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PANEL DISCUSSION ON GENDER EQUITY

By

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PROTOCOLS OBSERVED

Someone once said "There have been many revolutions over the last century, but perhaps, none as significant as the longevity revolution. We are living an average today of 34 years longer than our great-grand parents did, and if you are to think about it; that's an entire second adult lifetime that has been added to our lifespan.

In my humble opinion, I believe that we are all here with one agenda, singing the same tune, and that is, to transform the lives of so many of our peoples, in particular the most vulnerable and marginalized. I, therefore, deem it an honor and a distinct privilege to be able to participate in this very important discussion on Gender Equality and women's empowerment.
It can be agreed that we have made significant strides since the endorsement and ratification of international agreements and obligations including CEDAW (Convention on the elimination of all discrimination against all women), PoA of ICPD, Beijing Platform for Action, Belem do Parra Convention, and the Millennium Development Goals. Evidently, more Women have been exposed to health care, more women have access to education especially tertiary level education while we are making some gains in increasing the number of women in politics and desicionmaking, f.e. in the Caribbean we have several women who have become prime ministers notably in Dominica, Dame Eugenia Charles, Janet Jagan in Guyana, the most honorable Portia Simson Miller in Jamaica, and in Trinidad and Tobago the honorable Kamla Persad Bissesar, former prime minister and now leader of the opposition. And even though the MDGs’ delivered on some targets, regrettably they fell short on others, especially those pertaining to gender equality and women’s empowerment. Suffice it to say, therefore, that much more work must be done before we could
The need for regional education and training

The need to strengthen sources of statistical information and development

The establishment of a permanent institutional structure on population

critical in the implementation of the Montevideo consensus:

The operational guide therefore, speaks to five key elements, which are:

1. The internationally agreed agenda, including the Sustainable Development

2. The Sustainable Development

3. The Montevideo Consensus is in alignment with the

4. The Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against

5. The elimination of all forms of violence and discrimination against women

6. Yet again, Priority Measure, 57 and 58 of the Operational Guide speaks to

Sustainable Development Agenda.

That cluster can be compared to target 5.4 in the 2030
formulation and implementation of public policies and in decision-making.

Cluster of measures to achieve equal participation for women in the
to look further we would realize that Priority Measure 48 encapsulates a
women visible in National Statistics and in Government budgets. If we are
with PM 62, 63 and 64 represents a cohort of instruments to make
Gender-sensitive budgets, whereas Priority Measure 49 when compared
linked with 49 as it relates to institutional strengthening and promoting
among several priority measures. Priority Measure (PM) 47, is closely
The Montevideo Consensus, therefore, speaks to the interrelatedness

Consensus (2010) and this list is not exhaustive.

Consensus (2013) The Santo Domingo Consensus (2013), The Brazil
documents as earlier mentioned and in addition to the Montevideo
outlined in the Operational Guide are clearly aligned to the existing
address gender equality. We must be cognizant that the priority measures
which speaks specifically to gender equality, all 16 goals could easily
as we focus on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, goal 5
all right of all women and girls.
4. The need to create monitoring and evaluation and accountability mechanisms

5. The need for Committed financial resources

If we are to effect real change and create an overall paradigm shift we must start be reorienting persons in the way they think, and the way they do things; so for us the most significant target is to ‘Mainstream Gender Equality and women’s rights and women’s empowerment, in particular in education, where at the basic educational level the young minds could be molded. The education curriculum should also include comprehensive sexuality education, which .. In this way it will eliminate any perceptions about inequality between boys and girls.

Second to this, is the implementation of concrete policies across the region for the elimination of violence against women, including pregnant women, older women, women with disabilities older women, indigenous women,

... afro-descendants, women of vulnerable groups including sex workers, lesbian, bisexual and transgender women, must be covered under such a policy with compulsory access to proper redress. For too long we have
been clamoring for such policies to become operational but have not yet been able to eliminate violence against women. There is also need to ensure social protection policies to prevent violence against women and girls, including sexual violence, trafficking of women and girls, and adolescents' pregnancy.

From a Caribbean's perspective, which is often regarded as middle income countries while access to resources becoming increasingly challenges, access to international financing for a successful implementation of the Montevideo consensus must become a priority area. I draw your attention to the proposals advanced by the Commonwealth Finance Ministers, at the recently concluded 70th United Nations General Assembly, and I quote “It is very important to create innovative strategies for helping Small Developing States gain access to international sources of funding.” (end of Quote)

The Operational Guide could therefore become that very important tool which will be used not only to implement the Montevideo Consensus in an integrated manner but also to harmonize the other conventions. However, we must be cognizant that this is not a one size fit all; as Small Developing
States we must define our goals carefully, set our own deadlines, determine our road maps, and develop indicators that are workable. It means therefore that implementation will take place at different timelines and at different levels.

I echoe the sentiments by my Prime Minister - The Honourable Timothy Harris at the recently concluded 70th United Nations General Assembly, we as a Small Nation is committed to working internationally to bring about transformational changes, in programs and policies, that will benefit our people. We, therefore, endorse the Montevideo Consensus and the operational guidelines look forward to its successful implementation, as we strive to create a sustainable future for all.

In closing, I would like to thank the President and People of Mexico for so graciously welcoming us to your country and for so ably planning and executing such an important conference. May it please you.