



Fifth meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development

San José, 7–9 March 2022

Concept note

Commemoration of International Women’s Day

Plenary meeting room (Crowne Plaza San José Corobicí, Costa Rica time, GMT-6)

Tuesday, 8 March

Moderator: María-Noel Vaeza, Regional Director for the Americas and the Caribbean of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women)

- Amina Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations
- Alicia Bárcena, Executive Secretary of ECLAC
- Epsy Campbell, Vice-President of Costa Rica
- Erika Mouynes, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Panama
- Jean Gough, Director of the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)
- Carla Barnett, Secretary General of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) (virtual)
- Shi Alarcón, representative of Vecinas Feministas por la Justicia Sexual y Reproductiva en América Latina and member of the LGBTQI+ group of the mechanism for civil society participation in the Sustainable Development Agenda and the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development
- Rosa Adriana López Carrillo, representative of RedTraSex of Guatemala and focal point of the mechanism for civil society participation in the Sustainable Development Agenda and the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development.
- Elizabeth Gómez Alcorta, Minister for Women, Gender and Diversity of Argentina (video message)

The theme of International Women’s Day on 8 March 2022, “**gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow**”, recognizes the contribution of women and girls around the world who are leading climate change response, mitigation and adaptation efforts to build a more sustainable future for everyone.

Climate change and sustainability issues have had and will continue to have severe and long-lasting repercussions for social, economic and environmental development. It is becoming increasingly clear that women are more vulnerable to the impact of climate change than men, as they make up the majority of the world's poor and are more dependent on natural resources that are under threat from climate change. In addition, women and girls are effective and powerful leaders driving change to achieve climate change mitigation and adaptation. They are involved in sustainable initiatives around the world and their participation and leadership result in more effective climate action.

For there to be sustainable development and greater gender equality, it is essential to continue to explore opportunities and constraints, to enable women and girls to have a voice and participate in climate change decision-making on an equal footing. Without gender equality today, a future of sustainability and equality will remain out of reach.

Latin America and the Caribbean was the developing region most affected by the COVID-19 crisis and will be the slowest to recover. The structural problems that have restricted economic growth in the region for decades, including low levels of investment and productivity, have worsened and will limit the recovery in economic activity. Women have always been more vulnerable to crises, and this time was no exception. Over a period of almost two years, we have seen a deterioration in women's income, employment conditions and time use, and continued gender-based violence against them.

In recent years, there have been interconnected health, environmental and economic crises. **Achieving women's autonomy and gender equality in the context of crises is one of the greatest challenges of the twenty-first century.** And the situation calls for responses that cannot wait. In Latin America and the Caribbean, this call to action comes in a context of deep inequalities, in which persistent gender inequality has been a structural feature of the region and environmental activists are seriously threatened in the defence of their territories.

We are in a historic time for a transformative recovery with gender equality and sustainability. Women's autonomy, women's and girls' empowerment and gender equality are, together, a prerequisite, a pathway and a catalyst for sustainable development. It is essential to move towards a care society in which the interdependence among people is recognized, as well as the interdependence between production processes and society, putting the sustainability of human life and the planet at the centre.

Questions

On 8 March we commemorate International Women's Day, to recognize the legacy of the women who came before us and with whom we unite to make all rights a reality for all women. It is a day to reflect on the situations of women, adolescent girls and young girls in all their diversity. It is an opportunity to renew our commitments to making gender equality a reality, and to moving towards an environmentally sustainable pattern of development that leaves no one behind and no woman out.

1. Tributes: which women would you like to pay tribute to at this commemoration?
2. Reflection: how can we move synergistically and sustainably towards achieving all the Sustainable Development Goals, while guaranteeing the economic, physical and decision-making autonomy of all women and girls?
3. Action: In the context of a prolonged economic, climate and social crisis, what is required to put women's rights and autonomy and advancing gender equality at the centre of the region's recovery?

Panel

Moderator: María-Noel Vaeza, Regional Director for the Americas and the Caribbean of UN-Women

See the full preliminary programme at <https://foroalc2030.cepal.org/2022/en/programme>

Panel format

This multi-stakeholder panel will bring together representatives from governments, civil society and the United Nations system.

The moderator will invite the panellists to reflect on 8 March, through five-minute statements.

Once the panellists have finished making their statements, the moderator will give four-minute concluding remarks.