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POSITION PAPER OF THE CIM BEFORE THE GENERATION EQUALITY FORUM

(Draft)

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action remains the most comprehensive global agenda for women and girls in all their diversity, in all spheres of life. After 25 years of implementation and looking towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) assumed by the Member States of the United Nations (UN), the national reports prepared by the States of the American region account for important progress in some areas, but also for necessary and urgent actions in each of the 12 Critical Areas of Concern of the Beijing Platform for Action.

Since the process of the Generation Equality Forum began in late 2019, the world has been transformed in the context of an unprecedented crisis that forced the postponement of the commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

COVID-19 has caused specific and differentiated impacts on women's lives, is deepening existing gender inequalities, both inside and outside the household, and presents an imminent risk of reversal of the rights already achieved.

In this global context, the process of the Generation Equality Forum offers key opportunities to understand the new reality, renew links, revitalize commitments, strengthen political will, deepen our approaches from an intersectional perspective, and mobilize the set of actors involved to achieve substantive equality, as well as to consolidate the progress made and continue to generate the changes visualized in Beijing.

The Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) of the Organization of American States (OAS), from its role and mandate as a hemispheric political forum for women's rights and gender equality, seeks to channel and unite the discourses of the entire region, allowing us to see ourselves collectively from the National Machineries for the Advancement of Women in the face of the Generation Equality Forum process, which will take place throughout 2021

In particular and based on its work on the subject, the CIM seeks to place the reality of COVID-19 in the lives of women in the discussions and to identify urgent and essential actions to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of the response and recovery.

Through the heads of the National Machineries and other Principal Delegates, responsible for the implementation of their national equality policies and plans, the CIM manifests the need for the American region, collectively from a Multilateral Regional Forum, to seek effective influence over the prioritized lines of work, which are strategic and considered as the main accelerators to achieve gender equality:

On gender-based violence: Given the impacts of confinement on all manifestations of violence against women and girls, which exacerbated violence and generated new patterns, reinforce the guarantees of the Belém do Para Convention for access to justice, assistance services and comprehensive reparation for victims. To this end, the prevention of violence against women and girls should be prioritized and measures aimed at eradicating violence should be strengthened through the elimination of stereotyped patterns of behavior and social and cultural practices based on concepts of inferiority and subordination. The visibility of specific manifestations of violence such as femicide/gender-based killing of women and girls, political violence, trafficking in women, child marriage and early union and violence against historically marginalized groups of women should be increased and addressed. To this end, the sustainability of the financial and human resources assigned to the response to gender-based violence must also be guaranteed, even in times of crisis

On economic justice and rights: Declare a global care emergency based on the deepening of inequality between men and women in the distribution of unpaid work as a result of COVID-19. Rethink care as a human right and the role of the State, families and the private sector in protecting and guaranteeing this right. Re-conceptualize work to make visible and value the care work carried out mainly by women, as well as the care economy that supports national and global economies. On this basis, strengthen the legal framework around economic rights and particularly the economic autonomy of women, closing the main gaps and making the State a guarantor of these rights. Likewise, it is necessary to advance towards social co-responsibility for care, particularly in the context of the pandemic and the intensification that it implies in care, promoting the exchange of good practices from those countries that have systems of co-responsibility for care and protecting the full participation of women in the labor market on equal terms

On bodily autonomy and sexual and reproductive health and rights: Make effective the Belém do Pará Convention and the recommendations of the MESECVI Committee of Experts, the Beijing Platform for Action and the Montevideo Strategy for the Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda. Punish and prevent all forms and expressions of sexual violence against women, girls and adolescents, guaranteeing that victims receive dignified treatment and access to justice without discrimination, eliminating impunity.

On feminist action for climate justice: Ensure gender mainstreaming in responses to the COVID-19 crisis to foster rural women's leadership and economic empowerment in changing the consumption paradigm based on new gender pacts that empower local small-scale producers, as a measure to strengthen food security and sovereignty and combat climate change. Ensure the gender perspective in policies, programs and determined actions at the national and regional levels on climate change, the environment, risk management, the preparation and mitigation of natural disasters and other emergency situations, particularly in combination with the current COVID-19 emergency in vulnerable regions such as the Caribbean coast.

On technology and innovation for gender equality: Recognize that digitization in the context of COVID-19 has fundamental gender implications and direct actions to close the gender digital divide, including training and skills development for women in the face of technological change, so that it does not expand inequality and the poverty of women during the pandemic and the subsequent recovery, and so that access to technology is increasingly universal. Strengthen the discussion of primary and secondary digital education, due to the impacts on quality, comprehensive training and investment of women's time. Strengthen the digital space in the search to enhance the rights and participation of women and girls, as well as make visible and minimize discrimination and violence against them in cyberspace.

On feminist movements and leadership: Guarantee parity in general terms and particularly in the context of Task Forces and other entities charged with responding to COVID-19, in the understanding that it is a measure of justice that touches on three dimensions: (i) equal participation of women and men (50/50) in decision-making positions in the public and private sectors, from the international to the local level; (ii) exercise of power under conditions of equality, that is, free from discrimination and violence based on gender and/or sex; and (iii) the incorporation of the agenda for women's rights and gender equality; being that the involvement of both men and women is an indispensable condition for achieving democratic parity. There is no democracy without women, and parity is a sine qua non for the full implementation of the Beijing Platform and the achievement of the SDGs. Likewise, promote plural and horizontal exchange between women's movements and strengthen the leadership of women who represent historically marginalized groups, in line with the work of the CIM and the Inter-American Task Force on Women's Leadership. Likewise, generate protection systems for women human rights defenders.

The work of the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) in the line of accelerators described above and the achievement of the strategic objectives set out in the 12 Critical Areas of Concern of the Beijing Platform for Action necessarily go through the strengthening of the National Machineryes for Women and their ability to effectively monitor the implementation of national legislation and public policy on women's rights, gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.