

Lima, September 25, 2009

***FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE
FIRST PAN AMERICAN FORUM ON CHILDREN***

On the third day of the First Pan American Forum on Children, the 22 delegates from Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Barbados, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Jamaica, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Santa Lucia, San Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, the United States, Uruguay and Venezuela attending the forum developed the final recommendations, which will be delivered to the delegations participating in the XX Pan American Child Congress.

Our recommendations appear below:

- Adults should stop thinking that children have difficulty expressing themselves, that we are incapable of creating productive things and that we have insufficient knowledge to participate. This attitude leads adults to impose on us rather than promote or encourage our participation.
- Create local, regional, national and inter-American Advisory Councils to incorporate the voices, opinions, needs and suggestions of children, including those with disabilities and special needs, in the design and development of public policies to be implemented by high-ranking authorities.
- Share experiences on the participation of children in our countries.
- Encourage the participation of individuals with disabilities and special needs.
- Create public spaces that are suitable for the participation of all children, favoring recreation, culture, play and expression/communication.
- Educate and sensitize individuals who deal with children on the rights of the child and the promotion of participation.

- Encourage States to provide family assistance and to organize campaigns using appropriate methods for encouraging parents to have a more open mind, to listen to children, allowing them to express opinions on the issues that affect them and their families.
- Create or improve facilities for early stimulation that foster the participation of children under age 5.
- Include the rights of the child in the school program, using experiential teaching methods.
- Enhance and ensure employment conditions for adults to improve the quality of life of their families.
- Increase the number of health care workers and facilities that provide healthcare to children and adolescents in situations of risk or exclusion (children living with HIV/AIDS, adolescent mothers and adolescents with substance abuse problems).
- Offer sex education programs.
- Increase State investment in education.
- Guarantee transportation in remote areas to enable low-income children to attend school.
- Create Student Councils, with the participation of children, parents and members of the wider community.
- Do not deny adolescent mothers their right to an education.
- Provide us with an education based on our experiences, not on memorization.
- Expand and improve food programs and link them with urban, peri-urban and rural schools.
- Prioritize children in State budgets.
- Prohibit all forms of physical and psychological punishment in families, schools and society.
- Current border conflicts affect child protection. Stop arms investment. Promote peace.

- Adolescents are interested in following up the proposals developed in this forum, including with the groups of adolescents that will follow us.
- We call on all authorities to end border conflicts and to prioritize child education, thereby creating a culture of world peace. **MORE SCHOOLS, FEWER WEAPONS.**

Now that our meeting with children of the Americas is coming to a close, we would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to Peru for the warm reception of the participating country delegations, and especially to the Peruvian adolescents who facilitated the event.