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Fourth Regional Intergovernmental Conference
on Ageing and the Rights of Older Persons in
Latin America and the Caribbean

Asunción, 27-30 June 2017

ASUNCIÓN DECLARATION

BUILDING INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES: AGEING WITH DIGNITY AND RIGHTS

We, the representatives of the countries gathered in Asunción from 27 to 30 June 2017 at the Fourth Regional Intergovernmental Conference on Ageing and the Rights of Older Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean,

1. *Reaffirm* the commitment of our Governments to promote, protect and respect the human rights, dignity and fundamental freedoms of all older persons, without discrimination of any kind, and ratify the responsibility of States to ensure ageing with dignity and rights, with the greatest possible quality of life and full enjoyment of the rights of older persons;

2. *Recognize* the importance of the Regional Intergovernmental Conference on Ageing and the Rights of Older Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean as a forum that facilitates the systematic review and evaluation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and the situation of older persons and their human rights at the regional level, on the basis of national reporting and experience-sharing, which in turn helps to fulfil other regional and international commitments on the matter;

3. *Reiterate* that the San José Charter on the Rights of Older Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean offers a regional framework for public policymaking that States continue to adopt, that complements the work of other mechanisms at the regional and international levels, and that helps to strengthen protection of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of older persons;

4. *Emphasize* the important and diverse contributions that older persons can continue to make to the functioning of society and recognize that particular difficulties and obstacles remain in the regional context that undermine the participation of older persons in political, social, economic and cultural life;

5. *Urge* the Governments to build the issue of ageing into their development policies, plans and programmes in a cross-cutting manner, and to implement specific policies for older persons that recognize gender inequalities and promote their autonomy and independence, as well as intergenerational solidarity, bearing in mind that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development represents a historical opportunity for the international community to eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions and considering the worrying incidence of poverty among older persons in the region, especially those in the most vulnerable situations;

6. *Recognize* the importance of the Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons, and signal that its States parties reaffirm their commitment to its further divulgation and to advancing with the ratification procedures that will enable the establishment of its follow-up mechanism;

7. *Highlight* the efforts undertaken by Governments and civil society, including older persons' organizations and the private sector, to promote cooperation and integration and to raise awareness about issues related to ageing and older persons' human rights, and recognize that major challenges remain to achieving the empowerment of older persons and their full and effective enjoyment of human rights;

8. *Emphasize* that old age is a time in the natural life of human beings involving full experience of the biopsychosocial dimension that must be underpinned by a rights-based approach, for which it is necessary to generate healthy, accessible and enabling environments so that people may age in an appropriate setting that fosters the pursuit of their activities;

9. *Urge* the Governments to take specific measures and intensify existing measures to combat age-based and multiple discrimination, abandonment, mistreatment and violence towards older persons, affording particular attention to those in situations of greatest risk and social vulnerability, and to provide comprehensive health services, care, social protection and access to food, housing, employment, social occupation and justice, among others;

10. *Reaffirm* our commitment to the work of the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing and underscore the need to start drafting a specific multilateral legal instrument that is binding in nature and comprehensive and integrated in approach, to promote and protect the rights and dignity of older persons, in accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 67/139, with a view to strengthening the international regime for protection of older persons and reducing the existing normative fragmentation;

11. *Welcome* the work of the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons and, in accordance with the priorities established by national States, ask her to act in coordination with all bodies and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, as well as national institutions for older persons and older persons' organizations in Latin America and the Caribbean, in the pursuit of her mandate;

12. *Encourage* the Governments of the region to consider the situation and interests of older persons, including also the ethnicity, race, gender, disability and generational perspectives, in the design and implementation of national plans and programmes to promote achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals, the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development, and the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030;

13. *Recommend* that States strengthen the capacity of their national institutions that govern matters relating to old age and ageing, endowing them with the competencies and attributes necessary to contribute to ensuring the full exercise of all human rights of older persons, as well as to facilitate the collection of data, the preparation of statistics and the management of qualitative information, broken down by relevant factors, according to their specificities and national context, in order to improve the evaluation of the situation of older persons and strengthen the formulation of policies sensitive to their needs;

14. *Call upon* all States and the international community to cooperate, support and participate in the global efforts towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to mobilize all necessary resources and support in that regard, according to national plans and strategies, including through an integrated and multifaceted approach to improving the well-being of older persons;

15. *Urge* the Governments of the region, as a complement to national development efforts, to continue promoting and deepening South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives, bearing in mind that these efforts complement but do not substitute North-South cooperation, and to share good practices in relation to the promotion and protection of the human rights and dignity of older persons;

16. *Request* the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean to strengthen its activities on the matter of ageing and older persons' rights in order to help Governments in Latin America and the Caribbean adopt measures that ensure the full exercise of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and the dignity of older persons, with the participation of civil society;

17. *Encourage* the participation of civil society organizations from Latin America and the Caribbean in the design, implementation and evaluation of public policies relating to the human rights of older persons;

18. *Take note of* the document *Challenges to the autonomy and interdependent rights of older persons*,¹ prepared by the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean;

19. *Note* the recommendations issued by the Caribbean subregional preparatory meeting for the Fourth Regional Intergovernmental Conference on Ageing and the Rights of Older Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Port of Spain on 1 and 2 June 2017;

20. *Encourage* the inclusion and participation of older persons in the design, adoption and implementation of disaster management and mitigation plans and strategies, with particular attention given to those living in remote areas; the implementation of measures that provide specific assistance to older persons in risk assessment, preparedness, prevention, response and reconstruction; and their participation in education and training programmes and data collection activities;

21. *Encourage* the implementation of policies and programmes for the prevention, care and palliative care and treatment or management of non-communicable diseases, including Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia, and for the promotion of healthy ageing in order to improve quality of life and reduce the burden of non-communicable diseases on the population, the economy, health services and health systems;

22. *Thank* the Government and people of Paraguay for organizing and holding the Fourth Regional Intergovernmental Conference on Ageing and the Rights of Older Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean.

¹ LC/CRE.4/3.