Formal statement Curaçao

ECLAC/CEPAL-conferentie Montevideo 2026

Sixth Session of the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean

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Honourable Chair,
Distinguished representatives of ECLAC, UNFPA, member States and associate members,
Ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the delegation of Curaçao, allow me to express our appreciation to ECLAC and the Government of Uruguay for hosting this Sixth Session of the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Curaçao welcomes the opportunity to participate in this important regional dialogue on population and development, and on the continued implementation of the Montevideo Consensus.

For Curaçao, the themes discussed during this Conference are highly relevant. Reproductive health, demographic change, low fertility, ageing, gender equality, youth participation and sustainable development are not isolated policy areas. They are interconnected social, economic, educational, health-related and human rights issues.

Curaçao recognizes that reproductive health should not be approached only as a medical or public health matter. It is also connected to social development, family formation, parenting, gender equality, education, protection, poverty, social support and the autonomy of women and young people.

In our national context, these issues require stronger interministerial cooperation. The Ministry of Health, Environment and Nature contributes from the perspective of public health, sexual and reproductive health services, prevention and health data. The Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport contributes through education, youth development, social-emotional learning, inclusion, safe school environments and youth participation. The Ministry of Social Development, Labour and Welfare contributes through family and youth policy, social protection, gender equality, child rights, prevention of violence and support to vulnerable families.

Curaçao also recognizes the importance of reliable and integrated data. Demographic developments, including changes in population composition, fertility, migration and ageing, have implications for family formation, education planning, care, the labour market, social security and the sustainability of social policies. For small island societies such as Curaçao, these developments require timely, coordinated and evidence-informed policy responses.

At the same time, Curaçao acknowledges that important challenges remain. These include taboos around sexual and reproductive health, the need for more accessible and culturally sensitive information, barriers faced by vulnerable women and migrants, the need to strengthen support for

young people and families, and the need to improve coordination between health, education, social development, justice, statistics and civil society.

Curaçao is committed to further strengthening its approach. Existing national efforts, including child protection initiatives, policies addressing domestic and relational violence, youth participation, sexual education programmes, and work related to CEDAW, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Istanbul Convention, provide important entry points for further action.

We therefore see this Conference as an opportunity to learn from the region, to exchange experiences, and to identify practical steps that are suitable for small island contexts.

Curaçao's key message is that population and development policies must be people-centred, rights-based and intersectoral. Reproductive health, demographic change, gender equality and youth development must be addressed together, with special attention to women, young people, families, vulnerable groups, prevention, data and sustainable social protection.

We look forward to working with ECLAC, UNFPA and our regional partners to continue advancing the Montevideo Consensus in a way that responds to the realities and needs of our societies.

Thank you.