



STATEMENT OF THE SECOND MEETING OF MINISTERS OF EDUCATION OF THE COMMUNITY OF STATES LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN (CELAC)

San Jose, April 21, 2016

The Ministers of Education of the countries of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), meeting for second time in the history of this Regional Forum, in San Jose, Costa Rica, in order to continue working on strengthening the educational systems at all levels, stating Education as a human inclusive, equitable and quality right.

Following up on the agreements of the First Meeting of Ministers of Education of the CELAC, held in Havana, Cuba on February 7, 2013, establishing priority areas in line with the Declaration of CELAC-EU Summit in 2015, which emphasizes the rights to education quality, equity, throughout life approach.

Bearing in mind the conclusions of the Regional Conference of Education For All, held in Lima, Peru; World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development held in Nagoya, Japan, in 2014, and the World Forum of Incheon, held in the Republic of Korea in 2015. All were promoted by the United Nations among them (UNICEF, UNESCO, UNFPA, PNUD, UNO Women and ACNUR);

Recognizing that the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), is a mechanism for political dialogue in which the countries of the region, through consensus, have demonstrated their will to build a common agenda that allows them to advance social welfare, quality of life, economic growth and promote sustainable development on the basis of democracy, equity, social justice and human rights of Latin American and Caribbean people.

Reaffirming that education is a human right, a social investment and the most important public wealth to achieve sustainable development of our people, thus guarantee present and future generations in order to improve and expand their opportunities in a globalized world.

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Considering that education is fundamental to guarantee best social, academic and professional opportunities to present and future generations and meriting an important social investment to achieve sustainable development of our towns in a globalized world.

Considering that the concept of human development implies the satisfaction of the socio-personal needs of a community, region or country, including among many, health, work, education, recreation, housing and citizen participation so it is imperative to promote education for early childhood, preschool, primary, secondary, technical and university, consistent with both the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, as with the principles of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), which ensure equitable education to generate well-being of each and every citizen.

Reaffirming in this regard, our common commitment, made in the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development which has a comprehensive nature, which objectives and goals are deeply interrelated in particular the Objective 4, focusing on quality education and relevance in order to form a citizenship to ensure our children, adolescents, youth and adults equal opportunities in all areas; an education to overcome gaps in gender, equity and inclusion; an education that develops in safe environments with appropriate infrastructure, leading to learning and training of active and participatory citizens with accurate skills to function both in their communities and in a globalized and increasingly specialized world.

Recognizing that education is a global commitment that incorporates different sectors, in which it is required the support of international organizations, in particular those which must respect The Convention of Children's Rights and the Rights for Education for All to assist the policies, actions, programs, projects and initiatives that are made from the educational systems of our countries. Likewise, it is relevant to highlight the importance of the participation and support of an active, engaged civil society committed with educational goals.

Appreciating the efforts and advances of the member countries of the CELAC on the aim of achieving 100% literacy and aware that the consensus and the creation of common agendas are a momentous opportunity to share experiences, generate initiatives and coordinate actions to enable our Latin American and Caribbean people to have a plan of action that would allow countries to meet the challenges we share in early childhood education for sustainable development, equity and inclusion in education, as well as promoting regional educational policies that promote a political framework conducive to the formation of a citizenship.

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We agreed upon:

1. Ensure universal and free coverage, gender oriented, early education, primary and secondary education, covered in the universal right to education without any discrimination such as cultural, racial, creed, sex, nationality and disability condition which assists children, adolescents and youth in Latin America and the Caribbean.
2. Promote, with respect to the realities and national laws, the active participation of families and communities at different stages of the educational process.
3. Promote the establishment of comprehensive services in early childhood to ensure that every child from birth to primary have the opportunity to reach their full potential in cognitive, social, emotional and physical development.
4. Establish public education policies, with relevant content and appropriate budget, to set a legal and conceptual framework to ensure that all children enter and complete in a timely manner early education, receive quality education during this stage to establish conditions for a successful transition to primary education and success throughout the educational trajectory.
5. Committing to the need to implement mechanisms for operationalization and implementation of the goals associated with education in the framework of the Agenda 2030 of the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 4, which aims to ensure an inclusive, equitable and quality education and to promote the sustainable approach in the educational systems learning opportunities throughout life for all.
6. Improve the quality and equity in education to ensure social inclusion for children, adolescents, youth and adults in all educational services from early childhood until higher education to contribute to eradicate poverty and inequality.
7. Eradicate illiteracy, school dropout, child labor in all of the region and meet the demands of the knowledge society in education throughout life through innovative and flexible educational models

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8. Ensure that educational programs reinforce Education for Peace beginning in early childhood. This must have a sustainable approach visualizing spaces for active participation throughout early education, primary, secondary, adult education, and higher education so that the levels of violence recorded in schools and communities can be lowered in each community.
9. Promote improvement in the quality from the reinforcement of school curricular programs and materials, use of technologies, infrastructure, teacher development offered throughout the educational lives of children, adolescents, youth and adults, so that the teaching-learning process takes place in the best conditions and thus increases retention.
10. Promote policies and priority actions to achieve universal coverage and free secondary education, implementing strategies that prevent the most vulnerable young people from dropping out of school without completing their secondary education and facilitating reintegration of adolescents who are out of the educational system.
11. Promote policies and priority actions that enable children, adolescents, young people and adults from populations in vulnerable situations, such as indigenous communities, Afro descent communities, Indian descent communities and others, access to all levels of education, respecting the national realities and legislations, their right to learn in their own language, when applicable, and with culturally relevant teaching methods, thus generating equitable and inclusive opportunities for all members of a multicultural and diverse society.
12. Promote bilingualism to develop language skills in children, adolescents, young people and adults to strengthen their identity and increase the possibility of communication with other human groups with an emphasis in the care and strengthening of native languages of the member countries.
13. Generate a culture of respect for Human Rights, which leads to the eradication of poverty, understanding that education transforms lives, develops personal potential, encourages employment, strengthens democracy, allows understanding and appreciation of diversity and fosters civic participation.

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14. Promote learning environment based on the respect of human rights, rejecting all forms of corporal punishment, humiliation and other forms of violence in the school context, including gender based violence.
15. Enable teachers to receive comprehensive training with research techniques that allow them to develop a vision and a humanist, critical, analytical practice and adapt methodology, teaching and assessment, to the diverse learning needs of students, their environment and local cultures without detriment to the quality of education.
16. Recognize the social and professional work of teachers and their contributions to improve the quality of education.
17. Promote among teachers, children, adolescents, youth and adults, the appropriation of information and communication technologies as tools to stimulate learning, research, and communication.
18. Embrace the work done by the Working Group on Education CELAC, meeting on April 20, 2016, which the results will lead to create in the short term a Plan of Action on Education for CELAC member countries.
19. In this context we invite international organizations, particularly those whose mandate is to ensure compliance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Right to Education, such as UNICEF, UNESCO and OEI, to work together with the CELAC in the promotion of equitable, quality education, that is inclusive for all, as a fundamental tool in the construction of the new Agenda for Post-2015 Development and in particular the Action Plan of CELAC.