overcome a silo mentality and take into account the three sustainable development pillars. He noted the various levels at which the 2030 Agenda operated (global, regional, national, among others) and was followed up. He also welcomed the voluntary reviews presented by countries to their global peers at the high-level political forum on sustainable development. He drew particular attention to the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development and the goal of bringing together the bodies responsible for implementing the 2030 Agenda in order to advance collective learning. He mentioned other regional agendas, such as the Montevideo Consensus, and said that the indicators for regional follow-up would be decided at the next meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. Indicators were also expected to be adopted for other agendas, such as the Regional Gender Agenda, and for the declaration that would be adopted at the Fourth Regional Intergovernmental Conference on Ageing and the Rights of Older Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean. He said that all the regional agendas' architecture would ultimately contribute to the 2030 Agenda at the regional Forum, in which subsidiary bodies and intergovernmental meetings of ECLAC had their own space. Civil society had participated very actively in the regional Forum, as it had in the Conference. Lastly, he invited all stakeholders present to raise the issue of ageing at the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development.

#### Consideration and adoption of agreements (agenda item 8)

69. Under this agenda item, the Conference adopted the Asunción Declaration “Building inclusive societies: ageing with dignity and rights”, as set forth in annex 1.

#### **Closing session**

70. At the closing ceremony, statements were made by María Teresa Barán, Vice-Minister of Public Health of Paraguay; Cecilia Ugaz, Resident Coordinator and Resident Representative of the United Nations in Paraguay; and Paulo Saad, Chief of the Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE)-Population Division of ECLAC.

71. Vice-Minister of Public Health of Paraguay called on the countries to continue to uphold older people's rights with dignity, reaffirming that her country, which would hold the Chair of the Regional Intergovernmental Conference on Ageing and the Rights of Older Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean for five years, stood ready to do that.

72. The Resident Coordinator and Resident Representative of the United Nations in Paraguay said that the Asunción Declaration would mark a milestone in the progressive achievement of the human rights of older persons and called for the document to be extended to other regions of the world.

73. The Chief of the Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE)-Population Division of ECLAC highlighted the broad participation of the countries in the Conference and welcomed the involvement of civil society. He said that Latin America and the Caribbean had reaffirmed and strengthened its commitment to the rights and dignity of older persons and confirmed that ECLAC would continue to provide assistance on the matter of ageing and the rights of older persons.

## Annex 1

**ASUNCIÓN DECLARATION****BUILDING INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES: AGEING WITH DIGNITY AND RIGHTS**

*We, the representatives of the countries gathered in Asunción from 27 to 30 June 2017 at the Fourth Regional Intergovernmental Conference on Ageing and the Rights of Older Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean,*

1. *Reaffirm* the commitment of our Governments to promote, protect and respect the human rights, dignity and fundamental freedoms of all older persons, without discrimination of any kind, and ratify the responsibility of States to ensure ageing with dignity and rights, with the greatest possible quality of life and full enjoyment of the rights of older persons;

2. *Recognize* the importance of the Regional Intergovernmental Conference on Ageing and the Rights of Older Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean as a forum that facilitates the systematic review and evaluation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and the situation of older persons and their human rights at the regional level, on the basis of national reporting and experience-sharing, which in turn helps to fulfil other regional and international commitments on the matter;

3. *Reiterate* that the San José Charter on the Rights of Older Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean offers a regional framework for public policymaking that States continue to adopt, that complements the work of other mechanisms at the regional and international levels, and that helps to strengthen protection of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of older persons;

4. *Emphasize* the important and diverse contributions that older persons can continue to make to the functioning of society and recognize that particular difficulties and obstacles remain in the regional context that undermine the participation of older persons in political, social, economic and cultural life;

5. *Urge* the Governments to build the issue of ageing into their development policies, plans and programmes in a cross-cutting manner, and to implement specific policies for older persons that recognize gender inequalities and promote their autonomy and independence, as well as intergenerational solidarity, bearing in mind that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development represents a historical opportunity for the international community to eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions and considering the worrying incidence of poverty among older persons in the region, especially those in the most vulnerable situations;

6. *Recognize* the importance of the Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons, and signal that its States parties reaffirm their commitment to its further divulgation and to advancing with the ratification procedures that will enable the establishment of its follow-up mechanism;

7. *Highlight* the efforts undertaken by Governments and civil society, including older persons' organizations and the private sector, to promote cooperation and integration and to raise awareness about issues related to ageing and older persons' human rights, and recognize that major challenges remain to achieving the empowerment of older persons and their full and effective enjoyment of human rights;

8. *Emphasize* that old age is a time in the natural life of human beings involving full experience of the biopsychosocial dimension that must be underpinned by a rights-based approach, for which it is necessary to generate healthy, accessible and enabling environments so that people may age in an appropriate setting that fosters the pursuit of their activities;

9. *Urge* the Governments to take specific measures and intensify existing measures to combat age-based and multiple discrimination, abandonment, mistreatment and violence towards older persons, affording particular attention to those in situations of greatest risk and social vulnerability, and to provide comprehensive health services, care, social protection and access to food, housing, employment, social occupation and justice, among others;

10. *Reaffirm* our commitment to the work of the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing and underscore the need to start drafting a specific multilateral legal instrument that is binding in nature and comprehensive and integrated in approach, to promote and protect the rights and dignity of older persons, in accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 67/139, with a view to strengthening the international regime for protection of older persons and reducing the existing normative fragmentation;

11. *Welcome* the work of the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons and, in accordance with the priorities established by national States, ask her to act in coordination with all bodies and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, as well as national institutions for older persons and older persons' organizations in Latin America and the Caribbean, in the pursuit of her mandate;

12. *Encourage* the Governments of the region to consider the situation and interests of older persons, including also the ethnicity, race, gender, disability and generational perspectives, in the design and implementation of national plans and programmes to promote achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals, the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development, and the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030;

13. *Recommend* that States strengthen the capacity of their national institutions that govern matters relating to old age and ageing, endowing them with the competencies and attributes necessary to contribute to ensuring the full exercise of all human rights of older persons, as well as to facilitate the collection of data, the preparation of statistics and the management of qualitative information, broken down by relevant factors, according to their specificities and national context, in order to improve the evaluation of the situation of older persons and strengthen the formulation of policies sensitive to their needs;

14. *Call upon* all States and the international community to cooperate, support and participate in the global efforts towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to mobilize all necessary resources and support in that regard, according to national plans and strategies, including through an integrated and multifaceted approach to improving the well-being of older persons;

15. *Urge* the Governments of the region, as a complement to national development efforts, to continue promoting and deepening South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives, bearing in mind that these efforts complement but do not substitute North-South cooperation, and to share good practices in relation to the promotion and protection of the human rights and dignity of older persons;

16. *Request* the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean to strengthen its activities on the matter of ageing and older persons' rights in order to help Governments in Latin America and the Caribbean adopt measures that ensure the full exercise of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and the dignity of older persons, with the participation of civil society;

17. *Encourage* the participation of civil society organizations from Latin America and the Caribbean in the design, implementation and evaluation of public policies relating to the human rights of older persons;

18. *Take note of* the document *Challenges to the autonomy and interdependent rights of older persons*,<sup>1</sup> prepared by the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean;

19. *Note* the recommendations issued by the Caribbean subregional preparatory meeting for the Fourth Regional Intergovernmental Conference on Ageing and the Rights of Older Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Port of Spain on 1 and 2 June 2017;

20. *Encourage* the inclusion and participation of older persons in the design, adoption and implementation of disaster management and mitigation plans and strategies, with particular attention given to those living in remote areas; the implementation of measures that provide specific assistance to older persons in risk assessment, preparedness, prevention, response and reconstruction; and their participation in education and training programmes and data collection activities;

21. *Encourage* the implementation of policies and programmes for the prevention, care and palliative care and treatment or management of non-communicable diseases, including Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia, and for the promotion of healthy ageing in order to improve quality of life and reduce the burden of non-communicable diseases on the population, the economy, health services and health systems;

22. *Thank* the Government and people of Paraguay for organizing and holding the Fourth Regional Intergovernmental Conference on Ageing and the Rights of Older Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean.

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<sup>1</sup> LC/CRE.4/3.

Annex 2

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

**A. Estados miembros de la Comisión  
States members of the Commission**

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**BOLIVIA (ESTADO PLURINACIONAL DE)/BOLIVIA (PLURINATIONAL STATE OF)**

Representante/Representative:

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**C. Secretaría de las Naciones Unidas  
United Nations Secretariat**

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**D. Organismos de las Naciones Unidas  
United Nations bodies**

**Fondo de las Naciones Unidas para la Infancia (UNICEF)/United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)**

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**E. Organismos especializados  
Specialized agencies**

**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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**F. Organizaciones intergubernamentales  
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