



Forum of the Countries
of Latin America and
the Caribbean on
**SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT**
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Second meeting of the Forum of the Countries of
Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development

Santiago, 18-20 April 2018

**INTERGOVERNMENTALLY AGREED CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF
THE SECOND MEETING OF THE FORUM OF THE COUNTRIES OF LATIN AMERICA
AND THE CARIBBEAN ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

We, the Ministers and high representatives gathered at the second meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and Caribbean on Sustainable Development convened under the auspices of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in Santiago de Chile, from the 18th to the 20th of April, 2018:

1. *Reaffirm* our commitment to effectively implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, ensuring that no one is left behind, including its Goals and targets, which are integrated and indivisible and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development —economic, social and environmental—, and stress that it is people-centered, universal and transformative 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, being reaching the furthest behind first and empowering those in vulnerable situations crucial to sustainable development,

2. *Reaffirm* that the Addis Ababa Action Agenda provides a global framework for financing sustainable development, as an integral part of the 2030 Agenda that supports and complements it, and helps to contextualize its means of implementation with concrete policies and actions to achieve its targets; recognize the synergies of the Paris Agreement, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the New Urban Agenda adopted in Quito, Ecuador, the SAMOA Pathway and the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, recommend further strengthening of multilateral cooperation at the regional and global levels for the effective implementation of the aforementioned instruments; welcome the numerous contributions and the support provided by the United Nations Development System at the regional level, aiming to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, and reiterate the need that their activities are carried out in a coherent and coordinated manner and in line with national policies and priorities,

3. *Reaffirm* all the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, including inter alia, the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, as set out in Principle 7 thereof,

4. *Stress* 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,

5. *Reiterate* the call to the United Nations Development System, in consultation with international financial institutions, to address the specific development needs of middle-income countries through, *inter alia*, an accurate response to their needs, taking into account variables that go beyond *per capita* income criteria; recalls that 73 per cent of the world's poor population is concentrated in these countries where cooperation can have a multiplying effect to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals; and look forward to actively participate in the high-level meeting of the General Assembly during its 73rd Session to discuss the gaps and challenges of middle-income countries in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda,

6. *Recognize* that the follow-up and review at the regional and sub regional levels of the 2030 Agenda can, as appropriate, provide useful opportunities for peer learning, including through voluntary reviews, sharing of best practices and discussion on shared targets, and that the resolution 700(XXXVI) of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) established the Forum of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean for 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,

7. *Welcome* efforts at all levels to implement the 2030 Agenda and recognize that after almost three years of implementation, our individual and collective efforts have yielded encouraging results in many areas. However, given the challenges for the region to achieve sustainable development, in particular poverty, inequalities, high global debt and reduced levels of international cooperation, we underscore the need to accelerate both the pace of implementation and raising awareness of the Sustainable Development Goals at all levels, to secure our objectives for people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership,

8. *Welcome* the ongoing efforts to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, and note with appreciation the adoption of the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the sustainable development framework by 2030, resulting from the Thirteenth Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, and 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,

9. *Stress* the need to take all measures necessary in order to leave no one behind, while respecting and promoting all human rights for all, including social protection and equal access to quality essential public services for all,

10. *Take note with appreciation* ECLAC's second annual report on regional progress and challenges on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean, which provides an evidence-based analysis on opportunities and challenges for our consideration and informs some individual and collective actions carried out by our countries to implement the Sustainable Development Goals, even under an uncertain economic environment constraining the mobilization of resources, and take note of its recommendations to promote *inter alia* a structural progressive change from a sustainable development perspective, including the set of Sustainable Development Goals that will be reviewed in depth at the 2018 session of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development related to SDGs 6, 7, 11, 12, 15, and Goal 17 reviewed annually,

11. *Reaffirm* the commitment to ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all, and welcome the launch of the International Decade of Action, "Water for Sustainable Development", 2018-2028; recognize that in addition to access to energy, it is still needed to ensure that it is affordable, reliable and sustainable; reiterate the commitment with sustainable urban development, recognizing that more than 80 per cent of the population of the region live in urban areas, and look forward

to the regional action plan for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean 2016-2036; reiterate the commitment to ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns, and that people in our region have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature, and recognize the need to promote a structural progressive change towards sustainable development to protect ecosystems and biodiversity, reduce deforestation, combat desertification, land degradation and drought, foster strategies for the sustainable use of natural resources and ecosystem services in the region, and look forward for, *inter alia*, the global observance of the World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought, on 17 June 2018, to be hosted by Ecuador,

12. *Commend* the 14 countries of the region that have already presented voluntary national reviews at the ministerial segment of the High-level Political Forum under the auspices of ECOSOC, and the 8 countries preparing to do so in 2018, and highlight the commitment and leadership shown by these 19 countries —of which 3 are presenting a second review— in their efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda, including by integrating it into their national strategies and adjusting institutional set-ups; recommend further volunteering and engaging in the upcoming High Level Political Forum, and look forward to the appropriate allocation of time both, for presentations and feedback from peer ministers,

13. *Welcome* the continuous efforts of countries from our region to implement the 2030 Agenda through its mainstreaming in public policies, institutional arrangements, and national and subnational follow-up and review, and the establishment of twenty national coordination mechanisms for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and encourage these countries to further deepen their national efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and to engage in in-depth knowledge sharing with peers and partners throughout the region,

14. *Acknowledge* the contribution of ECLAC and the Statistical Coordination Group for the 2030 Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean to the indicators of the region in the second report, and recommend its contribution for the next one, and welcome the results of the 9th Statistical Conference of the Americas and its important contribution to advance in the generation of disaggregated, accessible, timely and reliable data, in order to identify inequalities and needs of the most vulnerable, ensuring that no one is left behind,

15. *Welcome* the ongoing process to strengthen and adapt the United Nations Development System to better support Member States in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and agree with the need stated by the Secretary General to revamp regional structures and look forward to consider the options for longer-term restructuring of the regional assets of the UN to be presented by the Secretary-General avoiding a one-size-fits-all approach; strongly commend the work carried out by ECLAC through its 70 years of existence and its continued effort to support country-led processes; commit to ensure that ECLAC functions and mandate are fully recognized and maintained, particularly its crucial role in the regional dimension of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, and urge the Commission to fully engage in the Secretary General's initiative to revamp the regional assets in benefit of country-led processes and increase, within its mandates, regional initiatives to leave no one behind,

16. *Recognize* the importance of the environmental dimension as one of the three dimensions of sustainable development, and the role of multilateral institutions and agreements that set the global environmental agenda, promoting the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system; and also recognize the role of regional fora on environmental action, such as the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, and its contributions for the follow-up of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

17. *Recognize* the need to adopt a broader and more people-centered and inclusive preventive approach to disaster risk reduction, ensuring that the policies and practices cover multiple risks and people in vulnerable situations in our region, including by realigning the disaster financing to anticipate, plan for and reduce disaster risk, as well as to promote post-disaster recovery and reconstruction in order to improve efficiency, predictability and speed of response; and further welcome ECLAC's proposal of debt swaps for

climate adaptation that address the unsustainable debt burden of the Caribbean economies affected by disasters, while creating a resilience fund to facilitate investment in climate adaptation thereby reducing their vulnerability,

18. *Take note* of the adoption of the “Escazú Regional Agreement” on Access to Information, Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean, adopted in Escazú, Costa Rica, which constitutes an important step forward to achieve the 2030 Agenda, and invite all governments of Latin America and the Caribbean to consider becoming a member of the Agreement, which will be open to signature from the 27th of September 2018,

19. *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,

20. *Commit* to continue to promote a universal, rules-based, open, transparent, predictable, inclusive, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system under the World Trade Organization (WTO),

21. *Note with concern* that, despite some improvement in the global and regional economy, this recovery has not been shared among all countries and sectors; and that there are still structural problems aggravated by the reduced access to concessional finance, particularly for middle-income countries. In this regard, emphasize the importance for countries of the region of Official Development Assistance, call the developed countries to fulfill their ODA targets, and reiterate the importance to increase climate financing, which is additional to ODA; and further recognize the necessity of concrete and immediate action to create the necessary enabling environment at all levels for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, including national efforts, international and regional cooperation that supports policies and programmes to increase investment in sustainable development; taking into account that every country has, and shall freely exercise, full permanent sovereignty over all its wealth, natural resources and economic activity,

22. *Further recognize* that inequality, or even a rise in inequality, remains pervasive in countries of the Latin America and the Caribbean, even in those with high levels of economic growth, and that further investment in social services and economic opportunities are needed in order to reduce inequalities and that economic growth needs to be sustained, inclusive and equitable,

23. *Reaffirm* that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development also acknowledges that the implementation of sustainable development will depend on the active engagement of both the public and private sectors, and recognizing that the active participation of the private sector can contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, encourage to align private sector incentives with national public goals towards long-term investment according to national realities and capacities, including innovative financing instruments and approaches, to bridge the region’s structural inequality gaps and eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions,

24. *Recommit* to a redoubling of its efforts to substantially curb illicit financial flows by 2030, with a view to eventually eliminating them, including by combating tax evasion, transnational organized crime and corruption through strengthened national regulation and increased international and regional cooperation, to reducing opportunities for tax avoidance,

25. *Reaffirm* that South-South cooperation is an important element of international cooperation for development as a complement to, not a substitute for, North-South cooperation and welcomes the contributions of South-South cooperation to poverty eradication and sustainable development; stress the importance of triangular cooperation as a means of bringing relevant experience and expertise; and *look forward* to a successful outcome of the Second High-Level UN Conference on South-South Cooperation to be held in Buenos Aires, Argentina from 20-22 March 2019,

26. *Reaffirm* the importance of mobilizing for our region financial and nonfinancial resources and capacity building for the development, transfer, dissemination and diffusion of environmentally sound technologies on favorable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms as mutually agreed, and further recommend to increase international and regional cooperation, inter alia, for the development of endogenous science and technology,

27. *Reaffirm* that science, technology and innovation, including information and communications technologies are essential enablers and drivers for the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and in this regard, welcome the ongoing discussions in the I and II Forum on the impact of artificial intelligence on accelerated technological change in sustainable development; look forward to the Conference on Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean which will include a panel on emerging technologies for productivity and inclusion; as well as to the 21st Session of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, that will hold a high-level round table on the impact of rapid technological change on the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals; and to the Third Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals, which will include a session on the impact of rapid technological change, including in cases in which changes may occur at an exponential pace, on the achievement of the Sustainable Developing Goals, in order to further elaborate regional recommendations within the Forum of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development; and urge the operationalization of the United Nations online platform as a gateway for information on existing STI initiatives, mechanisms and programs,

28. *Recognize* that each country has primary responsibility for its own economic and social development, as well as for follow up and review of the 2030 Agenda at the national regional and global levels, in relation to the progress made in implementing its goals and targets, taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities; and that there are different approaches, visions, models and tools available to each country, in accordance with its national circumstances and priorities, to achieve sustainable development,

29. *Welcome* the contributions of all relevant stakeholders to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the region, and the participation according with the resolution 700(XXXVI) of ECLAC, of parliamentarians, local governments, private sector, civil society and academia at the Second Forum, and encourage their continued commitment to ensure that no one is left behind,

30. *Request ECLAC* to prepare an updated version of the progress report for the third forum and present it one month in advance, recommend the Presidency of the 37th Session of ECLAC to submit the second progress report, along with the present conclusions and recommendations with a Summary of the Chair, as regional contributions to the 2018 High-Level Political Forum and the ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development, as well as to the United Nations Regional Coordination Mechanism for their due consideration,

31. *Express* our deepest appreciation to the Chair of the 36th session and ECLAC for organizing and hosting the second meeting of the Forum of the Latin American and Caribbean Countries.