

**STATEMENT BY
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TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**SIXTY-FOURTH SESSION
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“ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN”

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(check against delivery)

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honor to make the following statement on behalf of the Rio Group: Argentina, Belize, Plurinational State of Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Dominican Republic, Suriname, Uruguay, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Jamaica on behalf of CARICOM, and of my own country, Mexico.

First of all, I want to thank, through you, Mr. Chairman, the Secretary General for the preparation of reports on: the status of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; the intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women; violence against women migrant workers; improving the situation of women in rural areas; the activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women-UNIFEM and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, INSTRAW.

The Rio Group also notes the report of the Secretary General on the evaluation of measures that have been adopted and the progresses made in monitoring the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. The Group invites all Member States to participate at the highest level in the next session of the Commission on the Status of Women, that will review the progress achieved in the implementation of the agreements adopted in Beijing, and has the expectation that the 15th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action will be an opportunity to ratify the International commitment with its full implementation.

In particular, the Rio Group welcomes the success of the campaign "Unite to end Violence Against Women" (2008-2015), leaded by the Secretary General, which wide visibility will allow the UN System to intensify its support to initiatives, programs and national campaigns on this issue. The campaign could become an axis of the actions adopted by governments, civil society, base community organizations, the private sector and public, private and alternative media for combating violence against women.

Mr. Chairman,

The Rio Group countries are deeply committed to gender equality and the respect of all the human rights and fundamental freedoms of women.

The Rio Group reaffirms the importance of a full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the Twenty-Third Special Session of the General Assembly. Moreover, we reaffirm the

importance that States Party fully comply with its treaty obligations under the International Convention against All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and its Optional Protocol.

The Rio Group considers essential to continue the efforts to promote and strengthen gender equality and women empowerment as key factors for the promotion of social development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. It is necessary to promote women's participation in government decisions and expanding its presence in public offices, including at the highest levels of the government. Likewise, the promotion of agreements and actions to promote women's participation in decision-making processes at the highest levels in political, economic, cultural and social sectors, must continue to be a priority in the national and International agendas.

In light of the above, the Member States of the Rio Group have undertaken measures for the improvement of our legal and regulatory frameworks, through the enactment of laws on gender equality that supports our efforts towards the elimination of discrimination against women.

Other national initiatives are the design and management of public policies that are carried out with direct participation of institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women in cooperation with international and regional organizations, civil society, including non governmental organizations, and the communities.

Mr. Chairman,

The situation of women is an issue of increasing importance for our societies, specially the eradication of violence against women, the trafficking on women and girls, the feminization of poverty and HIV/AIDS, the situation of migrant, rural and indigenous women, the recognition of reproductive rights, access to health services, including sexual and reproductive health, the elimination of barriers between women and men related to employment and the importance of sharing family chores between men and women.

We recognize the need to expand efforts and coordinate all necessary actions to address these important issues at the national and international level, and we call upon international organizations and developed countries to support national programs for women.

The Rio Group is firmly committed to the efforts to eradicate violence against women in all its forms and manifestations. It is necessary to implement concrete actions at all levels to prevent and eradicate this scourge. I would like to emphasize the leadership of our region in this area. Latin-American and Caribbean countries have been pioneers at the regional and international level in

the development of instruments and mechanisms to prevent and eradicate violence against women, as well as to promote the full enjoyment of their human rights.

As for the regional initiatives, the Rio Group expresses its satisfaction at the recent launch of the Observatory for Gender Equality, established by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean at the request of the governments of the region during the Tenth Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Quito, Ecuador in 2007. This observatory would provide us with reports about the condition of women and facilitate the exchange of good practices.

In our region we have developed sub-regional mechanisms for women, such as the Council of Ministers for Women of Central America, Network of Andean Women Mechanism, the Bureau of Women's /Gender Affairs of CARICOM and the Special Meeting of Women in MERCOSUR. These mechanisms and other initiatives, promoted the advancement of a comprehensive gender agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The Rio Group would like to underline the XI Regional Conference on Women for Latin America and the Caribbean, which would be held on Brasilia, Brazil, on July 2010. One of the main topics of the Conference would be equal access of women to economic life, and the impact of the economic and financial international crisis on gender equality.

The Rio Group commends rural women on the occasion of International Day for Rural Women which will be celebrated on October 15. In many states of the Rio Group rural women, including indigenous women form a significant part of our population and have been making meaningful contributions to development. Notwithstanding, rural women globally continue to face many challenges. We urge the international community to intensify efforts to remove the existing barriers to their empowerment.

Mr. Chairman,

The Member States of the Rio Group support the important work of agencies and organizations such as UNIFEM, UNPFA and the Committee of CEDAW for their key role regarding the implementation and support of governments to advance in gender equality, prevent discrimination against women, and promote the achievement of all their human rights. We also welcome the continued efforts undertaken by the INSTRAW and its important research achievements.

Our group recognizes the important activities of UNIFEM in the field, in partnership with governments, civil society and other funds and programs of the United Nations, in order to enhance women empowerment, promote social development, prevent violence against women, reduce the prevalence of HIV /

AIDS on women and girls, and promote gender justice. Thus, we consider that any methodology to be adopted for the allocation of resources for gender issues includes indicators that are specific to the advancement and empowerment of women worldwide.

The Rio Group takes note of the resolution 63/311 on "System-wide Coherence" during the last session of the General Assembly. We hope that in the context of intergovernmental negotiations of this session, Member States continue to hold constructive consultations as part of the system wide coherence process, including, inter alia, the definition of all the details regarding the creation of a new gender architecture, in order to promote equality gender and the empowerment of women worldwide, strengthen International cooperation for the implementation of national programs in this field, and to ensure gender mainstreaming in the work of other agencies and entities of the United Nations system.

Mr. Chairman,

While gender differences persist, mankind would not overcome underdevelopment and social exclusion. Therefore, the Rio Group countries will remain committed to implement measures that ensure the empowerment and equality of women and will continue to comply with all the commitments adopted by our countries at the international level, including the Millennium Development Goals.

Thank you