



Red de Salud de las
Mujeres Latinoamericanas
y del Caribe, RSMLAC

Latin American and
Caribbean Women's Health
Network, LACWHN

Declaration of the Latin American and Caribbean Women's Health Network, LACWHN, to the 44th Session of the United Nations Commission on Population and Development (April 11–15, 2011) on the Topic of Fertility, Reproductive Health and Development.

**Women of the Third Millennium:
Comprehensive Health and Full Sexual and Reproductive Rights**

Ladies and Gentlemen. It is not enough for women to have reached the highest positions in politics, national representation and international organizations when in our daily lives we continue to experience violence, exclusion from decision making, discrimination in the workplace and social subordination. It is not enough to have women serving as Ministers and Presidents when most of us lack adequate food, quality education, dignified work, sufficient rest, access to health, freedom to make choices about our sexuality and motherhood, self-determination over our bodies and a life free from all kinds of abuse. It is not enough that women are present in education, the arts, sciences and technologies, when that culture, those arts, those sciences and technologies are not available to all of us. If it is not within everyone's reach, then it is not enough.

The Latin American and Caribbean Women's Health Network, LACWHN, a regional network of the women's health movement with consultative status in ECOSOC, has been working for more than two decades to build a society with greater social, political and economic justice; a society free from

Casilla 50610
Santiago 1, Chile
Simón Bolívar 3798
Nunoa, Santiago, Chile

Tel.: (56-2) 223-7077
Fax: (56-2) 223-1066
E-mail: <secretaria@reddesalud.org>
Web: <<http://www.reddesalud.org>>



Red de Salud de las
Mujeres Latinoamericanas
y del Caribe, RSMLAC

Latin American and
Caribbean Women's Health
Network, LACWHN

discrimination based on class, age, race, ethnicity, gender and sexual identity; a society that guarantees women and girls the full exercise of their human rights, especially their right to comprehensive health, sexual rights and reproductive rights.

In 1994, women from different regions participated with optimism in the process of the International Conference on Population and Development convened by the United Nations in Cairo. We applaud the 20-year Programme of Action that emerged from that conference and was ratified by nearly 180 countries. This document offered a new perspective on population and development and established an ethical paradigm with a universal value, making sexual and reproductive health and their related rights an intrinsic element of population policies founded upon human rights. With this new perspective, population policies stopped considering women as objects and began recognizing them as subjects able to make decisions with dignity on aspects related to our sexuality and reproduction, free from violence and coercion. Later follow-up actions have endorsed this paradigm. Today, more than ever, we need to revitalize the spirit and proposals of that Programme of Action and even advance beyond them to guarantee that all women, without discrimination of any kind, can enjoy the right to life, to health and to the freedom to make choices without being subject to coercion or violence, and the right to have those choices respected.

We note with concern that as we approach the 20-year deadline for the full implementation of the ICPD agreements, we may not be able to achieve them. In fact, in the global context of crisis, violence and destabilization, women's rights are disproportionately affected, especially our right to life and to health and the exercise of our sexual and reproductive rights. Therefore, based on the political principles upon which our organization is founded, and interpreting the voice of women's networks,

Casilla 50610
Santiago 1, Chile
Simón Bolívar 3798
Nunoa, Santiago, Chile

Tel.: (56-2) 223-7077
Fax: (56-2) 223-1055
E-mail: <secretaria@reddesalud.org>
Web: <<http://www.reddesalud.org>>



Red de Salud de las
Mujeres Latinoamericanas
y del Caribe RSH/LAC

Latin American and
Caribbean Women's Health
Network, LACWHN

coordinating bodies and coalitions of the Latin American and Caribbean region represented at the Follow-up Meetings on the Cairo +15 Agenda held in Panama (August 2009) and in Antigua, Guatemala (October 2010), in which participants approved the Panama Declaration and the Antigua Declaration, LACWHN affirms:

* Over the past 17 years, the States of Latin America and the Caribbean have ratified and reaffirmed their commitment to implementing the Cairo Programme of Action through successive international and regional agreements. To effectively achieve this Programme, they must define and implement comprehensive public policies on population and development with a human rights perspective. These policies must seek to strengthen gender equality within the State and ensure suitable, timely and adequate financial resources to make them sustainable. This will involve changing current national budget allocations to prioritize social policies and guarantee universal access to: comprehensive health, especially sexual and reproductive health, with special emphasis on HIV/AIDS and complications arising from unsafe abortions; education, including education for comprehensive sexuality; and social protection, as effective strategies to reduce poverty in our region, which is the most unequal on the globe. In Latin America and the Caribbean, many indicators—for maternal mortality, the consequences of unsafe abortion, unwanted pregnancy, pregnancy in adolescents and girls, the unsatisfied demand for contraceptives, the lack of access to quality health services with qualified healthcare providers, the feminization of HIV/AIDS, and sexual violence, among others—continue to be unacceptably high, especially among the most vulnerable groups: poor, indigenous, rural, Afro-descendant, migrant, adolescent and young women.



Comisión Interamericana
de la Mujer
CIM

**Latin American and
Caribbean Women's Health
Network, LACWHN**

In summary, there is an urgent need for States—that up to now have failed to achieve the minimum reductions in maternal mortality established in the Millennium Development Goals, that have violated the separation of Church and State by negotiating women's rights with religious hierarchies, that have been negligent in failing to bridge the legal and programmatic gaps that hinder the achievement of gender equality—to demonstrate without delay their true political will by investing in the health and wellbeing of women and girls rather than in weapons, in order to guarantee peace among peoples and thereby revert militarization and race for arms that particularly and directly affect our daily lives.

The agreements made by States in the ICPD Programme of Action, and reaffirmed in 1999 (ICPD+5), 2004 (ICPD+10) and 2009 (ICPD+15), in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and reaffirmed at the Regional Conferences on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean (Quito, 2007; Brasilia, 2010) provide an existing framework for action that is adequate for achieving societies that are more just, equal and equitable and for effectively recognizing women's full citizenship. We therefore urge States to assume their responsibility to fulfill the aforementioned agreements without delay. Failure to do so will negatively impact the development of the region's countries and will result in greater suffering and more violations of basic human rights such as the right to life, comprehensive health, and sexual and reproductive health, to education, to dignified work and a life free from violence for millions of women of all ages, classes and identities.

* We welcome the creation of UN Women and hope that its actions contribute effectively to addressing the urgent priorities of the agenda of the region's women's and feminist movements. We further hope that synergies will be strengthened between this entity and those of us working unceasingly to promote and defend women's comprehensive health, sexual and reproductive health,

Casilla 50610	Tel.: (56-2) 223-7077
Santiago 1, Chile	Fax: (56-2) 223-1066
Casilla Boliviar 3798	E-mail: secretaria@reddesalud.org
Flumen, Conuco, Chile	Web: http://www.reddesalud.org



Red de Salud de las
Mujeres Latinoamericanas
y del Caribe, RSM-LAC

Latin American and
Caribbean Women's Health
Network, LACWHN

and sexual and reproductive rights and for equality between women and men. We also call upon other agencies of the United Nations system, particularly the UNFPA, which has spearheaded actions on the ICPD agenda, to work concertedly to achieve all of the goals mentioned above, and we likewise call on the community of international cooperation donors in view of the gradual and increasing withdrawal from our region, which we have observed in recent years.

* Finally, we reaffirm our unwavering commitment to continue working for comprehensive health and for sexual rights and reproductive rights as human rights; for accessible sexual and reproductive health services with good quality of care for all women; for sustainable development with equality, equity and social justice and without poverty; for peace and disarmament; for the protection of the environment; for societies free from all forms of violence and discrimination; for secular, sovereign and democratic States; and for societies with the capacity to choose, defend and exercise their rights.

New York, April 2011

Casilla 50610
Santiago 1, Chile
Simón Bolívar 3798
Ñuñoa, Santiago, Chile

Tel.: (56-2) 223-1077
Fax: (56-2) 223-1060
E-mail: <secretaria@reddesalud.org>
Web: <<http://www.reddesalud.org>>