



## Economic and Social Council

### Advance Unedited Version

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#### High-level political forum on sustainable development

Convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council

New York, 14-23 July 2025

Item 2 of the provisional agenda\*

#### **Regional contribution on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean**

##### **Note by the Secretariat**

The Secretariat hereby transmits the input from the eighth meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development, held in Santiago from 31 March to 4 April 2025, to the high-level political forum on sustainable development.

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\* [E/HLPF/2025/1](#).

### *Summary*

The eighth meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development was held in Santiago, from 31 March to 4 April 2025, chaired by Peru, in its capacity as Chair of ECLAC, and was open to member States of the Forum and observers, the United Nations system, regional and subregional bodies, international financial institutions, the private sector, academia and civil society.

The Executive Secretary of ECLAC presented the document *Latin America and the Caribbean in the Final Five Years of the 2030 Agenda: Steering Transformations to Accelerate Progress*, which analyses the progress and status of the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 3, 5, 8, 14 and 17, as well as projections for their achievement by 2030.

On 31 March several multistakeholder events were held, including meetings of civil society, the Regional Collaborative Platform for Latin America and the Caribbean with the United Nations country team in Chile and with United Nations resident coordinators in Latin America and the Caribbean, and more than forty side events.

Intergovernmentally agreed conclusions and recommendations of the eighth meeting of the Forum were adopted.

The present report is based on the summary of the Chair of the meeting.

## **Introduction**

1. The eighth meeting of the Forum was held at the headquarters of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in Santiago, from 31 March to 4 April 2025, convened under the auspices of ECLAC. It was open to member States of the Forum, associate members of ECLAC, and observers, the United Nations system, United Nations resident coordinators, intergovernmental organizations, international financial institutions, academia, the private sector and civil society.

2. Preparatory activities included the Forum of children, adolescents and youth of Latin America and the Caribbean; the Interfaith preforum of the eighth meeting of the Forum; the meeting of the Mechanism for civil society participation in the Sustainable Development Agenda and in the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development; and the meetings of the Regional Collaborative Platform for Latin America and the Caribbean with the United Nations country team in Chile and with United Nations resident coordinators in Latin America and the Caribbean. More than forty side events, organized by multiple stakeholders.

## **Opening session**

3. The Executive Secretary said that that in the current uncertain economic and geopolitical context, financing, international and regional cooperation, and multisectoral partnerships were essential for achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. ECLAC worked to galvanize the management of transformations in areas such as governance, social dialogue and the technical, operational, political and prospective capabilities of the institutions responsible for each SDGs.

4. The Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of Peru and Chair of the Forum, said that the Forum promoted coordination and collaboration among countries of the region, fostered national capacity-building, identified gaps,

challenges and shared goals, and enabled peer-to-peer learning through the exchange of good practices and lessons learned. He reaffirmed Peru's commitment to multilateralism and the promotion of an international development agenda centred on social inclusion, sustainability and cooperation.

5. The Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs said that the stark realities and escalating global challenges that undermined development gains and growth prospects called for a decisive response and renewed urgency to strengthen multilateralism. He highlighted the region's leadership in transformative, people-centred sustainable development policies, noting that the pivotal conferences to be held in 2025 would reset the trajectory towards the SDGs and a fit-for-purpose international system.

6. The Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations said that with five years remaining and progress on sustainable development dangerously off-track, countries of the region nevertheless continued to lead on the global stage. The Pact for the Future must not remain words on paper: achieving the SDGs demanded bold reform, regional unity of purpose and acceleration of the key transitions to drive systemic change. The unprecedented merging of policy and operational assets resulting from the stronger link between regional commissions and the resident coordinator system had the potential to enhance support to the entire region. The Forum must be a turning point for renewed commitment to the 2030 Agenda and joint action.

### Dialogues on global action

7. The Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs said that the Forum uniquely integrated dialogues for action at all levels, which was crucial for innovative responses to sustainable development challenges. The three upcoming global summits were critical opportunities for the international community to reinvigorate partnerships to arrest detrimental trends and accelerate implementation of the 2030 Agenda, through bold action in areas such as financing for development, debt and international financial architecture reform, social development, poverty eradication, and climate resilience and adaption.

8. **The Session on the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (Seville, Spain, 2025)** was moderated by Roberto Carlos Ramírez, Undersecretary of Finance, Honduras. The Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs said that obstacles to vital investment in sustainable development and climate action trapped developing countries in a vicious cycle of limited growth or worse, stagnation. The draft outcome document proposed a transformative investment push for fiscal space and resource mobilization, and a fundamental overhaul of the international financial architecture. José Antonio Ocampo, Professor of the School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University, spoke about various measures to tackle debt distress in developing countries, strengthen national and international development banks, establish specific funds to support sustainability and address taxation of global corporations and high-income earners. Daniel Titelman, Chief of the Economic Development Division of ECLAC, said that national and international finance pillars were complementary, and that tax reform was needed to achieve more progressive systems at both levels. Dinorah Singer, Senior Executive at the Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean (CAF) in Chile, said that it was necessary to highlight development banks' role in helping countries to narrow gaps and the need to strengthen their resource mobilization and foster a new international financial architecture. Finally, Kamina Johnson Smith, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Jamaica, said that the financial obstacles to SDG attainment in the region should be addressed through international financial architecture reform, reorientation of financing for sustainable development and private sector engagement aligned with international financial institutions' initiatives targeting developing countries.

9. **The Session on the Second World Summit for Social Development (Qatar, 2025)** was moderated by Michelle Muschett, Regional Director for Latin America of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, said that social development progress in the past 30 years had brought one billion people out of extreme poverty, but the current moment was one of profound global crisis. The Second World Summit would chart a course forward. The Executive Secretary of ECLAC presented the special report entitled "The road to the 2025 Second World Summit for Social Development: towards a pact for inclusive social development"<sup>1</sup>. Kirk Humphrey, Minister of People Empowerment and Elder Affairs of Barbados, expressed both hope and scepticism, recalling the aspirational spirit of the first World Summit while acknowledging its failure to determine the "hows" of implementation, and he called for bravery moving forward. Javiera Toro,

<sup>1</sup> See <https://repositorio.cepal.org/entities/publication/c3af8441-3fab-4927-bfef-67f359a5d78f>.

Minister of Social Development and Family Affairs of Chile, said that social development ministers of the region had agreed that the document *Latin America and the Caribbean looking ahead to the Second World Summit for Social Development: proposals for inclusive social development*<sup>2</sup> would serve as input for the Second World Summit. Leslie Urteaga Peña, Minister of Development and Social Inclusion of Peru, reaffirmed her country's commitment to regional cooperation to chart a course forward based on mutual support. Peru had made efforts to address challenges recently, including urban population growth following the pandemic and the effects of disasters on the most vulnerable groups. An adaptive approach to social protection was a way to get ahead of potential problems through preventive and transformative policies for more flexible and resilient social protection systems. Laís Abramo, National Secretary for Care and Family, Ministry of Social Development of Brazil, said that her country's recent experience had shown that eliminating hunger and poverty was possible through a set of coordinated policies, such as a conditional income transfer programme, non-contributory pensions, formal job creation, an increased minimum wage and expanded public services. Juan Somavía, former Permanent Representative of Chile to the United Nations, said that the current global climate, characterized by growing geopolitical disorder, the dissolution and formation of new alliances and a preference for arms over diplomacy, was affecting the United Nations, which should be prepared to defend its identity and mandates. Finally, Yamile Socolovsky, President of the Committee of Working Women of the Americas, said that the union perspective was that the social rights debate should give priority attention to the world of work, where inequalities and obstacles to building societies based on full social justice were plain to see.

10. **The Session on the thirtieth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (Belém do Pará, Brazil, 2025)**, was moderated by Manuel Pulgar Vidal, global leader of climate and energy at the World Wide Fund for Nature International, who stressed that climate change was one of the most serious threats facing humanity and that the success of the thirtieth session of the Conference of the Parties depended on strengthening the narrative and confronting denialist voices. Paulo Roberto Soares Pacheco, Ambassador of Brazil to Chile, said that all stakeholders and resources should be aligned to achieve the goal of fostering low-carbon and climate-resilient development and strengthening climate governance in the framework of sustainable development. Brazil's new nationally determined contributions reflected the country's determination to define a new development paradigm that reconciled the goals of enhancing social development and combating climate change. Dwight G. Sutherland, Minister of Housing, Lands and Maintenance of Barbados, presented the achievements to date of the Bridgetown Initiative, an agenda to reform the global financial architecture that includes a focus on climate finance. Macarena Sánchez, Director of Environment and Impact for Chile, Peru and Ecuador at Patagonia, Inc., explained how the company she represented had managed to be both profitable and responsible towards the environment and local communities. Daniel Seidel, Coordinator of the Ecclesial Network for Justice and Peace of the Greater Homeland, called on countries to sign the Escazú Agreement, given that the highest number of environmental leaders were killed in the Amazon.

11. **The session on the thirtieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action** was moderated by Laura Moreno, Ambassador of Mexico to Chile, who invited delegations to participate in the sixteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, which her country would host in August 2025. María-Noel Vaeza, Regional Director for the Americas and the Caribbean of UN-Women, said that femicide, the disproportionate burden of care work on women and gender stereotypes persisted in the region. Virginia Vargas, co-founder of the Flora Tristán Centre and member of Articulación Feminista Marcosur, said that the women's movement had been a proactive participant in drafting the Beijing Platform for Action, but something had been lost in its implementation. The linking of the Platform and the 2030 Agenda had enabled gender mainstreaming across the 17 SDGs. Noemi Espinoza, Secretary-General of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), said that ACS reaffirmed its commitment in the face of the challenges that the climate crisis, economic inequalities and the need for improved access to justice posed for women. Virginia Albert-Poyotte, Minister of Public Service, Home Affairs, Labour and Gender Affairs of Saint Lucia, said that the Caribbean had made significant progress on the Forum's priority SDGs, including poverty, education and jobs.

12. **The session on the Pact for the Future** was moderated by Carla Serazzi, Deputy Secretary General for Foreign Policy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Chile, who recalled that the Pact for the Future had been adopted at the Summit of the Future in 2024 with the aim of revitalizing multilateralism and improving global governance. Hugo Francisco Rivera, Deputy Minister for Economic Affairs and International Cooperation of the

<sup>2</sup> See LC/MDS.E-2025/4 <https://repositorio.cepal.org/entities/publication/fb07c5a9-f7ec-49ac-9300-3f749bcb2d5> .

Dominican Republic, noted that no single country on its own could succeed in fully implementing the Pact for the Future and achieving sustainable development. Inga Rhonda King, Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to the United Nations, called for a concise, science-based and action-oriented declaration, with support for developing countries, to drive progress on the SDGs. Themba Kalua, Director for the Pact for the Future Implementation in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, said that the political commitments of the Pact must now translate into tangible action, including on peace and security, regional representation, international financial reform and governance of artificial intelligence. Philipp Schönrock, Director of CEPEI, said that it was important to support governments and the different stakeholders in implementation of the Global Digital Compact. The region had a unique opportunity to lead its digital transition. Rolando Pelicot Ruiz, member of The Resolution Project, noted the vital role played by young people, who worked together and mobilized to lead initiatives aligned with the different areas encompassed by the Pact for the Future. Children and adolescents should not be seen merely as beneficiaries of programmes and projects, but rather as strategic stakeholders and agents of change. Rosario Díaz Garavito, co-facilitator of the impact coalition for Latin America and the Caribbean for the Pact for the Future, explained implementing the Pact would require solidarity and ambitious action to work on shared priorities. Marcela Browne, member of the Mechanism for Civil Society, welcomed the Pact's concrete responses to pressing challenges such as climate change, inequality and the digital transition. Albert Ramdin, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Suriname and Secretary General-elect of the Organization of American States, said that implementation of the Pact required decisive leadership through a whole-of-society approach, with community buy-in and legislative commitment to a concrete agenda, in alignment with national development strategies. Mario Lubetkin, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Uruguay, reaffirmed his country's commitment to multilateralism and said that the SDGs had served as its fundamental policy planning and implementation framework. Enhancing international cooperation was indispensable to ensure the implementation of the Pact for the Future.

### **Dialogues on regional action**

#### **Presentation of the document *Latin America and the Caribbean in the Final Five Years of the 2030 Agenda: Steering Transformations to Accelerate Progress***

13. Presenting the document *Latin America and the Caribbean in the Final Five Years of the 2030 Agenda: Steering Transformations to Accelerate Progress*<sup>3</sup>, eighth report on regional progress and challenges in relation to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Executive Secretary ECLAC said that with five years remaining to achieve the SDGs, progress was lagging behind. In the document, it was noted that only 23% of the SDG targets were expected to be achieved in the region by 2030; for 41%, the trend was moving in the right direction but too slowly to reach established thresholds; and for the remaining 36%, progress had stalled or reversed compared with 2015. ECLAC proposed that the answers lay in five key areas: governance and collaboration arrangements among stakeholders for each SDG; the technical, operational, political and prospective capabilities of the institutions responsible for policies relevant to each SDG; spaces for social dialogue among the institutions and key stakeholders involved in each area; the political economy of reforms and transformations; and the challenge of financing, which encompassed domestic resource mobilization and possible reforms to the international financial architecture.

14. He examined the development traps the region faced —low capacity for growth, high inequality with low social mobility and social cohesion, lack of environmental sustainability and weak institutional capacities—, the chances of achieving the SDG targets, and the role of non-governmental stakeholders.

#### **Contribution of the United Nations sustainable development system in Latin America and the Caribbean - Presentation of the 2024 system-wide results report of the Regional Collaborative Platform for Latin America and the Caribbean**

15. The session was moderated by Jorge Félix Rubio, Director General for Economic Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Peru. The report was presented by the Executive Secretary of ECLAC and Michelle Muschett, Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean of UNDP, in their capacity as Vice-Chairs of the Regional Collaborative Platform for Latin America and the Caribbean.

<sup>3</sup> See document LC/FDS.8/3 [online] See [online] <https://repositorio.cepal.org/entities/publication/f082edbd-e41c-4d78-8bdd-d1859da58efb>.

16. The Executive Secretary of ECLAC said that the region had shown resilience and innovative capacity despite the complex development landscape it continued to face, marked by low economic growth, an annual financing gap, high levels of labour informality, food security problems, a high homicide rate, gender-based violence, education gaps, vulnerability to climate change and disasters, and challenges posed by migration. In 2024, the Platform had made progress in the areas of knowledge management, data and statistics, transparency and results-based management, and optimization of common services at the regional level.

17. The Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean for UNDP presented the activities undertaken by the issue-based coalitions on climate change and resilience, equitable growth and financing for development, human mobility and governance for peace, justice and strong institutions. She also summarized the activities of the working groups on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, youth, populations left behind, peer support, SDG data and statistics, and evaluation.

18. Roberto Valent, Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean of the Development Coordination Office, highlighted the critical role of the resident coordinator system and the Regional Collaborative Platform and stressed the need for responsive regional cooperation in close alignment with country needs.

19. The statements by the Forum of children, adolescents and youth of Latin America and the Caribbean; the Mechanism for civil society participation in the Sustainable Development Agenda and in the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development; and the Interfaith preforum were read.<sup>4</sup>

### **Advancing Caribbean development through greater synergy in implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States**

20. The session was moderated by Paul Chet Greene, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Agriculture, Trade and Barbuda Affairs of Antigua and Barbuda, who mentioned that despite the challenges they faced, SIDS could draw hope from the 10-year Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States. Pauline Antoine-Prospere, Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Education, Sustainable Development, Innovation, Science, Technology and Vocational Training of Saint Lucia, said that her country was well positioned to leverage synergies between the 2030 Agenda and the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS, and was taking steps to build climate resilience through ambitious efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while building adaptive capacity. Kennethia Douglas, Senior Programme Manager for Sustainable Development and SIDS National Focal Point in the Ministry of Planning and Development of Trinidad and Tobago, said that the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS was an opportunity to identify and address Samoa Pathway implementation gaps. Her country would work to integrate that Agenda's targets and indicators, when available, into the SDG data repository. Nahuel Arenas, Chief of the Regional Office for the Americas and the Caribbean of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), said that financing for prevention through national budgets and ODA was not commensurate with the high risks the subregion faced. The Antigua and Barbuda Agenda's focus on resilience as the backbone of sustainable development was the only way forward. The overemphasis on compensatory measures and response often increased the debt burden; more prospective measures were needed. Benito Wheatley, Special Envoy of the Premier of the British Virgin Islands, highlighted the importance of South-South cooperation and of greater collaboration within the region. The territory, ineligible for development finance, was already taking steps to advance its sustainable development, for example mobilizing domestic resources by boosting underperforming revenue streams. He expressed appreciation for ECLAC support to associate members and called for greater inclusion of and investment in young people. Crenston C. Buffonge, Parliamentary Secretary in the Office of the Prime Minister of Montserrat, outlined the significant technical, administrative, access and financial challenges it faced because of its sovereignty status. Policy changes by once-reliable partners were putting SIDS development and access to resources at risk amid increasing global conflict and a reduction in development aid. He urged rapid implementation of the multidimensional vulnerability index.

### **Strengthening public-private partnerships to accelerate the use of private and disaggregated data: a path to achieve the SDGs**

21. The session was moderated by Miosotis Rivas Peña, General Director of the National Office of Statistics of the Dominican Republic, and Chair of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC. The moderator

<sup>4</sup> Statements are available in Spanish [online] <https://foroalc2030.cepal.org/2025/en/programme/readings-statements-stakeholders>

said that the growing use of data from the private sector to produce official statistics posed challenges in areas such as privacy and security. Freddy Rodríguez, Senior Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Manager, Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data, recognized the value of collaboration with the private sector, which enabled access to technologies and the development of joint solutions. Abraham Muñoz, Director of Education for Sharing (E4S) of Mexico, said that while there was significant information in the private sector on initiatives that targeted the SDGs and that could be replicated, people did not always know how to encourage its use. Félix Romano, Chair of 2030 Agenda Committee of the Confederation of Industrial Chambers (CONCAMIN) of Mexico, emphasized that all sectors should work together on the 2030 Agenda and said that the formula for a sustainable future merged technology, soft and hard skills, gender diversity in the workplace, social justice and environmental protection and restoration. Denise Silva, Vice-President of the Executive Committee of the International Statistical Institute, said that the private sector had an important role to play in the ecosystem of data production and data-sharing for official statistics, and she stressed the need to focus on data integration for SDG disaggregation. The Executive Director of CEPEI, emphasized the volume of data that was generated and its underutilization. There was a need for mechanisms for collaboration with the private sector, a more robust enabling environment, methodologies adapted to the region's requirements, investment in public digital infrastructure, and the capability to measure the impact of data use.

### **Panel 1. Goal 3: Good health and well-being**

22. The panel was moderated by Susana Sottoli, Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean of the UNFPA, who said that improvements had been made in the region in the area of health, including on child mortality, tobacco use and premature deaths from chemicals and pollution. It was nonetheless alarming that unacceptable barriers persisted, such as the increase in maternal mortality and adolescent fertility. Ximena Aguilera, Minister of Health of Chile, described some of the institutional efforts and strategies maintained through the years, such as the national immunization programme, a pioneering model for food labelling and innovative early childhood development programmes. Pilar Torres, Head of the Office for Planning and Sectoral Studies of the Ministry of Health and Social Protection of Colombia, referred to the strategy for strengthening primary healthcare, under which it had been sending teams to the most remote areas of the country. Reductions had been achieved in maternal and under-5 mortality rates, the death rates for HIV and non-communicable diseases. Regina Guzmán, Head of e-Government and Information Systems of the Ministry of Public Health of Uruguay, explained that her country had prepared a strategy with national healthcare objectives based on SDG targets and indicators. Health system coverage was 100%, the immunization rate was high. Luisa Cabal, Director of the Regional Support Team for Latin America and the Caribbean of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), said that the region had made strides in this area thanks to a collective multisectoral commitment akin to the response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The commitment and solidarity demonstrated had enabled the expansion of coverage of antiretroviral therapy, and mortality had declined. However, political and financing challenges remained. Giovanni Escalante, Representative of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) in Chile, spoke of investment in health as a catalyst for sustainable development and of the need to direct it towards comprehensive approaches to the social determinants of health. It was essential to increase public health spending to 6% of GDP, since strategic investment in that area was not an expense but rather an investment which yielded high returns in the reduction of poverty and inequality and in education, labour inclusion and economic growth. Andrés Martínez, Regional Coordinator of the Joint Learning Initiative on Faith and Local Communities (JLI), said that mental health was one of the most neglected areas of public health and that a lack of universal care that was sensitive to cultural differences often worsened the problems faced by those affected by conflicts, disasters and poverty. Estefanía Mirpuri Merino, Director of FOAL, a foundation focused on educational, social and labour inclusion for persons with visual disabilities, noted that persons with disabilities faced barriers in access to health, not only because they could not afford medical care but also because of a lack of accessibility in documentation, applications, and infrastructure and signage in health centres.

### **Panel 2. Goal 5: Gender equality**

23. The panel was moderated by María-Noel Vaeza, Regional Director for the Americas and the Caribbean of UN-Women. Ana Gúezmes García, Chief of the Division for Gender Affairs of ECLAC, said that the region showed progress in formal gender equality, but was far from achieving substantive equality and highlighted the recent ECLAC publication *The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Regional Gender Agenda in Latin*



*America and the Caribbean: gender indicators up to 2024*<sup>5</sup>. The Regional Director of UN-Women said that data, which were fundamental for driving public policy, showed the urgent need for intensified efforts to overcome gender inequalities. The care society would serve as a model for gender equality and sustainable development. June Soomer, Chair of the Permanent Forum of People of African Descent said that the SDGs did not adequately consider the specific needs and realities of women and girls of African descent, who faced elevated poverty rates caused by educational disparities, labour market inequality, social norms and gender roles, all exacerbated by racism inherited from colonialism and enslavement. Ana Raquel Martínez, Regional Ministerial Secretary for Women and Gender Equality of the Santiago Metropolitan Region in Chile, spoke of her country's progress in creating a national care system based on managing a network of service providers and entities. Pamela Martín García, representative of Vecinas Feministas, said that feminist movements had as much power as groups that were against rights; however, their tools were not intimidation and fear, but rather sustained work, experience and progress on rights in the region.

### **Panel 3. Goal 8: Decent work and economic growth**

24. Fabio Bertranou, Director of the ILO subregional office for the Southern Cone of Latin America and moderator, said that Goal 8 was linked to all 2030 Agenda targets, and the region's main challenges were to achieve economic growth and decent work. the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Agriculture, Trade and Barbuda Affairs of Antigua and Barbuda, summarized national efforts to achieve Goal 8 and put forward recommendations for its attainment in the region, including focusing on sustainable growth, diversifying industries, investing in human capital and addressing climate change impacts. Carlos Rafael Gómez Rodríguez, Director General for Monitoring, Administration and Supervision of Trade Treaty Compliance in the Secretariat of Economic Affairs of Mexico, explained that the country's economic policy was focused on guaranteeing access to basic rights that were essential to well-being through three main actions: the promotion of social welfare programmes; a people-centred national development plan, drafted in consultation with the public; and Plan Mexico, an industrial strategy aimed at strengthening strategic sectors. Mónica Recalde, Minister of Labour, Employment and Social Security of Paraguay, explained that her country had worked on formalizing labour, promoting social security, creating youth employment, improving labour inspections and creating spaces for social dialogue and conflict resolution. Several structural challenges hampered the full achievement of the goals, with labour informality being the main obstacle, especially for women, young people and older persons. She pointed to the need for training programmes covering digital transformation, the green economy and the development of care systems. Fanny Sequeira, Secretary-General of the Confederation of Workers Rerum Novarum, indicated that while countries reported gradual progress towards achieving the 2030 Agenda in their voluntary national reviews, trade union and civil society movements noted delays and stagnation. Decent work, as the main source of sustainable development, remained a utopia for many, and governments had an inescapable responsibility to ratify and enforce compliance with ILO standards.

### **Panel 4 Goal 14: Life below water**

25. The panel was moderated by Juan Bello, Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean of UNEP, who said that oceans were of paramount importance for the planet's sustainability. The region faced a range of threats, including excessive fertilizer use, untreated wastewater runoff, plastic pollution and overexploitation. Arnoldo André Tinoco, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Worship of Costa Rica, highlighted the disconnect between the severity of threats to oceans and the level of investment and cooperation. Ambitious commitments were needed, as were the mobilization of all available resources and coordinated, measurable and results-oriented action. Víctor Alegría, Director, Sustainable Development Unit, Ministry of Sustainable Development and Climate Change of Belize, said that SDG 14 meant life for his country. He highlighted successes including blue bonds and PROCARIBE+ support to enhance the traceability of key commercial marine species in Belize. Maya Takagi, Programme Leader at the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean of FAO, drew attention to an FAO-proposed framework for action on the blue transformation, which aimed to expand sustainable aquaculture, the effective management of fisheries and the upgrading of aquatic food system value chains. Léa Cabrol, Researcher at the French Institute of Research for Development and the Mediterranean Institute of Oceanology and Assistant Researcher at the Millennium Institute for Antarctic and sub-Antarctic Ecosystem Biodiversity in Chile, said that the region invested little in oceanography research. Such investment was important for channelling resources to effective protection policies, encouraging more sustainable economic practices, boosting innovation and using ocean resources to solve a range of challenges. Zoila Bustamante, President of the National Small-Scale Fisheries Association of Chile and of the Latin American Union of Artisanal Fisheries, highlighted the importance of artisanal

<sup>5</sup> See [online] See <https://hdl.handle.net/11362/81489>.



fishing, a sector that managed and restored marine resources, provided jobs and food, and lived off the oceans. Members of the artisanal fishing community should have a seat at any table for any consequential discussion of ocean matters. Juanita de los Ángeles Ariza, Director of Red Nacional del Agua of Colombia, referred to ocean governance as a pillar of global security.

### **Panel 5. Goal 17: Partnerships for the goals**

26. Panel 5 was moderated by Emilia Ruiz Revelo, Under-Secretary General of Planning of Ecuador, who said that successful implementation of SDG 17 depended on the ability of different stakeholders to work together on the basis of shared principles, values and goals. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Agriculture, Trade and Barbuda Affairs of Antigua and Barbuda, called for a collective commitment to international cooperation, innovation, multi-stakeholder partnerships and international trade, including lowering trade barriers. William Díaz Menéndez, Director for International Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Foreign Investment of Cuba, noted that the Forum had established itself as a regional mechanism for forging alliances based on respect for State sovereignty. Cuba shared the problems of middle-income countries and Caribbean SIDS, but was also subject to an economic and financial blockade by the United States, which hindered its implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Amalia Dolores García Medina, Senator and President of the Special Commission for Follow-up of the 2030 Agenda of Mexico, expressed concern about the rise of protectionism and isolationism. Olivier Najar, regional economist at the Agence Française de Développement, advocated for multilateralism and international cooperation in response to current crises and outlined three areas where the agency was mobilizing action to achieve the SDGs: finance, civil society, and technical expertise and knowledge. Ander Arredondo, official of the Support, Planning and Coordination Unit of the Ibero-American General Secretariat, explained the fundamental role played by the Secretariat in building multi-stakeholder and multilevel alliances. The Secretariat coordinated horizontal regional cooperation between Latin America and the Caribbean and Europe, promoting transformative public policies, supporting the development of effective and cost-effective partnerships; and contributing to the design of national SDG-oriented policies. Dirk Meyer, Director General for Multilateral Development Policy, Transformation and Climate, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany, reaffirmed his country's commitment to the Pact for the Future and to multilateralism, which was essential for tackling global challenges. He gave examples of cooperation activities in various countries of the region and its development policy commitment to strengthening Goal 17, as evidenced by its collaboration with ECLAC to provide targeted country-level support. Domestic and external resource mobilization were essential to finance inclusive and environmentally sustainable development in the region. Dima Al Khatib, Director of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, outlined the Office's role and efforts in the region and advocated for South-South and triangular cooperation as a key complementary mechanism for countries to co-create sustainable solutions and accelerate progress towards achieving the SDGs. Javier Surasky, Head of the International Cooperation Department at the Universidad Nacional de La Plata, spoke about the impact that information and communications technology and artificial intelligence were having on the way sustainable development was being conceived, measured and implemented. The world order and global economic model were being reshaped around such technologies, and countries that failed to keep up would be left behind for at least a century. Elías Szczytnicki, Regional Secretary-General, Religions for Peace, Latin America and the Caribbean, said that religion, which upheld values linked to human dignity, poverty eradication and environmental protection, had long been forgotten by the United Nations. Religion shaped the ethical frameworks that guided human behaviour and could influence how people related to the SDGs.

### **Dialogues on national action**

#### **Session on successful national experiences in accelerating achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals**

27. The session was moderated by Roberto Valent, Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean of the Development Coordination Office (DCO), who said that the session aimed to inspire renewed momentum across the region and beyond through the sharing of practical lessons and transferable models. Fernanda Cardona, Minister of Industry, Energy and Mining of Uruguay, spoke of her country's energy policy based on a multiparty agreement that promoted investment, employment, energy efficiency and renewable sources. Pablo Ruiz Hiebra, Resident Coordinator in Uruguay, said that the Organization's support to accelerate the country's energy transition was based on environmental, gender and social impact, and went beyond profitability to incorporate regulations, partnerships and incentives, for example. Charmaine Hippolyte, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Equity, Social Justice and Empowerment of Saint Lucia, described outcomes of the Joint Sustainable Development Goals Fund's initiatives in Saint Lucia relating to Goal 1, which included strengthening social safety nets for vulnerable children

and adults, promoting job creation, improving education and healthcare access, and increasing climate resilience. Simon Springett, Resident Coordinator of the United Nations system for Barbados and Eastern Caribbean Countries and Territories, spoke of the importance of linking social protection systems to disaster risk management to ensure access to government support in crises. The Joint Sustainable Development Goals Fund in the Eastern Caribbean was a successful example of regional collaboration to support policy development. Ignacia Fernández, Undersecretary of Agriculture of Chile, spoke of her country's rural development strategy, which aimed to close gaps with urban areas regarding housing and habitat, young people, care and digital connectivity. She underscored the importance of dialogue, interministerial work, coordination with the private sector and collaboration with United Nations entities. María José Torres Macho, Resident Coordinator in Chile, spoke about the Connected Communities programme, which fostered digitalization as a development accelerator for two regions in the country. Partnerships between United Nations entities, ministries and regional and local governments, cultural relevance, work with communities and the gender perspective were fundamental. María Eugenia Pino, Director of International Organizations and Conferences, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Panama, said that her country was positioning itself as a leader in protecting the oceans and its experience showed it was possible to strike a balance between economic development and environmental stewardship. Ana Graça, Resident Coordinator in Panama, said that the support of the Organization's entities in the country focused on innovation, which was crucial for monitoring and protecting marine areas. She also spoke of the strategic collaboration of those entities on technologies and methods to meet several environmental targets regarding the Panama Canal.

### **Good practices and challenges in the preparation of voluntary national reviews**

28. This session was moderated by Mario Otero, Director of International Relations in the Office of the Vice President and Executive Director of the National Council for Sustainable Development of El Salvador. The moderator thanked ECLAC for providing a space in which to share country experiences in the preparation of voluntary national reviews and for helping to drive SDG achievement through the related community of practice. Rochelle W. Newbold, Special Adviser on Climate Change and Environmental Matters in the Office of the Prime Minister of the Bahamas, cited stakeholder engagement, data collection and alignment with guidelines as good practice, and limited personnel, resources, data quality, awareness and capacity as challenges. Latoya Clarke, Programme Director of the Sustainable Development Goals Secretariat of the Planning Institute of Jamaica, highlighted good practices, including evidence-based policies and innovative communications strategies, and said that the availability of timely, high-quality data remained a critical challenge. Nelson Chávez, Director General of Economic Development in the Ministry of Economy, Planning and Development of the Dominican Republic, said that his country was carrying out its third voluntary national review and that the process, in which a collaborative approach had been adopted, with rigorous technical analysis and a participatory review, helped to strengthen national capacities for planning and monitoring and to build capacities for development statistics. However, improvement was needed regarding the participation of vulnerable territories and groups in an equitable and binding manner, the collection of disaggregated and timely data and long-term strategic planning. Pauline Antoine-Prospere, Parliamentary Secretary, Department of Sustainable Development in the Ministry of Education, Sustainable Development, Innovation, Science, Technology and Vocational Training of Saint Lucia, said that ECLAC technical assistance had supported a national SDG data gap assessment. Charissa Dhauri, Desk Officer in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business and International Cooperation of Suriname, said that her country—one of three that were carbon-negative—had expanded a national SDG platform to include religious and tribal organizations in the review process.

### **Public innovation to advance the Pact for the Future: accelerating action and collaboration to achieve the SDGs at the national level**

29. The session was moderated by Javier Medina, Deputy Executive Secretary a.i. of ECLAC. Orlando Rojas, Executive Director of the Chilean Government Laboratory, said that innovation was a necessity of the State to satisfy an increasingly demanding citizenry, both as a form of governance and of good public management. Camila Medeiros, Director of Innovation, GNova government innovation laboratory of the National School of Public Administration (ENAP) of Brazil referred to the promotion of public innovation in her country at the individual, organizational and systemic levels. She outlined various initiatives in the areas of capacity-building, creation of safe spaces for experimentation, regulatory frameworks, governance and funding to support innovation efforts. Daniel Quiroga, Undersecretary for Open Government in the Office of the President of Ecuador, said that the enabling factors for public innovation included: a necessary cultural shift; the involvement of oversight bodies; institutional legitimacy; the participation of local governments, which were most aware of citizens' needs; and the

involvement of the private sector, civil society and academia. Latoya Clarke, Programme Director, Sustainable Development Goals Secretariat of the Planning Institute of Jamaica, said that modernization was a driver of development and the benefits of technological transformation included more robust decision-making and improved human resource and performance management in government. She referred to measures implemented in e-government, ICT, education, health, civil registry and early warning systems, all of which improved the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery and use of resources.

### **Adoption of the intergovernmentally agreed conclusions and recommendations**

30. The intergovernmentally agreed conclusions and recommendations were adopted<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> See [https://foroalc2030.cepal.org/2025/sites/foro2025/files/2500068e\\_fds.8\\_agreed\\_conclusions.pdf](https://foroalc2030.cepal.org/2025/sites/foro2025/files/2500068e_fds.8_agreed_conclusions.pdf).