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## POLITICAL DECLARATION OF QUITO – MIDDLE OF THE WORLD

We, the Heads of State and Government of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), on occasion of the IV CELAC Summit, held in the city of Quito, on January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2016;

### PRINCIPLES

1. Reaffirm the decision to consolidate our unity and move towards Latin American and Caribbean integration, on the basis of our profound historical roots, our Community's heritage, all the while with an emphasis on the human person, on sharing common values and interests, and with the resolve of attaining our peoples' wellbeing, eliminating poverty and inequality. We reaffirm our commitment to strengthen CELAC as a mechanism of regional political coordination and we recognize the work that has been done throughout these years, to consolidate our unity in diversity. We ratify the validity of the Political Declarations and the documents approved in our previous Summits held in Mexico, Venezuela, Chile, Cuba and Costa Rica.

2. Reiterate our adherence and strict abidance to the United Nations Charter and the principles of International Law, particularly in regards to the respect to the sovereign equality of States, to the right to self-determination, territorial integrity, non-interference in the internal affairs of each State, to not use nor threaten to use force in international affairs, to the peaceful settlement of disputes, as well as promoting and respecting all human rights, including the right to development and all fundamental freedoms. Furthermore, we reaffirm our commitment to the consolidation of democracy and the Rule of Law, to the maintenance of international peace and security, to political independence, as well as to nuclear disarmament, conducive towards general, total and verifiable disarmament.

### HUMAN RIGHTS

3. Reaffirm our commitment to the promotion and protection of all human rights without discrimination. We underline that democracy, sustainable development and the respect of all human rights, civil and political; economic, social and cultural rights, in their universal, indivisible and interdependent character, including the right to development, are all closely related and mutually reinforcing. In this context, we highlight the importance of adopting measures aimed at promoting and protecting: the rights of people in situations of vulnerability, including indigenous people and people of African descent, migrants and disabled people; women; gender equality, decent work and the eradication of child labor in our region, as part of the measures aimed at prioritizing children and adolescents as subjects of rights.

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## DEMOCRACY

4. Reaffirm that the historical processes of consolidating, safeguarding and fully exercising democracy in our region are irreversible, do not admit interruptions or setbacks and will continue being defined by the respect for the essential values of democracy; access to power and its exercise in accordance with the Rule of Law; respect for constitutional prerogatives of the different branches of Government and constructive dialogue among them; holding free, periodic, transparent, informed, universal and secret elections, as an expression of the people's sovereignty; civil participation; social justice and equality; combatting corruption, and respecting all civil liberties enshrined in international instruments.

5. Recognize the regional commitment to continue supporting the strengthening of the democratic order in Haiti. In that sense, we advocate for the democratic stability of the electoral process, which must run its institutional course for a constitutional transfer to the next duly elected President. At the same time, we call upon the various sectors of Haitian society to focus on dialogue and avoid any actions that might jeopardize the security of the population and the success of the process, thus contributing to peace in the region.

## PEACE AND SECURITY

6. Confirm our commitment to consolidate Latin America and the Caribbean as a Peace Zone, formally proclaimed as such at the 2<sup>nd</sup> CELAC Summit, held in Havana, in January 2014, and emphasize the Nuclear Weapons Free Zone status of our region, established by the pioneering Treaty of Tlatelolco.

7. Condemn all attempts to violate the territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence of our Community's Member States; threats to peace; terrorism in all its forms and manifestations; human rights violations; increases in arms build-up; imposition of unilateral coercive measures contrary to International Law; transnational organized crime; human trafficking and smuggling of migrants; illicit brokering of small arms and light weapons; and all forms of cybercrime. In this regard, we are committed to promoting a culture of peace in the region, arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation; and to intensify efforts to address these great global challenges with transparency, solidarity, complementarity and cooperation.

8. Recognize the importance of combatting transnational organized crime and its diverse manifestations. Moreover, we take note of Panama's proposal for the creation of the Regional Interagency Center for Security, which is intended to establish coordination and cooperation mechanisms to combat such scourge.

9. Reiterate our support for the completion of the dialogue process taking place between the Government of the Republic of Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia and we welcome the progress made towards ending an internal conflict that has affected the social, economic and political development of that Sister Nation for more than 50 years, and appeal to the success of this process in leading to an agreement in the best interests of the Colombian people.

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## COERCIVE MEASURES

10. Reiterate our rejection of unilateral lists and certifications issued by developed countries that affect Latin America and the Caribbean, in particular those related to terrorism, drug trafficking, human trafficking, unwarranted financial black listing and other similar measures.

11. Welcome the restoration of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States of America and the reopening of embassies in both countries. We reiterate our deepest rejection of the application of unilateral coercive measures and reaffirm our call to the Government of the United States to unconditionally end the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed on that sister nation for over five decades. We urge the President of the United States to use his broad executive powers to substantially modify the blockade.

12. Reaffirm our rejection of the application of unilateral coercive measures contrary to International Law and reaffirm our commitment with the full validity of International Law, the peaceful settlement of disputes and the principle of non-intervention.

13. Reaffirm the contents of the Special Communiqué approved within the context of the 3<sup>rd</sup> CELAC Summit (Belén, 2015), as well as the Special Communiqué, dated March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015, on unilateral measures against the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and consider that the Executive Order issued by the United States of America, on March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015, must not be renewed.

## US NAVAL BASE IN GUANTANAMO

14. Consider that the return to the Republic of Cuba of the territory occupied by the US Naval Base in Guantanamo should be a relevant element in the process of normalization of relations between the two countries, through a bilateral dialogue in conformity with International Law.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

15. Highlight the progress made in recent years in Latin America and the Caribbean to consolidate democracy, inclusive socio-economic growth, the reduction and eradication of hunger and poverty, in all its forms and dimensions, and inequality; encourage regional integration; improvement of and access to education; gender equality and the empowerment of women; advances in science and technology as tools for development, as well as the impetus given to infrastructure and connectivity in the region, and the advances made to mitigate and adapt to climate change, all in support of the sustainable development of CELAC's Member States.

16. Welcome the successful adoption, during the 70<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly, of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; we deepen our commitment to achieving an inclusive, supportive region, with gender equality, that advances towards achieving sustainable development, food and nutrition security, long-lasting protection of the planet and its natural resources, as well as the eradication of hunger, poverty and inequality, taking into account said Agenda.

17. Emphasize that the means of implementation contained in the Sustainable Development Goals, which include the mobilization of financial resources, as well as capacity building measures and the transfer of environmentally sound technologies on favorable and even on concessional and preferential terms to developing countries, are essential to implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, constitute an integral part of it, and are of equal importance than the other Objectives and goals.

18. Renew our commitment to working together, with political will and tangible projects that contribute to the prosperity and modernization of our economies and societies, promoting sustainable socio-economic development, social inclusion and environmental protection; and prioritizing the enhancement of our human talent.

19. Recognize the existing asymmetries among the Member States of CELAC, which must be taken into account in the construction and execution of all of our Community's initiatives and projects.

20. Recognize the need to promote sustainable consumption and production patterns, which will contribute to eradicating poverty, mitigating and adapting to climate change, biodiversity conservation and other regional priorities with a global impact, taking into account our respective capabilities.

21. Welcome the decision to eliminate agricultural export subsidies, adopted at the Tenth Ministerial Conference of WTO, held in Nairobi, from December 15<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015. We support that the work of this Organization remains focused, at its core, on development, prioritizing the interests and concerns of developing countries.

## CLIMATE CHANGE

22. We are pleased with CELAC's contribution to the success of the 21<sup>st</sup> Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Paris, France, from November 30<sup>th</sup> to December 12<sup>th</sup> 2015, and welcome the adoption of the Paris Agreement and its enabling framework, which constitutes a meaningful step in the reduction of the impact of climate change, as it establishes a legally binding agreement under the tenets of the Convention, based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities in light of national circumstances, respective capabilities, and equality, without compromising our ability to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development. We will make all necessary efforts to consider its possible signature, ratification and / or adhesion, and its effective implementation, and we call on developed countries to take leadership in the global response to climate change, and also to fulfill their commitments of providing developing countries with the means of implementation, particularly in terms of financing, technology transfer, and capacity building. The Republic of Nicaragua is not a Party to the Paris Agreement.

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## ENVIRONMENT

23. Bolster regional efforts and initiatives to encourage the conservation and sustainable use of ecosystems, sustainable forest management, reducing deforestation and degradation, and promoting an increase in wooded reserves so as to warrant the protection of water sources, coral reefs, safeguarding biodiversity and combatting climate change.

24. We shall increase regional cooperation to promptly respond to the adverse impacts of extreme phenomena related to climate change, as well as other crises and economic, social and environmental disasters on human health, water security and food and nutrition security, particularly of the most vulnerable populations.

25. To promote and strengthen, in full respect of national legislations, public-private partnerships, among other means of implementation, to advance in fulfilling the goals and objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

26. Emphasize the high vulnerability of our region to the negative consequences of climate change and, in this regard, we highlight the need to take into account the special necessities and circumstances derived from the climate vulnerability of our countries, including Small Island Developing States and low-lying coastal States, the countries of the Central American Isthmus, and those suffering the effects of El Niño and La Niña phenomena and the Landlocked Developing Countries in the region; and we recognize the need to decidedly increase efforts to build resilient societies, ecosystems and economies to the adverse effects of climate change, and address the impacts of natural disasters and those of anthropogenic origin.

## HUMAN RIGHTS AND TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATIONS

27. Call on countries to strengthen the mechanisms that ensure that companies will respect human rights, nature and the environment, in accordance and compliance with the applicable international instruments on business and human rights, in accordance with national legislations.

28. Sympathize with the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, in their disputes with certain transnational companies that have contaminated their territories, ecosystems and communities.

29. Recall the adoption of the Resolution A/HRC/RES/26/9 titled "Elaboration of an international legally binding instrument on transnational corporations and other business enterprises with respect to human rights", adopted within the framework of the United Nations Human Rights Council, as well as the importance of the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

30. Pledge our efforts to continue strengthening and jointly improving multilateral policies and initiatives to resolve disputes between States and transnational corporations.

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## LABOR

31. Note the work of the Intergovernmental Open-Ended Working Group in charge of negotiating, finalizing and submitting to the Human Rights Council a United Nations draft Declaration on the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas; and encourage them to continue these important negotiations.

32. Recognize the great socioeconomic challenges facing our region, based on which we pledge to mutually support each other to improve our social cohesion, promote decent labor in benefit of men, women and young people, eradicate child labor and protect the labor rights of all workers, including migrant workers from the Community's Member States.

33. Reaffirm our commitment, in line with the Brasilia Declaration on Child Labor (3<sup>rd</sup> Global Conference on Child Labor, Brasilia, October 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup>, 2013), to eliminate the worst forms of child labor by 2016, while reaffirming the broader objective to steadily eradicate all forms of child labor, increasing our efforts at the domestic and international level.

## COOPERATION

34. Reiterate our conviction that South-South cooperation constitutes a favored tool for complementarity, solidarity, union, integration and the horizontal exchange of knowledge amongst countries, and we emphasize that Latin America and the Caribbean possesses a successful and tangible body of assertive experiences regarding South-South and triangular cooperation.

35. Consider that triangular cooperation, as a bridge between different experiences and modalities of cooperation, is an important tool for increasing our relationships with our partners outside the region through sharing experiences, knowledge, best practices, relevant public policies and the formation and training of human resources; and that could take into account the principles of South-South cooperation.

36. With a view to identifying regional cooperation priorities, we reiterate that the Declaration of Santiago, the Havana Special Declaration on International Cooperation and CELAC's Conceptual Framework on International Cooperation will guide cooperation at the community level. Cooperation, either within or outside the region, will seek to align itself to the priorities defined by our countries.

37. Reiterate the importance of continuing the implementation of the 2025 Plan on Food Security, Nutrition and Eradication of Hunger, adopted at the Belén Summit, in Costa Rica, in January 2015; and in this regard, we recall the work done at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of CELAC's Working Group on the Advancement of Women: *"Food and Nutritional Security. Empowerment of the Rural Woman"*, held on October 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015 in San Salvador, El Salvador.



38. Reaffirm the commitment of CELAC's Member States to the sustainable development of Small Island Developing States and low-lying coastal developing States, which can be achieved through a set of efforts between governments, civil society and the private sector, that takes into account the particular situations and vulnerabilities of these States, and that can be resolved through international cooperation.

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES

39. Highlight the importance of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), including the Internet, as tools to foster peace, human well-being, development, knowledge, social inclusion and economic growth. We reaffirm the peaceful use of ICT, and urge the international community to avoid and refrain from carrying out unilateral measures which are incompatible with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and International Law, such as those with the objective of subverting societies or creating situations with the potential of fostering conflict amongst States. At the same time, we stress, in regard to the use of ICT, the need to not infringe on the individual's right to privacy.

40. In this context, we recognize the importance of advancing regional cooperation on information and communications technologies, in line with the agreements of the World Summit of the Information Society, according to national legislation, and its recent follow-up process (WSIS + 10) where new guidelines were drawn to bridge the digital gap and to build confidence and security when using ICT.

41. Welcome the results of the Fifth Ministerial Conference on the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Mexico City from August 5<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup>, 2015, and reaffirm the commitment to the goals expressed in the Digital Agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean (eLAC2018), as a guiding instrument for strengthening cooperation, coordination and regional integration in regards to digital issues.

42. Recognize the essential role of energy in the comprehensive and social development of countries. We reaffirm our commitment to promoting regional energy integration as a foundation for sustainable development, to the efficient and rational use of energy, to social inclusion, environmental protection, to reducing the impacts of climate change, to the diversification of the energy matrix oriented towards the use of clean, renewable and sustainable energy sources, and universalizing access to energy services that improve our people's quality of life and contribute to the eradication of poverty.

## REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL ARCHITECTURE

43. Emphasize the multilateral commitment to broadening and strengthening the voice and participation of developing countries in international decision-making process and establishment of economic norms as well as on global economic governance, and to continue with governance reform in both the IMF and the World Bank, so that they may adapt to changes in the global economy.

44. Express our conviction of the importance of the issues related to strengthening our regional financial architecture and we encourage continued coordinated work. In this regard, we reaffirm our support for issues addressed in the Caracas and Havana Action Plans, and the resolutions adopted through the Quito Declaration of the CELAC's Second Meeting of Finance Ministers.

#### DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

45. Urge the international financial community to make extra and strenuous efforts to resolve the problems being faced by some Member States by the loss of correspondent banking relation, which presents profound difficulties for their national economies and which affect their financial and international-trade security.

46. Highlight the importance for the regional development finance institutions to take into consideration the principles of solidarity, asymmetry compensation and financing focused on the regional development priorities, bearing in mind international standards, principles and best practices; and we urge national development institutions and invite the central banks of Latin America and the Caribbean to bolster the exchange of experiences and cooperation.

47. Recognize that middle-income countries still have major difficulties in achieving sustainable development and, therefore, we ask the United Nations System for development, international financial institutions, regional organizations and other concerned parties, to ensure that the diverse and specific development needs of middle-income countries are duly taken into account and addressed, in adaptation to their relevant strategies and policies in order to promote a coherent and broad approach.

48. Recognize the need to develop actions for dialogue, reflection, consultation, advisement, technical cooperation and exchange of experiences, as well as support among CELAC's member countries, on integral aspects of competition in their markets.

#### CULTURE

49. Endorse culture as a driving force that contributes to development, the eradication of poverty and the reduction of the social gaps in our region, as well as to knowledge, understanding and the integration of our peoples, renewing the commitments established in the Declaration of the III Meeting of Culture Ministers, held in Havana-Cuba, on September 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015, with special emphasis on regional leadership in regards to preventing and combatting illicit trafficking of cultural property, individual and collective cultural rights in the digital sphere and the celebration of the International Decade for People of African Descent.

50. Highlight CELAC's Cultural Action Plan (2015-2020), emphasizing the celebration of the high-level event on the prevention and fight against illicit trafficking of cultural heritage assets, to be held in Quito-Ecuador in the first quarter of 2016.



51. Reiterate our determination that CELAC is the ideal space for expressing our rich cultural diversity and, in turn, the appropriate space to assert Latin America and Caribbean identity. We urge CELAC's Ministers of Culture to, in their next sectoral meeting, assess the relevance of establishing guidelines for the registration and promotion of the Tangible Cultural Heritage of the region.

## DRUGS

52. Invite CELAC's Member States to, in their interventions during the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on the World Drug Problem UNGASS 2016, take into consideration the Special Declaration on the World Drug Problem, adopted at the Third Summit of Heads of State and Government of CELAC, held in Belén, Costa Rica, on January 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>, 2015, as well as the Declaration of Quito, adopted at the Second Ministerial Meeting on the World Drug Problem, held on May 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2015, in Quito, Ecuador.

53. Reaffirm the importance of an active participation, at the highest level possible, in the upcoming Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on the World Drug Problem 2016 (UNGASS), to be held in New York City from April 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup>, 2016, in order to contribute to an objective and in-depth examination of the progress, achievements and challenges in the task of addressing the World Drug Problem on the basis of a broad and inclusive debate.

## HABITAT

54. Reaffirm our commitment to actively participating in the preparatory meetings and in the Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), which will be held in Quito, Ecuador, during the week of October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2016, taking into consideration that Latin America and the Caribbean is one of the most urbanized regions in the world and that it is essential, therefore, to address the phenomenon of urbanization through the development and implementation of effective and inclusive public policies so as to avoid negative social impacts, geographic exclusion and environmental degradation. We note with interest the actions taken to move towards having inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities, and we congratulate the Government of Ecuador for hosting the Conference.

55. Welcome the results of the Second Global High-Level Conference on Road Safety, which took place in Brasilia on November 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015, particularly the recognition, in its Final Declaration, that there is still much to be done to achieve the goals of the United Nations Decade for Action and the Sustainable Development Goals in reducing deaths and injuries; that road safety is also a result of social inequality, given that the most vulnerable road users are victimized; and that promoting sustainable means of transportation is a key instrument for the promotion of road safety.

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## PANAMA CANAL

56. Recognize the efforts of the people and Government of Panama for the successful completion of the Panama Canal expansion project, which will continue to contribute to the development of the hemisphere, as well as to trade and global navigation.

## MIGRATION

57. Share a comprehensive vision of international migration, based on a human rights approach, which rejects the criminalization of irregular migration, as well as all forms of racism, xenophobia and discrimination against migrants; which recognizes migrants as subjects of rights regardless of their immigration status, and on an equal footing with nationals of the host country; which provides the integration of migrants in our societies; promotes the linkage with nationals living abroad; and facilitates the reintegration of returnees in their countries of origin.

58. Reiterate the need for regular, orderly and safe migration and highlight the social, cultural and economic contributions of migrants.

59. Stress the importance of international cooperation of all the countries involved in the migratory flow to address the challenges of migration, including combatting the smuggling of migrants, human trafficking, and all forms of discrimination against them.

60. Recognize the contributions of CELAC's Meetings on Migration as well as the need to continue the dialogue on all relevant issues in this matter, including those in reference to migrant children and teenagers.

61. Urge the receiving countries to end the policies of selective treatment of migrants on the basis of their country of origin.

62. Support the possibility of promoting exchanges, cooperation and dialogues of the diaspora, in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the Action Plan for the Decade of Latin American and Caribbean Peoples of African Descent.

63. Support, as well, the development of a United Nations draft declaration on the promotion and full respect of the human rights of peoples of African Descent, stressing the importance of starting said work as soon as possible, as well as of submitting substantive contributions to its drafting, and urge the United Nations General Assembly to, within the framework of the International Decade, convene the Fourth World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance.

64. Recognize, once again, that slavery and the slave trade were atrocious crimes in the history of humanity; hence, we welcome CARICOM's initiative for the creation of the Reparations Commission of the Caribbean Community and applaud the efforts of this Commission to redress the injustices of history.

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## INTEGRATION MECHANISMS

65. Highlight the importance of strengthening the coordination and linkage among Regional and Sub-regional Integration Mechanisms to consolidate CELAC in complementarity with other international fora, based on the norms and principles of International Law, complementarity, solidarity and promotion of a sovereign cooperation that meets the needs of our countries.

## UNITED NATIONS REFORM

66. Reiterate our commitment to comprehensive reform of the United Nations System. We underline the importance of deepening intergovernmental efforts to promote the necessary reform of the Security Council, including its working methods, in order to transform it into a transparent, representative, democratic and efficient body that is attune with the evolution undergone by the United Nations and international relations in the past 70 years. We also consider the revitalization of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council essential.

## EXTRA REGIONAL PARTNERS RELATIONS

67. Reaffirm our interest and willingness to continue building relationships with our extra-regional partners, within our means and irrespective of the bilateral relations between the member countries of the CELAC and said partners, based on the principles of equality, mutual benefit, voluntary and non-conditioned participation, and taking into account solidarity as a commitment to privilege Small Island Developing States and landlocked countries. To do so, we pledge to identify common interest areas with each of the partners, which contribute to maximizing the benefits for the Community, in particular the most vulnerable countries in the region.

68. Confirm our desire to advance the bi-regional strategic partnership with the European Union, the CELAC Forum with the People's Republic of China, the Political and Cooperation Dialogue Mechanism with the Russian Federation, and the political dialogues with the Republic of India, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Turkey, Japan and ASEAN, among other actors, based on the terms agreed with each partner, in accordance with International Law and common interests and values; moreover, we reaffirm the willingness to implement the programs and actions agreed upon at bi-regional Summits, Fora and Meetings.

69. Emphasize the reflection on the future of the bi-regional partnership with the European Union, whose results will be examined at the CELAC-EU Meeting of Foreign Ministers in 2016, processes that will help to strengthen our relationships with countries and groups of countries, making them even more balanced, efficient, constructive and symmetrical.

70. Encourage the definition of actions to explore dialogue between CELAC and the African Union.

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## PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL FORA

71. Continue to strengthen consultation and coordination among CELAC's Member States, in the United Nations and other multilateral fora, in order to continue speaking out as a region, where appropriate and without prejudice to existing coordinating groups, on issues of interest and relevance to the Community's Member States, as well as to submit, when feasible and required, joint initiatives adopted by consensus.

## DECOLONIZATION

72. Reiterate the Latin American and Caribbean character of Puerto Rico and, in noting the resolutions on Puerto Rico adopted by the United Nations Special Committee on Decolonization, reiterate that it is an issue of interest for CELAC.

73. CELAC member countries pledge to continue working, within the framework of International Law, and in particular in Resolution 1514/(XV) of the United Nations General Assembly of December 14<sup>th</sup>, 1960, to ensure that the region of Latin America and the Caribbean be a territory free of colonialism and colonies.

74. Entrust the CELAC Quartet, together with the participation of other Member States wishing to join this mandate, to submit proposals to advance as stated in paragraph 72 of this Declaration.

75. Reiterate our firm regional support for the legitimate rights of the Argentine Republic in the sovereignty dispute over the Malvinas, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas, as well as the permanent interest that this dispute be solved by peaceful means and through negotiations, in accordance with the Resolution 31/49 of the United Nations General Assembly.

## CELAC

76. Emphasize the need to strengthen and deepen monitoring and evaluation of the compliance with the CELAC's agreements, in order to recommend sustainable and inclusive public policies that have a concrete impact on our citizens, who are the final arbiters of the success of our agreements.

77. Welcome the conclusions of the meetings of the sectoral themes, held pursuant to the 2015 CELAC Action Plan, that monitor and follow up on the agreed mandates, and we thank the countries that have hosted several meetings, as listed below: 17<sup>th</sup> CELAC - EU High Level Meeting of the Coordination and Cooperation Mechanism on Drugs, Montevideo, Uruguay, on February 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>; 2<sup>nd</sup> Ministerial Meeting on the World Drug Problem, Quito, Ecuador, May 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>; 1<sup>st</sup> CELAC-China Forum on Infrastructure, Macau, China, June 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>; 1<sup>st</sup> CELAC Meeting of Planning and Statistics Authorities, Quito, Ecuador, July 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>; 2<sup>nd</sup>

Sino-Latin American Young Politicians Forum and Sino-Latin American Cooperation and Young Entrepreneurs Forum, Beijing, China, July 30<sup>th</sup> to August 10<sup>th</sup>; 3<sup>rd</sup> CELAC Meeting of the International Cooperation Working Group, Quito, Ecuador, August 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>; Preparatory Meeting and 3<sup>rd</sup> CELAC Senior Officers Meeting on Science and Technology, Quito, Ecuador, September 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>; 1<sup>st</sup> CELAC-China Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation, Quito, Ecuador, September 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>; 3<sup>rd</sup> Specialized Meeting of Ministers of Culture, Havana, Cuba, September 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup>; 9<sup>th</sup> China-Latin American and the Caribbean Business Summit, Guadalajara, Mexico, October 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>; 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of Ministers and High Level Officers on Preventing and Combatting Corruption, Panama, Panama, October 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>; Fourth Meeting of Regional and Sub-regional Integration Mechanisms, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, October 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>; 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Working Group on Peoples of African Descent, Brasilia, Brazil, October 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>; 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of Ministers and High Level Officers on Social Development for Eradicating Hunger and Poverty, Caracas, Venezuela, October 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>; 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Working Group on the Advancement of Women, San Salvador, El Salvador, October 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>; 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Energy Ministers, Tarija, Bolivia, October 30<sup>th</sup>; 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Working Group on Family Agriculture and 2<sup>nd</sup> Ministerial Meeting on Family Agriculture, San Jose, Costa Rica, November 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>; 4<sup>th</sup> CELAC Meeting on Migration, San Salvador, El Salvador, November 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>; Joint Meeting of Foreign Ministers, Ministers of Environment and other High Level National Officers with competence on climate change, Quito, Ecuador, November 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>.

78. Guided by the values and founding principles of CELAC, we reiterate our commitment to its strengthening, in benefit of our peoples and for the construction of more prosperous, cohesive and sustainable societies, for the sake of our citizens, of nature and of future generations.

79. Resolve to adopt the 2016 CELAC Action Plan, in order to consolidate actions that contribute to the advancement and development of our peoples.

80. Entrust the upcoming Meeting of Foreign Ministers of CELAC, to be held in March 2016, under the Pro-Tempore Presidency of the Dominican Republic, to decide on the 2017 Pro-Tempore Presidency.

81. We appreciate the work accomplished by the Pro-Tempore Presidency of Ecuador during 2015 in compliance with the agreed mandates and in the advancement of CELAC's international agenda, as well as the valuable support offered by the Quartet.

82. Express our gratitude to the illustrious Government of the Republic of Ecuador and to the Ecuadorian people for the successful completion of the Fourth Summit of Heads of State and Government of CELAC, held in Quito, Ecuador, on January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

Quito, January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2016.