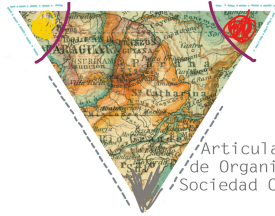


mi CUERPO  
mi TERRITORIO



Articulación Regional  
de Organizaciones de la  
Sociedad Civil Cairo+20

## **THE TIME IS NOW**

### **Delegates of the ECLAC**

### **First Conference on Population and Development:**

The more than fifty networks, national and international coalitions with presence in our region, campaigns and organizations aligned as movements for almost two years in the Alliance of Civil Society Organizations from Latin America and the Caribbean from different countries, cultures, races, ethnicities, social classes, ages and sexualities, are present in Montevideo. We are here, in this conference, because we want the agenda we agreed to as societies for the 20 years of the Cairo process and for development beyond 2014 and 2015, and also to defend an environment in the region where all people can live in freedom, equality and solidarity. A region that ensures the effective enjoyment of human rights and A WORLD where we can realize those rights.

In these few minutes we have to address to you, how can we choose and prioritize the many issues that concern? What is more important: women trafficked or child labor hours? What is more important: fear of women living in areas of armed conflict and militarism or migrant women working schedules without rights? Transgender women or sex workers? With a single word can we express discrimination and exclusion? How can we choose the main themes that represent the diversity of faces, races, ethnicities, histories and struggles of so many millions of people in Latin American and Caribbean?

The Conference on Population and Development held in 1994 was a milestone and its agreements established relations between population dynamics, sustainability of the planet and people's rights; especially sexual rights and reproductive rights of women and youth. The states expressed their commitment and civil society has worked very hard to realize that agenda. Twenty years later, we can say that there has been progress of which we have contributed to and actively participated in that context we applaud that:

Most of our countries have legislation to prevent, punish and eradicate gender-based violence. More and more women have access to tools that allow them to navigate their lives, actively participate in politics and society, realizing financial independence and professional achievements, carrying out and planning their maternity so that it does not become a burden. There has been progress in terms of regulation and technology, which has led to advancements in sexual and reproductive health, including HIV prevention and care.

ADDITIONALLY, there are significant cultural changes which have contributed greatly to the participation of feminists organizations and social movements which has resulted in the generation of information, facilitating debates and demands on issues relating to sexual rights and reproductive rights, such as the decriminalization of abortion or comprehensive sexuality education from an early age.

However, these advances occur in the context of structural inequalities that prevent the full enjoyment of rights of millions of people and threaten the sustainability for the future generations.

In our region, there are still unjustified gaps that are result in the:

1. Persistent maternal morbidity and mortality.
2. Precariousness of public health services.
3. Incidence of HIV / AIDS among women of reproductive age.
4. Discrimination, exclusion and invisibility ensurded by Afrodescendent women, indigenous people, migrants, rural residents and the LGBTI population.
5. Gender violence, femicide, abuse and sexual exploitation, merchandising of the body and trafficking.
6. Criminalization of sexuality, abortion, HIV transmission, transgender people and sex workers. It also leads to a constant threat to the sexual rights and reproductive rights of women, making their bodies disputed territories by churches, markets and bad politicians.
7. Lack of access to comprehensive sexuality education from childhood and limited access to information and sexual and reproductive health services dependent on age and marital status. High rates of unplanned pregnancies, especially among teenagers. Especially in light of the youth that are here at this conference, governments should be making concerted efforts to eliminate unsafe abortion and expand access to legal abortion for the realisation of desired motherhood. But instead, we have legal systems that mandate doctors to force young girls who were raped by fathers or stepfathers to carry their pregnancies to term, meanwhile attacking and criminalizing human rights activists and advocates.

There are States that flout their international commitments and openly violate women's rights. HOW CAN THIS BE PREVENTED? HOW DO WE WORK with State Actors who instead of defending the validity of the secular state and the myriad recommendations and calls for action emanating from these for a; capitulate to under pressure from conservative groups? HOW DO WE DENOUNCE THE IMPOSED agendas which are deeply harmful to freedom, equality and quality of life for all people?

It has been almost 20 years since 1994. THERE ARE KNOWN PROBLEMS and THERE ARE KNOWN SOLUTIONS. There is economic growth, stability of electoral processes and the RESOURCES are AVAILABLE to end inequality. THERE ARE NO EXCUSES FOR NOT DOING SO. Is that our

governments think that women DO NOT deserve it? Is this why the number illiterate people in our region stands at nearly 22 million ...

DELEGATES, we do not only PAY TAXES, we also control social and biological reproduction. We will NOT accept the excuse that parity is a pipe dream. Do our governments still think it is possible to maintain inclusive democracies yet you see us as second class citizens?

We advocate for that the agreed agenda and commitments and claim the full implementation of the Cairo Programme of Action. We also call for the incorporation of emerging issues and unresolved problems as well as strong financial commitments and strong accountability mechanisms with substantial civil society participation. We demand for our region; the implementation of sustainable development strategies, based on the equitable distribution of wealth and the equitable distribution of care work.

We demand an agenda that:

1. Guarantees sexual rights and reproductive rights as part and parcel of human rights, including those of adolescents and young people, without discrimination.
2. Ensures the removal of structural inequalities based on gender, race, ethnicity, age AND, OF COURSE, class.
3. Includes the decriminalization of abortion and timely access to legal, safe and free abortion services.
4. Promotes comprehensive sexuality education and sexual and reproductive health services for girls, teens and young children as well as access to comprehensive, youth friendly and integrated services regardless of age and marital status.
5. Strengthens democratic institutions from a gender, intercultural and intergenerational perspective.
6. Is based on the fulfilment of natural justice and international laws on human rights.
7. Promotes mechanisms for participation in all areas of policy and accountability of government commitments.
8. Ensures that appropriate systems are put in place to address the inequities of existing policies.
9. Provides sustainable and sufficient financial resources to address the unresolved problems and new challenges.
10. Extends the platform of countries in order to accomplish sexual rights and reproductive rights standards.
11. Includes measures to ensure the physical integrity of human rights activists and defenders.

12. Supports an agenda brought about by international cooperation that is in line with the full exercise of human rights, the empowerment of civil society and the strengthening of democracy.

YOU MUST create conditions for strengthening participation as a key element of the development model which we want for the next few decades. Development must be in balance with nature and focused on people with the goal of removing structural gaps, including gender inequality.

If equality is on the horizon in Latin America and the Caribbean, we must guarantee the presence of collective entities with resilience and autonomy to define their priorities and emancipatory projects of equality, social justice and democracy.

Delegates, we need plans, projects and policies that are fully IMPLEMENTED. We ask the Board to develop a proposal for an accountability mechanism and monitoring indicators for the fulfilment of the commitments made in this conference.

**We do not want you to wish us a good future.  
WE WANT THAT FUTURE TO START NOW.**

SIGNATURE:

**ALLIANCE OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS FROM LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

