



Meeting of the
**Presiding Officers
of the Regional
Conference on Women**
in Latin America and the Caribbean
Santiago, 30-31 July 2018

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**REPORT OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH MEETING OF THE PRESIDING
OFFICERS OF THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON WOMEN
IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

Santiago, 30 and 31 July 2018



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A. ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

Place and date of the meeting

1. The Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean held their fifty-seventh meeting from 30 to 31 July 2018 in Santiago.

Attendance¹

2. The meeting was attended by representatives of the following member countries in their capacity as Presiding Officers: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Mexico, Panama, Saint Lucia, Suriname and Uruguay.

3. Also attending were representatives of the following member countries of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC): the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Canada, Colombia, France, Guatemala, Italy, Japan, Nicaragua, Norway, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Turkey and the United Kingdom. Montserrat, an associate member of ECLAC, was also represented.

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

5. Also present at the meeting were representatives of the following United Nations programmes, funds and bodies: United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Food Programme (WFP) and the Resident Coordinator of the United Nations system and UNDP Resident Representative in Chile.

6. Representatives of the following specialized agencies were present: International Labour Organization (ILO) and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

7. Representatives of the following intergovernmental organizations also attended the meeting: Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), CAF-Development Bank of Latin America, Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (FLACSO), Organization of American States (OAS) and ParlAmericas.

8. Also present were representatives of non-governmental organizations and other special guests.

¹ See annex 2.

Chair

9. The Presiding Officers, as elected at the thirteenth session of the Regional Conference, were as follows:

Chair: Uruguay

Vice-Chairs: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Puerto Rico, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Suriname.

B. AGENDA

10. The Presiding Officers adopted the following agenda:

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Report by the secretariat on the activities carried out since the fifty-sixth meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean (Havana, 5 and 6 October 2017).
3. Report on the outcomes of the meetings of other subsidiary bodies of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and of intergovernmental meetings held since the fifty-sixth meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean.
4. Report on the United Nations Joint Global Programme on Essential Services for Women and Girls Subject to Violence.
5. Report by the working group on the regional fund in support of women's and feminist organizations and movements.
6. Preparations for the fourteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean (Santiago, 2019).
7. Discussion on women's autonomy in changing economic scenarios in the framework of preparations for the fourteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean (Santiago, 2019).
8. Other matters.
9. Adoption of agreements.

C. SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

11. The opening session was addressed by Alicia Bárcena, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC); Mariella Mazzotti, Director of the National Women's Institute (INMUJERES) of Uruguay, in her capacity as Chair of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean; Isabel Plá, Minister of Women's Affairs and Gender Equity of Chile; and Silvia Rucks, Resident Coordinator of the United Nations system in Chile.

12. After welcoming the participants, the Executive Secretary of ECLAC underscored the need to adapt to the political changes taking place in the region and their effects on institutions and to embrace innovation. The issue of economic autonomy, identified as a priority at the last session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, was particularly important in the light of the challenges of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In this context, she highlighted the work of the Gender Equality Observatory of ECLAC in breaking the statistical silence on areas related to economic autonomy, such as income inequality and the total work time of women in the region, and invited participants to reflect on the effect on autonomy the structural challenges identified as obstacles to gender equality by the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030. She drew attention to the greater presence of women in the political arena, particularly in the Caribbean, citing as examples the President of Trinidad and Tobago, the Vice-President of Costa Rica, and the Prime Minister of Barbados. She said that the aims of the meeting were to share country experiences, consider creating a space for reflection on the activities of the Regional Fund in support of Women's and Feminist Organizations and Movements, and to reflect on the preparation of the next session of the Regional Conference on Women.

13. The Director of INMUJERES of Uruguay and Chair of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean welcomed participants and thanked ECLAC for its crucial role as Latin American countries promoted increasingly sustainable and cross-cutting gender equality policies. She noted that, despite progress to date in shedding the light on gender inequalities, the region had only seen "the tip of the iceberg". She mentioned that through the forums for reflection offered by Regional Conferences on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean over the years, it had become evident that equality was not only a "women's issue", but was also a pillar of sustainable development in itself. In that regard, the Montevideo Strategy called on policymakers to step up the integration of gender equality in national policies, given the inextricable link between gender equality, economic policies and countries' development. To do this, the challenge would be to ensure closer coordination between economic policy, production policy and policies aimed at equality. Efforts to that end were already under way, led by governments and women's and feminist organizations and social movements. Lastly, she highlighted the significance of the presence of the Minister of Women's Affairs and Gender Equity of Chile, incoming Chair of the next Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean.

14. The Minister of Women's Affairs and Gender Equity of Chile, after welcoming participants, recalled the commitment undertaken by the President of Chile to support the implementation of the Montevideo Strategy and said that the gender agenda that her country was seeking to promote was a challenging one as it aimed to ensure equal dignity for men and women in diverse spheres. She stressed the need for broader inclusion of women, especially the increasing numbers of migrant women, in national progress; the importance of access to decent work; and the urgent need to implement reforms to bring about a cultural shift. She also said that among the other challenges on Chile's gender agenda, was instituting a culture of "zero tolerance" with regard to violence against women and reducing gender gaps

in areas such as politics, science, culture, public service and the private sector. She then proposed three themes for debate during the meeting: democracy, human rights and women's economic growth; gender equality as an axis of economic growth, justice and social progress; and the mainstreaming of these axes in a participatory approach, with the support of various stakeholders.

15. The Resident Coordinator of the United Nations system in Chile said that there were a number of bright spots in the region in the area of gender equality, noting the positive effect of quota laws on women's political participation in many countries, greater integration of women in the labour market and in better quality jobs, and the prominence of new issues such as the different forms of violence against women, including the growing attention on acts of violence in the political sphere. Lastly, she welcomed and acknowledged the Commission's efforts to create spaces for joint reflection, an example of which was the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Adoption of the agenda (agenda item 1)

16. The Chair of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, submitted the provisional agenda for consideration by the Presiding Officers, who adopted it without amendment.

Report by the secretariat on the activities carried out since the fifty-sixth meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean (Havana, 5 and 6 October 2017) (agenda item 2)

17. The secretariat presented a report on the activities conducted since the fifty-sixth meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean. The report described the preparation and contents of the Montevideo Strategy, a technical and political instrument that aligns 40 years' experience of the Regional Gender Agenda with the Sustainable Development Goals, and an outline was presented of the areas of work of the Division for Gender Affairs and reference documents produced by the Division. Special mention was made of the Division's role in cross-cutting analysis of issues related to gender equality, economic and sustainable development, changes in labour markets, the technological revolution and social inclusion. It was also noted that the Division served as technical secretariat for the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean and for the Working Group on Gender Statistics of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC, and attention was drawn to the concrete results of the technical assistance provided to Latin American countries in the implementation of the Montevideo Strategy. It was noted that three equality plans incorporating elements and approaches of the Montevideo Strategy had been launched in 2018 (in Chile, Uruguay and Costa Rica). Attention was also drawn to the input of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean in the second Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development, as well as the contributions of the Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean in the formulation and development of gender equality policies in the region.

18. In the discussion that followed, the delegations highlighted the importance of implementing the agreements adopted at the thirteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean in national agendas and the need for specific studies to guide developments on the matter. The representative of Cuba congratulated ECLAC on the publication of the study *¿Quién cuida en la ciudad?*:

*oportunidades y propuestas en los municipios de Boyeros y Guanabacoa (La Habana)*² and said that a number of gender audits had been conducted in central government planning bodies with a view to monitoring the SDGs. The Government of Cuba had also recently promulgated decrees on the protection of working mothers and on the right to care in families. The representative of El Salvador highlighted the contribution of the thirteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women to the discourse on new forms of gender governance and spoke of the measures introduced in her country to strengthen women's economic autonomy in the area of access to credit and to decent work and the implementation of the IGUAL-ES certification of equality in the workplace under the Gender Equality Seal programme. Other delegations highlighted the role of ECLAC technical support in mainstreaming the gender approach in the States, as well as the monitoring work done by the Gender Equality Observatory and its input in identifying priority issues for the region, such as reducing wage gaps and promoting women's economic independence.

Report on the outcomes of the meetings of other subsidiary bodies of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and of intergovernmental meetings held since the fifty-sixth meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean (agenda item 3)

19. Pursuant to agreement 9 of the fifty-fifth meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, the secretariat reported on salient aspects of other intergovernmental meetings convened by ECLAC: the second session of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (Montevideo, 25–27 October 2017), the special meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (Santiago, 7–9 November 2017), the ninth meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC (Aguascalientes, Mexico, 14–16 November 2017), the ninth meeting of the negotiating committee of the regional agreement on access to information, participation and justice in environmental matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (San José, 28 February–4 March 2018), the second meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development (Santiago, 18–20 April 2018), the Sixth Ministerial Conference on the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean (Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, 18–20 April 2018), the thirty-seventh session of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (Havana, 7–11 May 2018) and the third session of the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (Lima, 7–9 August 2018).

20. In that regard, it was noted that inter-agency cooperation was vital to avoid duplication of efforts and particular emphasis was placed on the role that national authorities must play in guiding the work of the various bodies involved in gender equality issues and on the need to promote enhanced dialogue between those bodies and mechanisms for the advancement of women.

21. In the discussion that followed, some delegations underlined the importance of national ownership of the Sustainable Development Goals. The representative of El Salvador pointed to the need to promote gender equality in the media and to improve care for victims of violence. The representative of CAF-Development Bank of Latin America highlighted the support given to the mechanisms for the advancement of women in the region and said that governments must assist her organization in identifying the most pressing issues on which action was needed. She said that a regional financial inclusion fund was being developed and was currently in the validation stage. The representatives of UN-Women, FAO, OAS and UNDP

² Castañeda Marrero, A.V., “¿Quién cuida en la ciudad? Oportunidades y propuestas en la comuna de Santiago (Chile)”, *Gender Affairs series*, No. 150 (LC/TS.2018/10), Santiago, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), 2018.

presented reports on their respective gender equality agendas and reaffirmed their readiness to support inter-agency work to implement the 2030 Agenda. They stressed the need to rethink economic development through the lens of environmental sustainability and gender equality, as well as the importance of acquiring technical knowledge in the area.

Report on the United Nations Joint Global Programme on Essential Services for Women and Girls Subject to Violence (agenda item 4)

22. The report was presented by the representatives of Guatemala, Panama, Peru and Uruguay.

23. The representative of Guatemala said that the National Coordinating Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Violence against Women (CONAPREVI) had played a crucial role in implementing initiatives to prevent and respond to violence against women in the country. She also reported on progress in the implementation of the United Nations Joint Global Programme on Essential Services for Women and Girls Subject to Violence and on the development of a protocol for the criminal investigation of violence against women, as well as other plans that were still in the design phase, including the preparation of a framework for funding the response to violence against women.

24. The representative of Panama said that the National Institute of Women (INAMU) had played a fundamental role in multisectoral efforts to strengthen and implement international agreements and legislative frameworks regarding violence against women. She highlighted cooperation with UNFPA in developing victim care services that complied with the standards established through inter-agency proposals and had a territorial focus. However, the challenge remained to establish introspection and stock-taking processes to improve the State's response at the national level.

25. The representative of Peru then spoke of the challenge of building the State's capacity to assist women in violent situations and highlighted some of the measures implemented under the United Nations Joint Global Programme on Essential Services for Women and Girls Subject to Violence, including the establishment of 50 emergency centres at police stations, the formulation of a joint action protocol between the Ministry of Women and Vulnerable Populations and the National Police, the development of training modules for the police academy and the creation of a protocol to address violence and the risk of femicide, among others.

26. Lastly, the representative of Uruguay said that the United Nations Joint Global Programme provided an opportunity to draw on shared international standards to guarantee quality care for women who were victims of gender-based violence. She underlined the measures contained in the 2016-2019 Action Plan for a life free of violence with an intergenerational focus and the departmental efforts made to territorialize and decentralize national policies for eliminating violence against women.

Report by the working group on the regional fund in support of women's and feminist organizations and movements (agenda item 5)

27. The report was presented by Marcela Eternod, Executive Secretary and Acting President of the National Women's Institute (INMUJERES) of Mexico, who recalled the mandate set out in the agreements adopted at the sessions of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean in Santo Domingo in 2013 and in Montevideo in 2016 to create a fund in support of civil society organizations. She also highlighted the milestones in the establishment of the regional fund in support of women's and feminist organizations and movements and underscored its importance as a tool for involving civil society and feminist and women's organizations in the implementation of the

Sustainable Development Goals. The Fund was the appropriate mechanism for strengthening regional projects and networks for action on a continental scale. She stressed that contributions to the Fund were voluntary and that its establishment did not imply any financial commitment on the part of the countries attending the meeting.

28. The representatives of Colombia, El Salvador, Mexico, Paraguay and Peru said that the report of the working group could serve as a valuable tool for reaching a large number of donors and stressed the need to refine some of the legal aspects concerning the administration of the Fund and its governance and accountability mechanisms.

29. The creation of the Regional Fund in support of Women's and Feminist Organizations and Movements was endorsed by acclamation, following which a representative of the Mexican women's and feminist movement delivered a statement. In the final discussion, reference was made to the need to frame the projects financed by the Fund within the key thematic areas of the Montevideo Strategy and the goals of the 2030 Agenda. It was noted that the Fund would be administered by an Executive Committee comprised of a Board of Directors and a secretariat. The procedures for applications for funding and the political leadership of the Fund were also discussed. Ecuador, Panama and, ad referendum, Argentina and Antigua and Barbuda expressed interest in joining the Board of Directors as the first members for the current period. Those nominations, as well as those put forward by women's and feminist organizations, would be considered at the fifty-eighth meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Preparations for the fourteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean (Santiago, 2019) (agenda item 6)

30. In fulfilment of the request set forth in agreement 14 of the fifty-sixth meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, the secretariat presented a road map for the preparatory process for the fourteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, to be held in 2019 in Santiago.

31. In the statements that followed, delegations highlighted various issues of interest for the next session of the Regional Conference on Women. The representative of Chile acknowledged the work of civil society organizations, who provided fundamental support for government action and advancing public policies. She reiterated the invitation to attend the fourteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, to be held from 4 to 8 November 2019 in Santiago. The representative of Colombia suggested that at the upcoming session space could be allocated for the presentation of related national reports, which the secretariat could then use as input for a regional report. The representative of Mexico welcomed the clear road map that had been proposed and said that it was appropriate to address issues such as the care economy at the next session of the Conference. She also reaffirmed the need to encourage countries to present their reports on the implementation of the Montevideo Strategy. The representative of Cuba underlined the importance of each country's individual commitment to implementing initiatives on women's economic autonomy; reports on such initiatives could be presented at the next Conference. The representative of Antigua and Barbuda underscored the vulnerability of Caribbean countries to extreme weather events and requested that the impact of extreme climate events on women, young women and girls should be addressed at the next session of the Conference.

Discussion on women's autonomy in changing economic scenarios in the framework of preparations for the fourteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean (Santiago, 2019) (agenda item 7)

32. The debate was introduced by Mario Cimoli, Deputy Executive Secretary of ECLAC, and Carolina Trivelli, economist and senior researcher at the Institute of Peruvian Studies.

33. The Deputy Executive Secretary of ECLAC pointed to some of the characteristics of the complex economic environment that the countries of the region were currently facing as a result of various technological changes that affected the labour market, value chains and production processes. He highlighted the debate on the capacity of countries and regional blocs to capitalize on new digital technologies, artificial intelligence, robotization and automation of production processes in sectors with a high percentage of women. He also said that it was necessary to consider the risks and opportunities that those processes would present for women's participation, employment and wages. Lastly, he stated that training in digital development was an opportunity and a challenge for the region, especially from a gender perspective, because although there were many such courses on offer, there was low demand and marked gender biases persisted.

34. The senior researcher at the Institute of Peruvian Studies highlighted the potential that financial inclusion instruments had for women's economic autonomy, as they helped to reduce women's vulnerability and dependency and enabled them to take advantage of economic opportunities, build up production and non-production assets and make decisions with regard to their personal finances. She spoke of the obstacles to financial inclusion that women commonly faced; such obstacles were often related to demand (low financial literacy, time and mobility restrictions, lack of access to information and networks, cultural and gender norms and limited education, employment and entrepreneurship opportunities) and supply (legal barriers, weak financial structure, gender biases in the practices of financial institutions and criteria for granting loans, and financial products that lacked a gender-sensitive market and service strategy). Lastly, she emphasized the importance of furthering the provision of disaggregated information on financial inclusion by sex, the need to incorporate targets for closing gaps in financial inclusion in national goals and the importance of developing savings mechanisms and policies to improve women's access to financial products and services on the whole.

35. Statements were delivered by Carolina Cuevas, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Women's Affairs and Gender Equity of Chile; Ana Lorena Flores, Technical Director, National Institute of Women (INAMU) of Costa Rica; Dora Coc, Director of Promotion and Participation of Women of the Presidential Secretariat for Women of Guatemala; and Beate Stirø, Ambassador of Norway in Chile.

36. The Undersecretary of the Ministry of Women's Affairs and Gender Equity of Chile said that the Government of Chile had met with representatives from all the financial sector unions to open dialogue on the financial inclusion of women and that the *Agenda Mujer*, which included a pillar on women and economic growth, reaffirmed the Government's commitment to gender equality. She spoke of the participation gaps, wage gaps and horizontal and vertical segregation affecting women in the country. Some of the measures adopted by the Government of Chile in the area of gender equality included implementing policies on shared responsibility, reforming laws that restricted women's access to the labour market, rewarding and recognizing women in the mining industry, bridging the gap between labour supply and demand to enhance employability, providing training in job skills or in business plan development, projects to facilitate teleworking and initiatives for mainstreaming gender in the production of statistics.

37. The Technical Director of the National Institute of Women (INAMU) of Costa Rica highlighted the Montevideo Strategy as one of the instruments that had made the most important contributions in the area of public policy aimed at enhancing women's autonomy. She said that the vicious cycle between lack of income and lack of time that affected the poorest women must be broken. Some of the issues that persisted in Costa Rica were the low increase in the female participation rate in recent years, structural problems stemming from the lack of public care services and barriers to access linked to women's age, level of education and place of residence. She further stressed the importance of gaining better understanding of the aspects of the care economy and its impact on women.

38. In her statement, the Director of Promotion and Participation of Women of the Presidential Secretariat for Women of Guatemala highlighted women's many contributions to the economy and the positive correlation between gender equality and economic growth. Some of the main challenges Guatemalan women faced were precarious labour market participation and significant wage gaps, which were compounded by the country's economic situation. She said that it was necessary to extend the scope of the macroeconomic stability goals that were being set in several countries to include goals related to growth and the creation of decent and good quality employment. That would require a policy shift with regard to public expenditure and revenue, as well as coordination among all bodies responsible for promoting production activities.

39. In the final statement, the Ambassador of Norway in Chile spoke of the situation regarding women's labour market participation in her country and their fundamental contribution to the growth of the economy. She highlighted the contribution of feminist and women's movements to the institutional policy of her country, in particular, in the implementation of a policy of quality education for all; the establishment of gender quota laws, which had had a positive impact on women's political participation; and the adoption of measures to improve work-life balance, which included the granting of parental leave, the recognition of the right to care for both women and men and opportunities for teleworking and flexible working hours.

40. In the discussion that followed, country representatives expressed appreciation for the presentation on the experience of Norway, which served as a model and reflected a long-term vision and an innovative approach to women's economic autonomy.

41. In the second round of the discussion, focusing on the Caribbean perspective, statements were delivered by Judith Karijodrono, Head of the Bureau of Gender Affairs of the Ministry of Home Affairs of Suriname; Janey Joseph, Director of Gender Relations of the Ministry of Education, Innovation, Gender Relations and Sustainable Development of Saint Lucia; and Samantha Marshall, Minister of Social Transformation and Human Resource Development of Antigua and Barbuda.

42. The Head of the Bureau of Gender Affairs of the Ministry of Home Affairs of Suriname underlined the role that institutions such as the Bureau of Gender Affairs, the Bureau for Women and Children of the Ministry of Justice and Police and the Institute for Women, Gender and Development Studies played in promoting gender equality in her country. She spoke of the consecutive gender plans implemented in the country over the periods 2000-2005 and 2006-2010, and said that another plan was being prepared and would be in effect until 2022. Lastly, she highlighted the progress made in adopting meaningful legislation on gender equality.

43. The Director of Gender Relations of the Ministry of Education, Innovation, Gender Relations and Sustainable Development of Saint Lucia spoke of some aspects of the situation of women in that country. She drew attention to the problems of unemployment and low participation rates among women, as well

as the recent development of new forms of employment —like the networks of rural women producers— that allowed women to balance paid and unpaid work and earn income from home; however, rural women still lacked sufficient knowledge in business administration to develop their activity.

44. The Minister of Social Transformation and Human Resource Development of Antigua and Barbuda spoke of the impact of extreme weather events on unemployment among women in her country and of the need to mainstream gender in policies for tackling climate change and developing sustainable economies. She also noted that despite budgetary constraints, the Government of Antigua and Barbuda was committed to the mandates outlined in the Montevideo Strategy, as well as the key issues of the Regional Gender Agenda.

45. In the statements by the countries, the participation of the Caribbean was welcomed and there was consensus on the importance of examining the relationship between gender and extreme weather events.

46. The third round of the discussion focused on the views of women parliamentarians, with the participation of Marcela Sabat, Deputy in the Chamber of Deputies of Chile and Norma Cristina Cornejo Amaya, Deputy in the Legislative Assembly of El Salvador.

47. The Deputy in the Chamber of Deputies of Chile highlighted the importance of the representation of women in parliaments, which helped to reduce poverty gaps. She cited the effect of quota laws in increasing the number of women in Parliament of Chile, which rose to 23% in both the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate. Among the remaining obstacles to greater gender equality in Chile, was the wage gap, which amounted to 30% in the country; the promotion of shared responsibility to ease the burden of women's unpaid work, and the need to mainstream gender in draft bills debated in Parliament by strengthening the Commission on Women and Gender Equity of the Chamber of Deputies of Chile.

48. The Deputy in the Legislative Assembly of El Salvador, who was member of the Board of Directors and Vice-President for Central America of the Parliamentary Network for Gender Equality of ParlAmericas, spoke of the importance of expanding the discussion on women's autonomy to include issues such as violence against women, which was a human rights violation whose costs as a percentage of GDP it was necessary to calculate. It was also vital to encourage investment in gender equality in a complex economic context which affected women in the informal sector most, and to promote gender-responsive budgeting practices given the fact that austerity policies led to significant cuts in a number of areas of the social budget. Lastly, she stressed the need to ensure that resource allocations were sufficient to address the problems of the women most affected in the region and that those allocations were seen as effective tools for good governance and accountability with respect to gender inequalities.

49. In the statements that followed, the representatives of Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Mexico, Montserrat, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay referred to the problems and proposals identified by countries regarding the economic autonomy of women. The problems identified included changes in production and trade patterns, which were affecting not only the types of work in which women participated but also social security systems. Among the proposals, reference was made to the importance of coordinating economic and financial inclusion policies with cultural change policies, and to the importance of aligning care systems with labour market measures to reduce wage gaps. Speakers highlighted the need to frame the discussion on women's economic empowerment within a comprehensive rights-based approach and to implement programmes that addressed women's contribution in the production sphere and the reproductive sphere alike, and, in turn, took into account the contribution of the feminist economy, the principle of shared responsibility for care and the development of programmes that spurred a paradigm shift in prevailing notions of masculinity. Emphasis was also

placed on the need to integrate issues related to the care economy into the discussions at the fourteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, together with specific issues such as the production of statistics with a gender perspective, gender-sensitive budgets, the feminization of poverty and the design of financial, budgetary and fiscal policies that seek to guarantee women's rights in the region.

Other matters (agenda item 8)

50. No other matters were discussed.

Adoption of agreements (agenda item 9)

51. The representatives adopted the agreements contained in annex 1 of this report.

Closing session

52. At the closing session, statements were made by Emilio Arcia Gil, Minister Counsellor, Embassy of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in Chile; Mariella Mazzotti, Director of the National Women's Institute (INMUJERES) of Uruguay; and Mario Cimoli, Deputy Executive Secretary a.i. of ECLAC.

53. The Minister Counsellor of the Embassy of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in Chile thanked ECLAC and the Government of Chile for organizing the meeting of the Presiding Officers, as well as for the services and facilities provided to ensure its success.

54. The Director of the National Women's Institute (INMUJERES) of Uruguay echoed the gratitude expressed by the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and also thanked the participants for their participation and effort, welcoming in particular the presence of the Caribbean countries at the meeting. She recalled that many women in government posts had started out in social movements and, in that regard, the establishment of the Regional Fund to Support Women's and Feminist Organizations and Movements was an extremely important achievement. She also reiterated the value of the meeting in deepening substantive discussion on economic autonomy, decision-making autonomy and physical autonomy.

55. The Deputy Executive Secretary of ECLAC thanked the participants of the meeting for their work and reaffirmed the role that ECLAC would play in the fulfilment of the agreements adopted. He also thanked the ECLAC technical secretariat, the Chair of the fifty-seventh meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean and the staff of the Division for Gender Affairs of ECLAC.

Annex 1

AGREEMENTS

At their fifty-seventh meeting, the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean agreed to:

1. *Commend* the efforts made by the countries of the region to apply the Montevideo Strategy for the Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030 and its contribution as a tool for fostering synergies among sustainable development plans, gender equality policies and budgets;

2. *Thank* the secretariat for its report on the activities carried out since the fifty-sixth meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Havana on 5 and 6 October 2017, and for the technical and methodological support provided to the governments of the region, as well as its innovative vision for advancing women's autonomy in Latin America and the Caribbean;

3. *Request* the secretariat to promote technical assistance to the countries of the region, with particular attention to Caribbean countries, on building the capacities of gender focal points to design and implement gender equality policies and to mainstream gender equality into national development plans through multi-stakeholder participatory processes;

4. *Also request* the secretariat to promote the strengthening of national statistical systems for the production of information in order to build and further develop gender indicators with an intercultural perspective and to make all groups of women and girls statistically visible, taking their diversity into account;

5. *Request* the Division for Gender Affairs of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, through the Global Centre of Excellence in Gender Statistics, to provide technical assistance to the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean in the production and strengthening of gender statistics necessary for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular by promoting the conduct of time-use surveys and other statistical projects included in the Montevideo Strategy, in line with the work of the Statistical Conference of the Americas;

6. *Thank* the Governments of Guatemala, Panama, Peru and Uruguay for their presentations on the United Nations Joint Global Programme on Essential Services for Women and Girls Subject to Violence, request that they share the progress presented and commend the exchange of experiences between countries of the region on various initiatives that take a comprehensive approach to ending all forms of discrimination and violence against women;

7. *Reaffirm* the need to establish shared international standards on care, prevention, protection, access to justice and reparation for women, children and adolescents who are victims of gender violence and underscore the importance of comprehensive engagement, inter-agency coordination and localization of initiatives;

8. *Reiterate* its rejection of the resurgence in discriminatory and violent patriarchal practices, discourses and cultural patterns based in the culture of privilege that restrict the full exercise of women's rights;

9. *Continue and further* its efforts to successfully mainstream the gender perspective into the discussions and agreements of the subsidiary bodies of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and in intergovernmental meetings to ensure that the promotion of women's autonomy is reflected in the work of the Commission;

10. *Work to ensure* that the follow-up to the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development and to the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030 complement each other, so that the two instruments are mutually reinforcing;

11. *Welcome* the creation of the Regional Fund in support of Women's and Feminist Organizations and Movements, and the adoption of the document¹ which sets forth its objectives, structure and resource allocation procedures and establishes the profile of participating organizations;

12. *Thank* the Government of Mexico for its efficient coordination and preparation of the document adopted at this meeting, as well as the countries that participated in the working group on the regional fund in support of women's and feminist organizations and movements, and welcome the incorporation of Paraguay in that group;

13. *Entrust* the working group on the regional fund in support of women's and feminist organizations and movements with the task of defining the legal and operational aspects, rules of procedure and accountability mechanisms, as well as the requirements for the signing of an agreement with an administrative body;

14. *Take note* of the incorporation of Ecuador and Panama and, ad referendum, of Antigua and Barbuda and Argentina, as the first members of the Board of Directors of the regional fund in support of women's and feminist organizations and movements for this period and consider these nominations, as well as those to be put forward by civil society organizations, at the fifty-eighth meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean;

15. *Welcome* the report by the representative of Chile on the preparations for the fourteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, to be held in Chile from 4 to 8 November 2019;

16. *Adopt* the road map for the preparatory process for the fourteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean and participate actively in the three subregional preparatory meetings to be held between May and July 2019 at the headquarters of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean in Santiago and at the subregional headquarters of the Commission in Mexico and Port of Spain, respectively;

¹ National Women's Institute (INMUJERES) of Mexico, "Regional fund in support of women's and feminist organizations and movements: Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean", 2018.

17. *Express thanks* for the presentations given during the discussion on women's autonomy in changing economic scenarios as input in preparation for the fourteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, and for the participation by the countries and their contribution to the dialogue;

18. *Include* among the themes to be discussed at the fourteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, the contributions of the feminist economy in bringing to light the interdependence between production and social reproduction processes, the care economy, the need to further gender-sensitive financial, fiscal and trade policies, the impacts of climate change on gender equality and the linkages between women's decision-making autonomy, economic autonomy and physical autonomy;

19. *Also include* among the themes to be discussed at the fourteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as in the respective position document, the particularities of the Caribbean subregion, such as the effects of climate change and extreme weather events on the economic autonomy of women, and consider including in the organization of work a round table to discuss this and other issues of interest to the subregion;

20. *Request* the secretariat to prepare a guide for the drafting of voluntary reports on progress in the application of the Montevideo Strategy for the Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030, and urge the countries to deliver voluntary reports on their progress at the fifty-eighth meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean;

21. *Emphasize* the contribution that voluntary national reports will make to the discussions on the progress and challenges in the implementation of the Montevideo Strategy at the fourteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean;

22. *Hold* the fifty-eighth meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean on 22 and 23 January 2019 at ECLAC headquarters in Santiago;

23. *Thank* the Economic Commission of Latin America and the Caribbean for organizing the fifty-seventh meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean and the Government of Chile for its hospitality.

Annex 2

**LISTA DE PARTICIPANTES
LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

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United Nations bodies**

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Fondo de Población de las Naciones Unidas (UNFPA)/United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

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- Mariella Mazzotti, Directora, Instituto Nacional de las Mujeres (INMUJERES), Uruguay, y Presidenta de la Mesa Directiva de la Conferencia Regional sobre la Mujer de América Latina y el Caribe
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