



**XXIV GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MINISTERS AND HIGH LEVEL AUTHORITIES OF HOUSING
AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

**Montego Bay
August 26 – 28, 2015
DECLARATION OF MONTEGO BAY**

Considering:

1. That the General Assembly of Ministers and High-Level Authorities of Housing and Urban Development of Latin America and the Caribbean (MINURVI), that was created in 1992, is the main forum for policy consultation, coordination and regional cooperation on issues regarding sustainable housing and urban land management, with a view to gradually finding housing solutions for the Region's inhabitants.
2. That the city should guarantee all of its residents access to goods and services, that National Urban Policies are the social contract of each country with respect to the political objectives of urban development and human settlements and that the State plays an essential role in guaranteeing that these objectives are realised.
3. That cities and urban areas are generally considered to be centres of opportunity and growth, but are also sources of inequality, unacceptable living conditions, social, environmental and economic vulnerability and that they endanger the welfare of major sectors of the population.
4. That we should improve quality of life and contribute to urban and social inclusion of the poorest households in the society, in particular those in informal settlements.
5. That we should reaffirm the right to the city, access to decent housing and should resolve problems such as poverty, vulnerability, segregation and informal living conditions that affect the region by introducing comprehensive public housing and urban development programmes that provide access to financing, and result in houses that satisfy the conditions of comfort, safety and sanitation, urban land management, with potable water, electricity and sanitation services, and facilities for education, health, recreation and that offer access to community spaces; and should ensure the connectivity of these settlements to the city.
6. That the region is susceptible to risks due to natural disasters, the vulnerability of human settlements, and to the characteristics of the areas in which they are located, and that those primarily affected are poor and informal settlements in vulnerable situations.
7. That countries in the region, particularly Small Island Developing States (SIDS), are extremely vulnerable to the negative impacts of climate change related to hurricanes, floods, landslides, droughts and rising sea levels, *inter alia*. Mitigation, adaptation, resilience, and disaster risk reduction strategies, planning and programming should be viewed within the context of national security and economic development, and should inform policies on sustainable development.



8. That given the traditional pattern of self-help housing in rural and urban areas practiced by residents of the region, our planning and building authorities should strengthen and channel these resources, providing assistance and supervision during the process, with a view to increasing access to all public services.
9. That we should develop policies to rehabilitate derelict and abandoned buildings that could constitute new housing solutions.
10. That rural housing linked to rural-urban productivity is one of the primary challenges that the region faces and that it is indispensable that we create new models of rural development linked to opportunities offered by urban markets in a manner that does not replicate the poverty of rural areas.
11. That we should redefine strategies and policies, incorporating considerations of equity in a new urban development agenda that strengthens existing policies to engender an increasingly more inclusive, democratic and participatory society.
12. That cognizant of the accelerated urbanisation of Latin America and the Caribbean and in light of the upcoming United Nations Conference on Housing and Urban Development (Habitat III), to be held in Quito, Ecuador in October of 2016, it is important to highlight problems faced by the region and to adopt a common regional position.
13. That there is need for continued active involvement of MINURVI member countries, despite changes in political administrations and/ or in Ministerial Portfolios.
14. That it is necessary that Heads of State of the host country of the General Assembly extend special invitations to their counterparts to promote greater participation of the region in MINURVI-related matters.
15. That it is urgent to obtain a to commitment at the highest level to provide accessible and decent housing and sustainable urban development, and to ensure greater active participation of CARICOM and member countries of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECD).
16. That it is urgent that we assume a leadership role in the defining, follow-up, and monitoring of sustainable development objectives to be approved by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2015, with objective 11 indicating a commitment to construct inclusive, secure, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements.
17. That it is essential to maintain the commitment of governments in achieving targets 10 and 11 of Objective 7 of the Millennium Development Goals adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations Summit in 2000.
18. That UN-Habitat has adopted the practice of developing a Regional Strategic Plan in a participatory manner and this of interest to countries in the Region.



Recognising:

1. The consistent support and collaboration of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the Regional Office of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, embodied in its support in the preparation of thematic documents, as well as conducting seminars and training courses. In particular, it has offered support in the preparation of a MINURVI position for the New Urban Agenda that will be agreed on at the Habitat III Conference.
2. The outstanding work of the countries that were part of the Executive Committee in 2014 – 2015, particularly, Argentina, that is in charge of the MINURVI Technical Secretariat.
3. The hospitality of the Jamaican authorities, and in particular the excellent organization of the meeting by the Minister of Transport, Works and Housing, in its capacity as host of this Assembly, in collaboration with the National Housing Trust and the Tourism Enhancement Fund.

The Ministers and High Level Authorities of Housing and Urban Development in Latin American and the Caribbean, participating in this General Assembly.

Agree to:

1. Assume a leadership role and commit to the development of an inclusive, participatory, productive and resilient urban agenda.
2. Recognise and reiterate that the city is the supreme public space to which all inhabitants have right of access, where citizenship is exercised, and where conditions are created that ensure that all persons, families and communities enjoy a certain quality of life, allowing for the expression of diversity and culture.
3. Ensure that this new urban agenda incorporates objectives and measures that promote equity, universal access to decent housing, access to quality urban infrastructure, and increases the sustainability and resilience of settlements, INCREASE safety in cities, on the basis of government systems that strengthen mechanisms for social participation and the exercising of democracy, and strengthens institutions to diversify and develop financial and productive instruments in urban centres.
4. Reaffirm the importance of and the challenges associated with the definition of a New Urban Agenda for the region and ensure active participation in the preparatory process for the conference, and ensure that the regional position is recognised at Habitat III.
5. Update the Regional Action Plan for Latin America and the Caribbean given the commitments and priorities of the Region and the proposals adopted for the Habitat III Conference.
6. Further develop housing and urban development policies that guarantee equity in land distribution, decrease urban segregation, promote land sustainability, incorporate risk management, taking into account the relationship between small, medium-sized and large cities and that strengthen regional institutions.



7. Generate strategies that will allow cities to become a source of political and social stability and thus enable continued transformation towards inclusive and sustainable development that is people-centred.
 8. Continue to analyse best practices in terms of urban planning, housing development and support systems and infrastructure of cities.
 9. Promote the sustainability of human settlements and reduce their vulnerability, developing strategies for risk prevention and emergency management in response to natural events, and develop regulatory, technological and building frameworks and infrastructure that mitigates risk.
 10. Share best practices on alternative renewable energy solutions to meet energy needs and reduce water consumption, which will lead to a reduction in the use of fossil fuels and a reduction in pollutant emissions.
 11. Continue to analyse best practices for the production of rural housing in keeping with local customs and practices, coupled with adequate technical assistance and supervision during the process; as well as access to all essential services, hath mitigate migration to urban centres.
 12. Forward the requisite information, in due time and form, relative to research carried out by collaborating entities or the Technical Secretariat, to facilitate the advancement of work on documents pertinent to the decision-making process in member countries, and establish
 13. Hold summit meetings with Ministers of Housing and Urban Development in CARICOM and OECS member countries.
 14. MINURVI will serve as an advisory body for the UN-Habitat Regional Strategic Plan and proposes that this plan draws on the agreements and issues of interest discussed within MUNURVI.
1. Entrust to the MINURVI Executive Committee the following tasks:
 - a. Finalize work on the drafting of the Regional Report by October 31, 2015, to be presented at the Habitat III Conference.
 - b. To follow up on the commitment to submit the National Reports for the Habitat III Conference.
 - c. To encourage the involvement of foreign ministries of MINURVI member countries in urban development and housing issues to ensure their relevance to the government agenda, and establish strategies to increase MINURVI's visibility at the international level.
 - d. Develop strategies to encourage country participation in the MINURVI process.
 - e. Continue work on the following issues:
 - Sustainable development and risk management
 - Preparations for Habitat II, Latin America and the Caribbean's position and vision



- Funding policies for housing for the middle and lower income brackets, as well as necessary infrastructure and amenities.
 - Increased involvement in the preparatory process for Habitat III, ensuring a place for MINURVI's position in the definition of the New Urban Agenda.
2. To ensure that the Executive Committee be comprised as follows until the XXV MINURVI ASSEMBLY:

The Central American and Mexican sub-region will be represented by El Salvador and Costa Rica, and the latter will act as the focal point for the sub-region.

The Caribbean sub-region will be represented by Cuba and Barbados and the latter will act as the focal point for the sub-region.

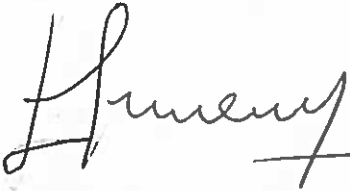
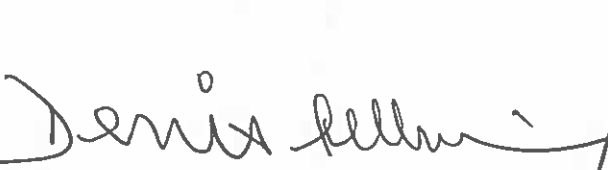



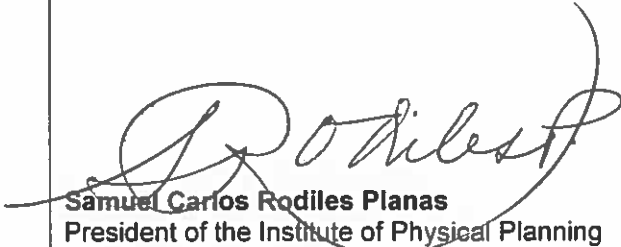

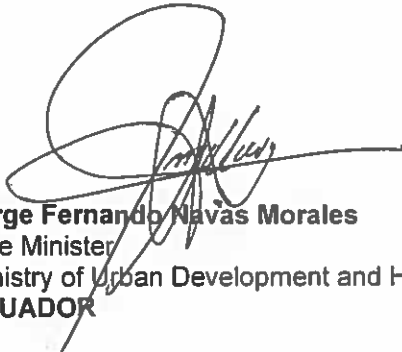
The South American sub- region will be represented by Chile and Ecuador, and the latter will act as the focal point for the sub-region.

Countries designated as focal points will undertake to foster increased participation of countries in the sub-region in the activities of the Technical Secretariat.

3. To appoint Argentina to assume the role of MINURVI Secretary General.
4. To convene the XXV MINURVI General Assembly in 2016 in Paraguay.

Montego Bay, Jamaica. 28th day of August, 2015.



 <p>Lydia Mabel Martínez de Jiménez National Director of Housing Policies Sub Secretary of Urban Development and Housing ARGENTINA</p>	 <p>Denis ST. Elmo Kellman Minister of Housing Land and Rural Development BARBADOS</p>
 <p>Júnia Santa Rosa Director National Secretary of Housing BRASIL</p>	 <p>Paulina Saball Astaburuaga Minister Ministry of Housing and Urbanization CHILE</p>
 <p>Rosendo Pujol Mesalles Minister Ministry of Housing and Human Settlements COSTA RICA</p>	 <p>Samuel Carlos Rodiles Planas President of the Institute of Physical Planning CUBA</p>
 <p>Lucien Blackmoore Permanent Secretary Ministry of Housing , Land and Water Management DOMINICA</p>	 <p>Jorge Fernando Navas Morales Vice Minister Ministry of Urban Development and Housing ECUADOR</p>



 <p>José Roberto Gochez Espinosa Vice Minister of Housing and Urbanization EL SALVADOR</p>	 <p>Morais Guy Minister without Portfolio (Housing) Ministry of Transport Works and Housing JAMAICA</p>
 <p>Paloma Silva de Anzoreña Director General National Commission on Housing MEXICO</p>	 <p>María Soledad Nuñez Méndez Minister Executive Secretary of Housing and the Habitat PARAGUAY</p>
 <p>Rafael R. Vasquez G. Technical Deputy Director National Institute of Housing DOMINICAN REPUBLIC</p>	 <p>Stanley Félix Minister of Housing SAINT LUCIA</p>
 <p>Asgar Ali Advisor Ministry of Housing TRINIDAD and TOBAGO</p>	 <p>Francisco Beltrame Echeverría President National Housing Agency URUGUAY</p>