

## **SPECIAL DECLARATION 14: ON SUSTAINABLE HEALTH SYSTEMS**

We, the Heads of State and Government of Latin America and the Caribbean, gathered in Punta Cana, the Dominican Republic, on the occasion of the V Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), on January 25, 2017.

1. Reiterate our commitment to guaranteeing the right of every person to enjoy the highest possible standard of timely, affordable and quality physical and mental health, recognizing that this right assists every human being, without distinction of any kind and respectful of the diverse cultural systems of healthcare in the region.
2. We welcome the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including its Goal 3, which highlights the importance of guaranteeing a healthy lifestyle and promoting the well-being of all and at all ages.
3. Recognize that Universal Health Coverage, based on the principles of equity, solidarity and social justice, and multisectoral action, is a means to promote and guarantee access to health services, since people in situations of vulnerability in societies are often more likely to have health problems. In this regard, we note that communicable diseases with higher mortality affect especially the poorest populations in the world, which represents a significant burden on the economies of developing countries and requires increased financial contributions from developed countries, especially malaria, HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis.
4. Likewise, we recognize that health is a priority factor in sustainable development, and in this context we reaffirm that States must adopt, at the national level, all necessary measures to make effective the right of all people to benefit from the highest possible level of physical and mental health, to development and ensure, among other things, equality of opportunity for all in regards to access to health services.
5. We also recognize the need to strengthen resilience and promote integrated national health systems, which aim to ensure universal access to quality health services, and universal health coverage, including access to medicines and vaccines.
6. We affirm that it is essential to strengthen public health services for the development of all Member States, stressing the need of building capacity, including training and hiring of personnel, as well as the strengthening of services for the prevention of infectious diseases and their immunization.
7. We emphasize the importance of timely international cooperation in the field of health, in particular the prevention and control of infectious diseases, especially during epidemic outbreaks and emergencies, including the need to cooperate in

research and development related to health, and combat antimicrobial resistance on the basis of the principles of mutual respect and equality.

8. We emphasize the need to invest in primary health care, including health education, promotion of healthy habits throughout the life cycle, immunization, maternal and child health, access to medicines, maintaining environmental health, ensuring sanitation services, prevention and control of HIV/AIDS and non-communicable diseases (NCDs), which ultimately reduce tertiary health care costs.
9. We express our commitment to encourage consideration of the recommendations contained in the UN Secretary General's High Level Panel on Medicines as an input for the achievement of international consensus for the benefit of public health and to advance on the implementation of the commitments on sustainable development.
10. We consider that community involvement is fundamental, to foster the health of the community aimed at modifying the socio-environmental determinants that affect it, creating a model that prioritizes health promotion and the empowerment of the population.
11. We believe that emerging global health problems, such as the Zika virus, require persistent attention and resources, and emphasize the need for sustainable and resilient health systems that can address such challenges through preventive and healthcare advocacy measures. We recognize that threats to the health system require a comprehensive approach by all Stakeholders involved, and that sufficient resources are required, of diverse nature and rapid response networks, with which we can protect the health security of our region.
12. We recognize the need to strengthen public health governance, technical and institutional capacities of the countries, with the purpose of contributing effectively to the health of the peoples and to protect the population from social and economic consequences due to precarious health in a globalized world.
13. We agree to continue examining models for financing health care and public health service systems, in order to progressively advance by strengthening cooperation among member countries.
14. We declare our support for continued investment in human resource development, capacity building, service delivery and the development of information systems and social mobilization as components of sustainable and resilient health systems.

Punta Cana, January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2017