

Assembly Mirabal Sisters Declaration

Having convened virtually the XI General Assembly of ILO, Mirabal Sisters, it agrees by the unanimity of participants on the following

DECLARATION

- I. The Assembly celebrates having carried out its 11th edition virtually, which although it happened for reasons of great concern to humanity as a whole -to be going through a pandemic-, allowed ILO members and other people active in the promotion and defense of human rights in various parts of our region and the rest of the world to get together, facilitating an exchange that cannot always be achieved in face-to-face meetings due to travel and resource limitations and other imponderables.
- II. Acknowledges and values the support provided by the International Ombudsman Institute (IIO), which made it possible to have simultaneous interpretation service and the technical support necessary to overcome the barriers of language and distance.
- III. It appreciates the solidarity effort of each and every one of the Ombudsman Institutions and their partners who, over the course of several months, contributed ideas, efforts and concrete dedication so that this Assembly could be held, despite the adverse conditions that we are experiencing as humanity
- IV. It states the importance of having met -based on the historical moment that we are going through- to collectively think about the appropriate responses from the Human Rights Institutions to the challenges posed not only by the pandemic, but, and in particular, by the responses given by the Governments that have weakened Human Rights, in some cases non-compliance, and even subjugation of the Human Rights of various population throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.
- V. It emphasizes the fact that many worrying situations that have been denounced by ILO and its partners regarding human rights violations have been aggravated in the context of the pandemic. As presented in the seminar that preceded the Assembly, issues of great concern that affect our region include: generational vulnerabilities (childhood, adolescence and youth; adult life and the elderly, with a profound weight on this population categorized as “population at risk” and limited in its agency and dignity by an exclusively sanitary approach to responding to the pandemic); increase in domestic and gender violence; limitations on various rights due to the socioeconomic crisis resulting from the pandemic and the lack of social protection policies: health, work, food, housing, education, mobility; increased control and repression; democratic weakening; lockdown situations during the pandemic; rights of migrants, indigenous peoples, Afro-descendant population; increased racism and xenophobia.

- VI. It expresses its concern regarding a growing tendency to question the legitimacy of the Ombudsman Institutions when they act within their legal framework, denouncing, proposing, recommending actions to the different State agencies to overcome situations such as those mentioned above that constitute violations of Human Rights. In 2020, ILO made public its concern regarding situations that occurred in Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Peru and Uruguay.
- VII. It also expresses its concern about the delay in the constitution of the Ombudsman for Children's and Adolescent's Rights at all national and local jurisdictions, thus breaching international commitments contracted by the States. The existing one in Chile stands out in this sense, having been the first Ombudsman Institution to be created in that country.
- VIII. Likewise, it expresses its approval for the efforts being made in Chile to create an Ombudsman for the Elderly and trusts that it will be confirmed as part of the constitutional process in which said country is embarking upon, without resigning to our permanent demands for the creation of an Ombudsman's Office in Chile, thus ratifying the actions of the Chilean Chapter of the Ombudsman that has pursued this objective for thirty-five years.
- IX. In the same vein, and after eleven years in which the Office of the Ombudsman of the Argentine Nation is vacant, it expresses the call to proceed without further delay and in compliance with the constitutional mandate to appoint the corresponding authorities.
- X. It expresses the recommendation to Latin American Ombudsmen at all levels to support processes for the creation of local Ombudsman Institutions, since these are the ones that are most directly and immediately related to the population, to their needs and their expectations of respect and fulfilment of their rights.
- XI. It also expresses its satisfaction with the UN resolution on the functions of the Ombudsman Institutions (A / RES / 72/186) adopted by consensus on November 19, 2020, by virtue of which the Venice Principles on the Ombudsman -in whose elaboration ILO participated- are established as the world standard; those principles establish that this institution has an important role to develop in the strengthening of democracy, the rule of law, good administration, and the protection and promotion of Human Rights and fundamental freedoms. Based on these Principles, it highlights the importance of providing the Ombudsman Institutions with the human, material and financial resources necessary for the full exercise of their activities.
- XII. It recognises the significance of these efforts promoted by the International Ombudsman Institute (IIO) and predicts that this will contribute to a closer relationship between the IIO and the ILO with the UN.



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- XIII. It addresses all Ombudsman Institutions, public protectors and commissions at all levels inviting them to express their support in the same sense as the efforts recognised above.
- XIV. Likewise, it recognises the importance of strengthening network relationships of the Ombudsman Institutions and the need to implement efforts for the preparation and training of human rights defenders and other agents that make up the cadres of each of the Institutions.
- XV. Finally, it expresses its appreciation for the fruitful work carried out by ILO members on different issues significantly affected by the development of the pandemic and recognises the efforts of the Ombudsmen, Public Protectors and Human Rights Commissions of Latin America and the Caribbean for actively assuming the defense of human rights, in many cases with enormous difficulties.

This **Declaration** is signed on the 28th day of November 2020.

Cristina Ayoub Riche
President of ILO

Ismael Rins
Secretary General of ILO