



# PROPOSAL OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS TO THE CSW60\*

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56 representatives from regional and sub-regional organizations, networks and articulations, gathered in the framework of the Regional Consultation of the Civil Society on the Commission on the Status of Women-CSW60), organized by the Committee of NGOs on CSW from Latin America and the Caribbean on January 25th, 2016, prior to 53rd meeting of the Presiding Officer of the Regional Conference on Women, elaborated the following considerations and recommendations.

First, we celebrate that the last information on the organization of the session provided by the Bureau Chair Ambassador Patriota to NGOs on January 19th includes in different activities the participation of civil society organizations. However, we want to point out two key points we expect to be considered: 1) that oral presentations by civil society are included at the end of each day in the Debate session and are not delayed for the last day; 2) that the zero draft of the agreed conclusions is timely distributed to civil society

organizations and that negotiations are carried out during the CWS and not prior to it as it occurred last year.

Regarding the priority topic: **“Empowering of women and sustainable development”** we consider the 2030 Agenda of Development approved by governments on September 2015 is the result of long process of consensus among States to achieve sustainable development, in a human rights and gender equality perspective. The position of the region, expressed in the regional consensus of the three Conferences on Women (Quito, Brasilia, Santo Domingo) and the consensus of the First Regional Conference on the Population and Development (Montevideo 2013) and its operational guide, approved in Mexico (2015) is the basis on which the fulfillment of the Agenda 2030 should be supported, re-taking the commitments of the Beijing Conference.

The regional consensus on women and population and development must be the road map to accelerate the

\* This Document was presented to the Ministries from the region in the Preparatory Session for CSW60 in ECLAC the 27 January, when they adopted the Political Declaration.

achieved advances and double the efforts for the accomplishment of the commitments still pending.

These commitments are based on a human rights approach—universal, comprehensive, indivisible and disgregressive—which requires a strong commitment and obligation of the State as institution guaranteeing the rights. Therefore, **it is essential that governments of the region sign and ratify all human rights treaties, urgently adopt legislation that ensures their implementation and the necessary budget and political will for their application**. Driving a regional fund for gender equality in the framework of the official development assistance and the South South Cooperation.

Likewise, it is vital to carry out all efforts needed for the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, particularly, vulnerable women: girls, adolescents, young, elderly, rural, indigenous, Afro descendant, migrant, disabled, women living with HIV, sexual workers, women in situation of prostitution, women deprived from their freedom and institutionalized and transgender women with different gender identities and sexual options, to ensure greater inclusion in all spheres of social, economic, cultural and political life. Moreover, we urge the adoption **of measures to eliminate persisting harmful practices in the region as childhood marriage, forced infant pregnancy, forced sterilization, female genital mutilation and other practices based on cultural and religious norms which violate women's human rights**. In this regard, it is key **to recognize the secularism of the State as a condition to strengthen democracy and development** in our nations.

## Political empowerment

- Despite the advances in the region, guaranteeing the equal participation of women in all spheres of decision-making is still a pending debt. The adoption of measures of affirmative action is a basic requirement to achieve development, substantive equality and full enjoyment of citizenship.
- The challenge of **eliminating all obstacles limiting the equal access of women to decision making spaces in all powers, levels and sectors, including political parties**,

**the judicial system, trade unions, private sector entities, the media** with special emphasis on political harassment and violence that has acquired predominance in the region.

- Also, **improving access and permanence in schools for women, especially girls, adolescents and young** to ensure them equal conditions that guarantee their full participation in all spheres of life.
- It is also necessary to **strengthen the governmental mechanisms for the advancement of women and achieve a substantive participation by the civil society, especially the organizations of women and feminists, in planning, formulating budgets, implementing and monitoring policies, plans, and programs, through the allocation of the necessary funds to really impact women's lives**.
- Ensuring the participation of women in peace building and pos-agreement contexts is key to achieve equality according to resolution 1325 and other related.
- Guaranteeing areas of protection and guarantee of rights which are essential for women right's defenders and social communicators.
- Women's empowerment will not be possible if all the dimensions of their autonomy are taken into account, **the political in decision-making, the physical on the control of their own bodies and the economical for the creation of income and access to resources**, vital requirements for the full enjoyment of citizenship, equality of opportunities and social justice.

## Economic empowerment

- In a **context of crisis and deceleration of the region, the Sustainable Development Goals may become an opportunity as the propose equality and sustainability in the core of attention and policies, in view of the trend to apply regressive policies that prevent the achievement of equality and the full enjoyment of rights**.

- **The elimination of all forms of poverty and inequality in our region is a main challenge to achieve development,** therefore it is key to recognize the link between the multiple inequalities women face: gender, ethnicity, class and others.
- Policies to fight poverty must be interlinked with other economic policies: investment, trade, debt and taxes in other forms that foster sustained growth.
- **Measures to ensure the rights of women to access and use of economic resources must be promoted and also implementing and promoting partnership** as a mechanism for the access to those rights.
- **It is fundamental recognizing the work, input, knowledge and practices of indigenous, rural, Afro-descendant and other women in the sustainable use of natural resources, the right to land and territory, the self-determination in view of extractionists models.** In view of a climate crisis affecting the live of women, especially indigenous, because they loose knowledge on natural resources, States must go on demanding and protecting the accomplishment of the assumed commitments to increase the greenhouse effect and ensure the preservation of life. In this regard, we must highlight the importance of SIDS/Samoa PATHWAY ratifies by Caribbean / CARICOM countries.
- **Advancing in the acknowledgement of care as a right for all and a three party responsibility between the families, society and the State** through the provision of public services and the allocation of funds for social infrastructure. Developing surveys on time use regularly to measure the unpaid work done by women is key.
- Accelerating **the inclusion of women in quality jobs**, with policies of affirmative action to train and other services in the structured and non-structured sector of economy, eliminating barriers.
- **Promoting the application of ILO Conventions (100, 111 and 112) on equal payment, discrimination and employment policies; and aligning the rights of domestic workers with general legislation on employment (169).**

- Ensuring the incorporation of cross-cutting and inter-cultural approaches for addressing inequalities, including ethnicity and social, political and economic inclusion, obtaining resources through labeled budgets and the review of tax policies to ensure tax justice that contributes to redistributing economic resources and gender equality.

#### **Eradicating violence against women and girls:**

- **For eliminating / eradicating violence against women and girls, the governments of the region must sign/ratify the Belem do Para Convention and adjust their legislation and legal frame to consider all forms of violence against women and girls in all spheres of their lives.**
- Eliminating violence suffered by the diversity of women and girls, specially vulnerable women, including forced sterilization, and ensuring autonomous decisions on sexuality and reproduction. HIV/AIDS is one of the causes and effects of violence, and prevention and care must be promoted in both cases.
- We acknowledge the increase in the claims for cases of violence, but this does not go along with an adequate care or follow-up. Therefore, countries must ensure comprehensive care, follow up and company for women suffering from violence to provide them with protection, ensure them access to justice, free legal counseling, respecting their language and ensuring all means and forms of communication between women and girls and judicial officials.
- The eradication of violence from indigenous women's lives requires understanding the indivisibility and complementary character of their individual and collective rights, included in UN and regional instruments. These instruments must be taking into account included the ones referring to land, territory, water and natural goods, which will allow them to access economic development, education and health.
- Prevention of violence must be strengthened by promoting cultural changes. Eliminating from the media images and messages sexist and discriminatory that

naturalize and/or justify violence against women and developing prevention campaigns

- The incorporation in formal and informal education curricula of content and socio-cultural roots of violence against the diversity of women for peace and security building, the dissemination of positive images of women and the elimination of gender stereotypes, as a way of denaturalizing gender-based violence and prevention of femicides.
- Femicide is the most serious expression of gender-based violence, the states must include recognize it as a crime in their legislation, modifying legal frameworks and penal codes, ensuring punishment for aggressors. It is vital that adequate care and follow up of violent episodes faced by women and girls prevent femicides. Protecting the children of murdered women, ensuring their rights and that they do not co-live with the aggressor or the family of the aggressor.
- Adopting measures to classify, fight and punish crimes related to human trafficking for sexual, labor and other exploitations, expressing the political will by ratifying international treaties and conventions, adjusting their legal framework to break networks and develop measures for rehabilitation of survivors in order to have them reinsert in society.
- In order to achieve these measures and for them to be effective, governments must express their political will in sufficient and adequate funds. It should also be promoted the official aid for development by developed countries.
- **Regarding health**
  - **The right to health must be ensured for all women and girls**, especially indigenous, Afro-descendant and other vulnerable that face the worst health conditions and the greatest difficulties for accessing services.
  - To achieve autonomy and equality and sustainable development, it is key to respect and guarantee sexual

and productive rights, as countries assumed to do in Montevideo in 2013 and they were included in the operational guide in Mexico in 2015. Women and girls in all their diversity must have universal access to sexual and reproductive health services, eliminating all persisting discrimination, as the one affecting girls, adolescents and young women, women with disabilities, migrant, rural transgender, sexual workers, women in situation of prostitution, women living with HIV, indigenous and Afro-descendent.

- Access to safe abortion in cases allowed by the legislation requires the existence of health services for their attention. In countries with restrictive legislation, countries must be urged to review and modify it and also norms and practices that prevent, ban and/or criminalize the right to abortion which limits the autonomy of women and their right to decide, to health and to life.
- The respect for the decision on sexuality and reproduction of girls, adolescents and women, especially vulnerable, is a requirement for women's autonomy and the capacity to freely decide without coercion and violence.
- Ensuring accessibility to drugs and essential vaccines, using the flexibilization clause of the Agreement on the Right of Intellectual Property for public health purposes so all people can access drugs and vaccines.
- Ensuring the access to comprehensive sexuality education at all levels of education, as Ministers of Health and Education from the entire region agreed in Mexico in 2008. This education is key for eliminating gender stereotypes, promoting equality between women and men and value and respect for diversity, sexual infant abuse and the prevention of undesired pregnancies.
- Strengthening measures to decrease the infant mortality rate, the mortality rate of five-year-old children and maternal mortality rate is a pending debt in many countries of the region which must be immediately revert.