



REPÚBLICA DE PANAMÁ
— GOBIERNO NACIONAL —



OAS | CIM

Declaration of PANAMA

**“BUILDING BRIDGES FOR A NEW SOCIAL
AND ECONOMIC PACT LED BY WOMEN”**

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“BUILDING BRIDGES FOR A NEW SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PACT LED BY WOMEN”

(Approved at the fourth plenary session, held on May 26, 2022)
(version pending review by the Style Committee)

1 **Paraguay** will comply with the recommendations of this document as long as they do not conflict with its current internal regulations.

For the Republic of Paraguay, the interpretation of the terms: in its diversity, intersectionality, intersectional, full autonomy, autonomy, sister leadership, sexual and reproductive health, feminist organizations, sexual and reproductive health, and reproductive rights; they are subject to the national legislation of each State, considering that they do not have a universally agreed definition.

It is also recorded that the signed declaratory document does not establish any precedent position for Paraguay, nor will it be considered as an agreed text for future negotiations.

2 **Guatemala** reaffirms its commitment to international treaties -legitimately agreed upon and ratified in accordance with its internal legislation- regarding the protection and promotion of human rights, including the rights of all women and girls.

Improving the condition of women and girls is a priority for the Guatemalan government, as is combating discrimination and violence against women. Taking into account the foregoing, and despite the efforts made and the good faith shown in all the previous negotiations, as well as those held during this Assembly and in the General Committee, Guatemala expresses its deep concern about the language included in this Declaration, which incorporates concepts and terms that have not been agreed upon in any treaty. Due to the foregoing, Guatemala cannot join the consensus on this Declaration.

In accordance with the Political Constitution of the Republic of Guatemala and its internal legal system, the State of Guatemala declares that it promotes and defends and reaffirms all human rights, as well as the equality of all human beings, without any discrimination.

In this sense, Guatemala reserves the right to interpret the terms contained in this Declaration in accordance with the provisions of the Vienna Convention on Treaties, rejecting any interpretation contrary to the common and current meaning of the words or the creation of new terms not agreed upon. nor expressly contained in international treaties.

By not joining the consensus, Guatemala dissociates itself from those parts of this Declaration and the CIM Strategic Plan 2022-2026, which are incompatible and/or contravene current national legislation, also reserving the interpretation of the terms contemplated in these documents, including, but not limited to: intersectionality, intersectional approach, autonomy, full autonomy, diversity, women in all their diversity, sororal leadership, sororal, feminists, sexual and reproductive health, sexual and reproductive rights. It is also noted that the scope of this terminology applies only to this Declaration.

3 The **United States** promotes an equal opportunity approach that seeks to ensure that all women are afforded access to social protection systems, access to public services, economic opportunity, and sustainable infrastructure on the basis of non-discrimination. With respect to affirmative actions and temporary special measures, including quotas and parity laws, the United States' position is that each country must determine for itself whether they are appropriate, in light of domestic law and policy. The best way to improve the situation of women and girls is often through legal and policy reforms that end discrimination against women and promote equality of opportunity. The United States also understands that this declaration outlines political non-legally binding commitments and does not change the current state of conventional or customary law. The U.S. Government takes this occasion to reaffirm its strong commitment to preventing, punishing, and eradicating violence against women and, in particular, prosecuting its perpetrators.

THE PRINCIPAL AND ALTERNATE DELEGATES TO THE INTER-AMERICAN COMMISSION OF WOMEN OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES (CIM/OAS), meeting in Panama City, Republic of Panama, on May 25 and 26, 2022 on the occasion of the Thirty-ninth Assembly of Delegates of the CIM;

BEARING IN MIND:

The rights enshrined in international and regional human rights instruments and their universal, indivisible and interdependent nature;

The rights enshrined in international and regional instruments on gender equality and women's rights, mainly the Inter-American Conventions on the Granting of Civil and Political Rights to Women (1948, OAS), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979, UN, CEDAW), and the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women (1994, OAS, Belém Do Pará Convention), Equal Remuneration Convention (1951, ILO, C100) and Maternity Protection Convention (2000, ILO, C183), as well as the recommendations and general observations of the follow-up bodies to these instruments, as appropriate;

The commitments established in international and regional political instruments on gender equality and women's rights, mainly the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (1948), the Declaration and Programme of Action of the World Conference on Human Rights (Vienna, 1993), the Declaration and Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women (1995, Beijing), Resolution 1325 of the United Nations Security Council on Women, Peace and Security (2000), the Inter-American Program on the Promotion of Women's Human Rights and Gender Equity and Equality (2000, IAP), the Inter-American Democratic Charter (2001), the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2015, 2030 Agenda) and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Strategies and Commitments adopted by the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean; and

The commitments made in previous years through the Declarations of the Assembly of Delegates of the CIM, including to the Strengthening of the National Machineries for Women (Santiago, 2008), Women and Power (Mexico City, 2010), the Economic and Political Empowerment of Women (San José, 2012), the Economic Rights of Women (Lima, 2016) and the Political Rights of Women (Santo Domingo, 2019).

RECALLING ESPECIALLY:

That the CIM, since its foundation in 1928, has been the multilateral space par excellence for gender equality and the rights of all women, in which consensus is built to advance this agenda as the cornerstone on which the program of work of the Commission has been built;

The Inter-American Program on the Promotion of Women's Human Rights and Gender Equity and Equality (2000), adopted by the OAS General Assembly, gave the CIM a series of the mandates to:

- i. "Strengthen the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) as the principal forum for generating hemispheric policy to advance women's rights and gender equality, and provide it with technical, human, and financial resources, including through voluntary contributions, with which to promote the initiatives required to attain program objectives and follow up on this program" (Line of Action 1.7);
- ii. "Make international cooperation and horizontal cooperation among the member states one of the instruments for implementing this program" (General Objective 3);
- iii. "Strengthen relations and foster joint cooperation and coordination activities with other regional and international bodies and civil society organizations active in the Americas, with a view to guaranteeing policy effectiveness and optimal use of resources" (General Objective 4); and
- iv. "Undertake actions with civil society organizations to: a. Promote joint efforts with government agencies and civil society organizations to establish effective means of implementing, monitoring, and evaluating policies, programs, and projects designed to promote women's human rights and gender equality, and b. Study and analyze the status of observance of women's human rights in the various countries" (Line of Action 2.2.5);

The Declaration of Lima on Equality and Autonomy in the Exercise of Women's Economic Rights (2016), adopted by the XXXVII Assembly of Delegates of the CIM, consolidated a series of commitments and mandates around key issues: i) identification of gaps and persistent barriers and the design of measures to close them; ii) women's employment in conditions of equality and free from violence; iii) the economic and social value of unpaid work in the home, in particular care work and the promotion of co-responsibility; and iv) women's leadership in economic planning, resource allocation and policy formulation; and

The Declaration of Santo Domingo on Equality and Autonomy in the Exercise of Women's Political Rights for Strengthening Democracy (2019), adopted by the XXXVIII Assembly of

Delegates of the CIM, consolidated a series of commitments and mandates around key issues: i) parity; ii) women's leadership; iii) violence against women in political life; and iv) electoral governance with a gender perspective.

TAKING NOTE:

Of the adoption of Resolution AG/RES. 2976 (LI-O/21) "Promotion and protection of human rights" by the OAS General Assembly at its fifty-first regular session (October 2021), particularly chapter xii "Strengthening of the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) for the promotion of gender equity and equality and the rights of women", which:

1. urged the CIM to analyze "...the existing gaps, which have widened in the context of the health emergency caused by COVID-19, with a view to providing measures and/or strategies to ... advance towards equality, empowerment, and the full realization of the autonomy of all women, respecting and valuing the full diversity of women's situations and conditions"; and
2. requested the CIM to further strengthen "...gender mainstreaming through the identification of new sectors and working partnerships and the protection and strengthening of National Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women as guidelines for national equality policies"; and

Of the Report of the President (CIM/doc.06/22) and the Report of the Executive Secretariat of the CIM (CIM/doc.07/22) on the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2016-2021 of the CIM and the positioning and progress made in terms of strengthening and making visible the role of the CIM as a hemispheric political forum for women's rights and gender equality.

RECOGNIZING:

That gender equality and the empowerment of women in all their diversity are key to the effective exercise of their human rights and to the achievement of their full autonomy, their equal participation in decision making, and their role and contribution as active agents of democracy and development;

That from an intersectional approach, which includes the interconnection of multiple forms of discrimination, exclusion and inequality,⁴ there are still significant inequalities between different groups of women in the exercise of their rights, especially women in situations of vulnerability or belonging to historically discriminated groups;

⁴ The term intersectionality and its derivative intersectional, which are used throughout this Declaration, shall be understood as stated in this paragraph

That the COVID-19 pandemic has represented a profound social, economic and health transformation, and has exacerbated pre-existing inequality gaps, evidencing a differentiated gender impact and deepening socioeconomic and gender-based violence problems that require a comprehensive approach from the perspectives of human rights, gender equality and intersectionality, to ensure the elimination of persistent inequalities;⁵

That the CIM, since the beginning of the pandemic, expressed its concern over the absence of women in their diversity in decision-making spaces and confirmed that the increase in women in government positions, as a result of the application and implementation of parity laws and other special measures, has not necessarily implied that women in their diversity participate on an equal footing in relation to men in spaces free of violence;

That the CIM, also made visible, from the beginning of the pandemic, the differentiated impacts on women of the policies applied by States to confront the pandemic in terms of economic participation and labor force participation of women in their diversity, and of the division of gender roles in terms of the distribution of the burden of care;

That the COVID-19 pandemic also represents an opportunity in terms of making the existing gaps visible, the collapse of certainties and the need to forge new comprehensive arrangements to eliminate inequalities, as well as the opening of new opportunities for dialogue, articulation and alliance building;

That the persistence of, and increase in resistance and the structural difficulties that the agenda for gender equality encounters in social action, institutional and governance spaces, at the local, national and regional levels, constitute barriers to the enjoyment and exercise of the human rights of all women and girls;

The importance of the National Machinerys for the Advancement of Women to promote gender mainstreaming, equality, and equity;

That political and budget readjustments deeply impact and weaken public institutions dedicated to gender equity and their ability to expand strategies for equality and to position gender mainstreaming in public affairs at the national and subnational levels;

That the growing and strengthened voice of the diversity of organizations that promote

5 The **United States** does not agree with the elimination of “women and girls” from this paragraph. The specific mention of girls indicates a recognition that girls can face unique challenges that are not included in discussions of women. This includes, but is not limited to, reduced access to quality primary and secondary education and other opportunities compared to their male peers, as well as stigma and isolation due to menstruation, increased risk of complications and death related to early pregnancy, restricted access to healthcare services and information, including sexual and reproductive health care and information, and increased risks of specific forms of gender-based violence, including child, early and forced marriage as well as incest.

and defend gender equality and the rights of all women, included women's organizations and feminist organizations play a crucial role in the construction and advance of the transformative agenda for gender equality, with significant contributions imbued with commitment, innovation, and organizational creativity, and continue to demand a permanent dialogue with State institutions in their responsibility to guarantee rights; and

That the agenda for gender equality has also advanced thanks to the alliances between women and other groups that advocate for equality but persists as a particular issue for women and not as a universal need and demand that is the responsibility of all members of society for the good of humanity.

AWARE THAT:

Public policies to implement and strengthen the agenda for gender equality in the region require the strengthening of alliances and the comprehensive coordination of society at all sectors and levels;

The struggle for equality requires solidarity among women, in leadership positions, understanding this as sororal leadership and that implies: i) a political arrangement between all women, around common goals and concrete gender equality agendas to enhance their empowerment and impact in the world, and ii) an ethical responsibility of women in leadership positions;

A State that defends the rights of all women and is committed to gender equality is one that believes in inclusion, is open to the participation of citizen voices and thus strengthens its institutions with affirmative actions and-or temporary special measures, as appropriate, in order to promote gender equality for the good of humanity and its importance for the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, through the pillars of parity and equality of opportunity in governance, the restructuring of care, and the safety and protection of all women and girls in the search for their full wellbeing, the search for living well, and the universalization of their rights;

The CIM has included in its agenda of work, specific actions to facilitate the exchange of experiences and good practices of women leaders, representatives of indigenous peoples, Afro-descendants, as well as other cultural groups and regions of the world, in order to position a high-level multicultural dialogue in the region from a perspective of solidarity among women, understood as sorority, that allows the development of a State that defends the rights of all women and is committed to gender equality, that reinforces the legitimacy of the exercise of power by women in their diversity in all areas;

The CIM has made visible and promoted the significant advances in the region towards democracies with parity, fundamentally through legislative reforms on parity, understanding it as a matter of justice with three aspects: (i) opportunity for equal participation in decision-making positions in the public and private sector, from the international to the local level; (ii) the exercise of political and economic power on an equal footing—that is, free from gender-based discrimination and violence; and (iii) the incorporation in public policy of the agendas for women’s rights and gender equality transversally to regulatory frameworks and public policies at the internal level with an intersectional, intergenerational, and intercultural (and human rights) perspective, recalling that the equal participation of women is an essential element of democracy;

That the CIM has highlighted the importance of the economic autonomy of women, including in relation to the enjoyment of their human rights in pursuing their own economic development,) because the sustainable economic development of the countries of the region requires their incorporation into the economy, and that gaps persist in at least seven areas of particular importance to women: the care economy, the informal economy, the rural economy, paid domestic work, tourism, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MS-MEs) and technology, which still show significant gender gaps and have been particularly affected by the pandemic that have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic;

In the series of document on the global care emergency developed in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the CIM has positioned unpaid and paid care work - historically undertaken by women to sustain life and the basis for the social, economic, and political development of our countries - as a fundamental starting point for new arrangements;

That the structural transformation to achieve the economic autonomy of women in the region requires the configuration of a system of co-responsibility between the State, the private sector and households as a whole, translating into national care systems, accompanied by regulatory frameworks that advocate for equal working conditions, and access to quality health systems that prioritize the mental health of women; and

That from an understanding of care as a structural issue for the empowerment and autonomy of women, the CIM developed the Inter-American Model Law on Care as a tool that offers States, civil society organizations, businesses, and individuals a route to recognize, redistribute, regulate, and generate new ways of addressing care and unpaid domestic work consistent with the principle of social co-responsibility, as well as making visible and recognizing the historical contribution of women in this matter to which are added efforts such as the Global Alliance for Care, launched by Mexico with the support of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women).

DECLARE THEIR COMMITMENT TO:

In the construction of alliances and articulation for gender equality for the good of humanity and taking into account its importance for the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms:

1. Strengthen the CIM as a facilitator of spaces, meetings and dialogues with diverse organizations that promote and defend gender equality and women's rights including women's organizations and feminist organizations, recovering their voices and contributions to the construction and strengthening of a joint regional agenda for gender equality and the defense and promotion of the human rights of all women in their diversity and their sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights;
2. Build bridges to broaden and enrich political dialogue with and between the CIM Delegates, high-ranking authorities on gender and women's issues from other continents, and women defenders of women's rights and feminists from different generations, ethnic cultural backgrounds, and other diversities in the quest to establish a strategic space: i) for reflection to generate synergies, alliances and collaboration opportunities; ii) to identify and share experiences, good practices, lessons learned and concrete measures; and iii) to promote solidary accompaniment between women, understood as sororal accompaniment among women in the design and implementation of actions for the full exercise of women's rights and equality, particularly in a context of setbacks and uncertainty resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic;
3. Promote strategic alliances and multisectoral arrangements with other key actors, such as academia, the private sector and civil society organizations, among others, in order to position the agenda for gender equality from their different spheres of influence, reinforce the shared responsibility for this agenda, coordinate strategies and create transformative synergies;
4. Promote the actions, alliances and spaces necessary to build new arrangements for gender equality led by women in the social, cultural, economic and political spheres, which have as a starting point the recognition of the various leaderships of women and solidarity between them (sisterhood) as a cross-cutting political ethic;
5. Support the CIM in its efforts to build regional operational tools that allow States to identify existing gaps preventing women from fully exercising their rights,

recognizing systemic inequalities, cross-cutting diverse situations, and multiple forms of discrimination, in order to enhance the contribution and human talent of women in the political and productive economic world in conditions of equality and non-discrimination;

6. Establish the hierarchy at the highest level of the National Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women or other relevant bodies, for the effective fulfillment of their role as governing bodies and managers of policies on gender equality, human rights of women and strengthen them with sufficient human technical, political, administrative, and financial resources, as appropriate;
7. Encourage that gender equality mainstreaming processes permeate the entire structure of the State, as appropriate, through the creation and allocation of sufficient budget for the functioning of permanent government bodies for intersectoral and interinstitutional coordination, with a mandate, especially among the National Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women and other Government entities, providing them with human, technical and political resources, as well as a specific budget, and especially with the central units of planning and budgeting, to participate in the design and execution of development plans and public budgets, as appropriate, incorporating the gender perspective in national, subnational and local planning and budgeting; and
8. Continue strengthening the design of robust data collection, disaggregated and with a gender perspective, reporting instruments and the construction of specific indicators aligned with the SDGs, from an intersectional and life-course perspective, to facilitate the design and implementation of public policies with a gender perspective.

In the field of women's economic rights:

9. Promote the adoption of regulatory frameworks, legislation, and public policies that aim to address care with social co-responsibility, taking as a reference, among other tools, the *Inter-American Model Law on Care*, so that women can actively participate in the world of work and production;
10. Strengthen legal and regulatory frameworks to facilitate labor insertion and re-insertion and entrepreneurship for the full exercise of women's economic rights, including: i) initiatives to increase the participation of women-led businesses in public procurement processes; ii) regulations to facilitate women's access to fi-

nancial products, seed capital and support for entrepreneurship; iii) regulations related to increasing the labor reinsertion of women; and iv) legislation and initiatives that address protection for reasons of maternity and lactation, and the elimination of discrimination against all women on this basis, promote the conciliation of work and family life, allow for social co-responsibility, and promote reciprocity between men and women in care work and family obligations;

11. Promote measures to increase the participation of women in their diversity and gender parity in decision-making positions in the business sector;
12. Promote the adoption of legal and regulatory measures with a view to closing the wage and occupational gaps;
13. Protect access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, as an essential component of women's ability to participate freely and equally in economic life;
14. Strengthen legal and regulatory frameworks for financial inclusion that promote women's full access to financial products and services under equal conditions;
15. Foster intersectoral alliances to mobilize resources and design policies that take into account the particular needs of women in the design of financial services and products;
16. Strengthen financial education programs from a gender perspective, so that women have the necessary tools to make financial decisions and strengthen their financial capacities in order to improve their economic autonomy and social well-being, and promote the incorporation of the gender perspective in national strategies for financial inclusion and education; and
17. Strengthen legal and regulatory frameworks for digital inclusion, including: i) actions to close the digital gender gap and promote women's access to information technologies and communications; ii) actions to promote digital education and literacy for women; iii) regulations to encourage and promote women's entrepreneurship in STEM areas; and iv) actions aimed at increasing cybersecurity and reducing the risks and different types of violence faced by women in the digital ecosystem.

In the field of women's political rights:

18. Continue supporting the promotion of legislative reforms on parity in the executive, legislative, and judicial branches, and in the different levels of Government, and take all appropriate measures to eliminate the structural, institutional, and cultural barriers that prevent their access to positions of decision-making and exercise of power, and the equal participation of women in these positions;
19. Strengthen the participation of all women in political parties, with equality of opportunity, particularly in leadership and decision-making spaces; to promote their increased access to resources, including public electoral financing, and promote measures to eradicate all forms of political violence and harassment;
20. Where applicable, strengthen electoral governance from a gender perspective, particularly with regard to elections and to the administration of electoral justice from a gender perspective in the electoral sphere, and the articulation of spaces that serve to promote and exchange knowledge and good practices at the regional level; and
21. Promote measures, including budgetary measures, to enable women defenders of human rights, in particular political rights and organizations that defend the rights of all women, receive the support and protection of State institutions, including to strengthen their participation in public policy-making processes and their access to justice.

REQUEST THAT THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT OF THE CIM:

22. Support States in sharing successful practices to guarantee the exercise of all women's rights at the national level, and facilitate alliances between States for cooperation, including South-South and triangular cooperation in this regard;
23. Strengthen the leadership of young women and women in all their diversity, including those that have been historically excluded, adapting the contents to their specific contexts; promote regional and community networks of political women; and generate specific knowledge regarding women's leadership in the regional context, in the framework of peace and security, and also on the characteristics and potential of leadership with solidarity among women, understood as sororal leadership;
24. Strengthen work on the eradication of violence against women in politics, with the generation of knowledge and new tools to support political women, political

parties and States to repair, prevent, punish, address and eradicate this violence, including in digital contexts;

25. Strengthen work to promote universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as an essential component of advancing gender equality and women's empowerment with the generation of knowledge, dialogue, and capacity building;
26. Spur, foster and strengthen the inclusion of the economic needs and priorities of women in normative advancement at the national and hemispheric levels;
27. Continue and deepen its efforts to mobilize specific fund resources for CIM projects in the areas of the Strategic Plan 2022-2026, and also when requested by the Member States for the strengthening of National Machineries for Women;
28. Continue efforts to incorporate the gender perspective and deepen its coordination with other OAS organs and instances whose work is related to the achievement of the goals set forth in this Declaration and in the Strategic Plan 2022-2026;
29. Work with the Summits of the Americas Secretariat of the OAS to make visible and monitor the political representation of all women in the process and commitments of the Summits of the Americas;
30. Continue strengthening its collaborative relationships with the institutions and agencies of the Inter-American System, the United Nations System, organizations that promote and defend gender equality and the rights of all women, including women's and feminist organizations, other international and intergovernmental cooperation agencies, international financial institutions, academic and research institutions, and with the private sector, in the framework of the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2022-2026, with a view to promoting synergies and joint initiatives of interest to the Member States;
31. Encourage close collaboration between the CIM, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), especially in the preparation of the XV Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean (Argentina, November 2022) whose theme will be "The Care Society: Horizons for a sustainable recovery with gender equality";
32. Thank, on behalf of the Delegates to the CIM, the support of the European Union Program for Social Cohesion in Latin America (EuroSociAL+ and its implementing

partners) for the work in the region, hoping for requesting a continuation of the Program to continue supporting progress on public policies on gender and on women's rights through exchanges between both continents;

33. Deepen efforts to mainstream the gender perspective in all the organs and entities of the OAS, taking into account the commitment assumed by the States, through the IAP, with the international agenda for women's rights; and
34. Execute all the activities foreseen in this Declaration will be subject to the availability of financial resources in the program-budget of the Organization and other resources.



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