



Brasilia, 12 December 2014

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SECOND PAN AMERICAN CHILD FORUM

In representation of the children of the Americas and the Caribbean, we have gathered together in Brasilia at the 2nd Pan American Child Forum, from 9 to 12 December, with the purpose of participating and making the voice of children heard, in the enjoyment of our right to give our opinions and be heard by the authorities responsible for addressing the issues that afflict the children of the Americas.

Bearing in mind the motto of this Forum, “Childhood: Building Peaceful Environments”, we have discussed the violence that affects us and its consequences at present and in the future.

We 74 delegates from Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Barbados, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Jamaica, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Lucia, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uruguay, as a single region, share in this document our concerns, proposals and dreams for a continent free from violence, in which peace is enduring.

The recommendations arising from the Second Pan American Child Forum are:

Violence

1. *Ensure that the children of OAS member States, regardless of where their countries are situated, should have access to and a voice in all of their governments’ activities. We demand that the States grant greater representativity and dissemination to consultative councils so that they become better known nationally and, at the same time, are endowed with the legal support that will ensure that the highest authorities in the country will take legal action regarding decisions which affect children, provide follow-up with yearly accountability and safeguard the application of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.*



- 2. The States should set up agreements internationally and between national agencies, with the purpose of coordinating work on children's issues. Furthermore, they should establish joint cooperation in order to ensure that everyone – particularly children – should know how to act in the face of violent acts. We demand that governments' budgets for children's issues should not be reduced, should progressively increase, should be devoted to projects protecting children from different types of violence and enable the support of calls for children's initiatives.*
- 3. Every nation should have advisory departments to address and prevent violence in cities and rural areas, with telephone numbers to provide advice, websites, and professional practitioners in schools and mayoral offices or municipalities, in order to help overcome, denounce or avoid any kind of violence against children. In addition, these departments should organize game-based activities to promote rights from early childhood, involving families, with a view to preventing possible acts of violence.*

Juvenile Criminal Justice

- 1. We recommend that OAS countries should establish the age of eighteen as the minimum age at which a person may be subject to criminal penalties such as deprivation of liberty, and implement restorative justice measures when children break the law. When the seriousness of their acts involves imputability, they should be fully acknowledged and respected as holders of rights, even in the fulfilment of their sentence.*
- 2. That a method other than deprivation of liberty should be sought, and that deprivation of liberty should be a measure of last resort. Alternative measures involving community service should be implemented, work should be done with adolescents, their families and the community, and the media should publicize restorative measures rather than foster punitive responses.*
- 3. We recommend that prevention should ensure that education is available to all and that communities be coached in providing good treatment for children. That there should be laws addressing social inclusion with the purpose of providing opportunities and that the States should ensure that labour and educational reinsertion, public or private, is possible, with qualified personnel in every area. Finally, that homelessness should not be a matter that entails conflict with the law.*



The Sexual Exploitation of Children

- 1. The States should draft laws to ensure that children are protected in border areas sensitive to child sexual exploitation, generating detection and control systems at points where children are most vulnerable, watching particularly over their movements in these places. They should also punish those who offer these services as well as those who request them, and provide surveillance in areas where child sexual exploitation is presumed to occur.*
- 2. The States should ensure that their budgets are sufficient to carry out programmes involving awareness-raising, prevention, and care and reinsertion for children affected by SEC.*
- 3. They should set up programmes to raise the awareness of society and teach the difference between child sexual exploitation and prostitution. To this end, the States should conduct studies and provide updated information and statistics. Prevention should also be fostered through education and training, particularly through art and the use of technology in creative and innovative ways.*
In addition, we recommend that institutions should provide specialized services in education, health, protection and justice, with qualified staff to handle registration, and swift and efficient care for victims. The States should continue to ensure that services exist to deal with the reinsertion of victims and their families in society.