

**Third Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin American
and the Caribbean**

Deputy Executive Director's Closing Remarks

9 August 2018

Your Excellency the Prime Minister, Cesar Villanueva,

Your Excellency the Honorable Minister and President of the Conference, Cecilia
Aldave,

Mario Cimoli, Vice Executive Secretary of ECLAC

Excellency's,

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Let me begin by thanking our wonderful hosts, the government of Peru. You have inspired us with your vision and leadership, taken care of us with your hospitality, and advanced our shared commitment to the Montevideo Consensus with your able stewardship of the consensus resolution. We look forward to your continued leadership over the next two years and express our commitment to support the process.

Sincere thanks to the delegations from Member States, who have committed so much of their time and energy to the preparation and realization of this Conference.

Thanks and appreciation to ECLAC for leading the production of the regional report, for their stellar delivery as the secretariat of the conference, and for being a true partner to UNFPA.

Let me thank my UNFPA colleagues, who have worked so hard to support governments and ECLAC in this process.

And I must thank civil society for reminding everyone, at every turn, of why we are here – to ensure the rights and well-being of all, and to leave no one behind. Civil society is resisting all efforts to take us backward and constantly bringing new issues to the table that people depend on. We have seen how strong the Green Wave is in this very room. We have seen the participation of young women, young people, across the region, in Chile, in Argentina, in the Caribbean, in the resilient feminist networks of all generations across the region. They teach us. They guide us. And they insist on bringing about an inclusive and equal world.

Five years ago was a momentous occasion for the region. The Montevideo Consensus brought the Programme of Action of the ICPD into the present and the future for the region. It set the standard around the world for ensuring that people – their human rights, their well-being and their equality – are at the center of population and sustainable development.

At the opening, the Executive Director of UNFPA said that agreements are only as good as their implementation. So we got to work.

For the past three days, we have heard national reports of implementation. Countries presented successes, which we can celebrate, learn from and use to help chart the path for other countries. And countries gave honest assessments of challenges they face, so we can work together to figure out how to change course and find new ways to advance the agenda.

We have done a systematic review of the national reports countries submitted. Let me tell you some of what we've found.

As countries are experiencing major population changes, most especially ageing and migration, about two thirds of countries focused on integration of population into development, including investments in the statistical system. Some countries have established permanent intersectoral commissions and other similar mechanisms, which are vital to implementing an integrated population and development agenda.

More than three quarters of countries are addressing key commitments around young people, including adolescent friendly sexual and reproductive health services, comprehensive sexuality education and prevention of violence. As we do this, let us ensure that young people are true partners and leaders, with safe spaces to contribute and ensure that this agenda is truly their agenda.

As part of a focus on age structure and ageing, 61 percent of countries are addressing discrimination and violence among older persons, while about half are focusing on the demographic dividend.

Across the board, we are seeing major emphasis on achieving universal access to sexual and reproductive health, without discrimination of any kind. Almost 80 percent of countries are focusing on reduction of maternal mortality and morbidity, including access to safe abortion where the law provides. Three quarters are intensifying efforts to ensure availability of a wide range of contraceptives, including emergency contraception. And more than three quarters of countries are focusing on access for the LGBTI community.

Gender based violence is a major issue in the region, and almost 90 percent of countries reported focusing on prevention. Yet under half of national reports focused on care and restitution for survivors, an area that must be strengthened given how many women are experiencing violence every day.

This is just a sample of what we have learned from these in-depth, evidence-based national reports. These are powerful tools for advancing the Consensus at national level and through South-South cooperation, and it is important to incorporate their findings in your voluntary national reports on the 2030 Agenda.

The regional report represents a huge step forward in shared understanding of how to deliver sustainable development. As per your resolution, this report will go to the Commission on Population and Development in 2019 for the milestone 25 year review of ICPD. It will notify the world of how far you've come, how much you are leading the way, and how they too can overcome challenges and fulfil the vision of ICPD and the 2030 Agenda.

We at UNFPA have heard your calls this week for support – on data, on programmes for adolescents and youth, ageing, sexual and reproductive health and rights, disaster risk reduction and more. With our partners in ECLAC and across the UN system, we are fully committed to continuing to provide this support and to strengthening our joint work.

Commitment requires political will. You have it, together with civil society and the powerful movements in the region. Commitment requires data, knowledge, capacity and evidence-based policy. We are working on these together.

We also know that commitment requires resources. You have made this clear in this room and in the resolution you adopted. Financing for this era of sustainable development requires new partnership with the private sector, new sources and innovations, and greater domestic mobilization of resources.

This is a region with resources, but not always distributed to those who need them, or mobilized for sustainable development. We will accompany and support you as

we all seek to find the new and diverse resources needed to deliver our shared agenda. And I believe that concentrating investments on young people, with an intergenerational, gender-focused and life-long approach, is something that can bring many new stakeholders and resources to the table.

Most of all, we have heard the repeated call, from every corner of this room and every corner of the region, that we must leave no one behind – women and girls, men and boys, young people, older persons, LGBTI persons, Afro-descendants, indigenous peoples, disabled persons, migrants, anyone experiencing poverty, exclusion or discrimination.

Our moral responsibility, captured at the core of the Montevideo Consensus, is this commitment – and that to bring it about we must **first** reach the furthest behind.

They are demanding it, they have a right to it, sustainable development depends on it, and together we all must – and will – deliver.

By 2020, at the Fourth Regional Conference on Population and Development, I know we will have made progress together.

Our sincere thanks to the government of [_____] for your offer to host the fourth regional conference, to continue championing the Consensus and keep the momentum going on implementation.

I thank you for the opportunity to make these remarks, and I wish all who have traveled to be here a safe journey home.