COMPREHENSIVE PROTECTION SYSTEMS FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

(Adopted at the Fourth Plenary Session, held on October 3, 2018)

THE DIRECTING COUNCIL,

CONSIDERING:

That for the States, party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, its adoption involved, among other matters, a commitment to take all necessary steps to make effective all of the rights recognized in the Convention. This implied a shift from the old special protection models to the new comprehensive protection strategies, where all children, and all of their rights, are included.

That while in most countries, and as a first step, governance of the new policies was entrusted to institutions in charge of protection, experience proved that the new paradigm required new institutional and operating structures that could overcome the old mindsets involving the State’s intervention in situations requiring child protection.

That this need led to a process of reflection on various aspects, among them, on whether the existence of various agencies at different levels and for different functions, and of public policy, programmes and actions catering to children and youth, actually addressed the changes introduced by the Convention on the Rights of the Child and operated as a system; in this case, as a set of concepts (Rights, Principles), processes, entities (State, Society, Family, Children, Adolescents) which act in a differentiated, orderly, coordinated and complementary way in order to implement universal targeted regulations and public policy to achieve comprehensive protection.

That at different times and with different intensities, the States of the region that are parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child modified their existing regulatory and institutional frameworks or adopted new laws to address these issues, which are characterized as having many complex variables that interact with one another and that cannot be addressed independently, but, to the contrary, need to be addressed comprehensively and systemically.

That these amended or new regulatory frameworks often: include the provisions of the Convention; establish means of enforcing the exercise of children’s rights; create or transform national and local institutional structures, establishing inter-agency and cross-sectoral mechanisms as necessary components in this set of bodies operating at different levels and with different objectives, usually known in the region as “protection systems”, whose synchronized work makes it possible to safeguard the rights and the comprehensive protection of children.
That there are national or sub-national protection systems in the region which were established many years ago, while others were created only recently, and still others are in the process of being established with different denominations and forms of organization.

**BEARING IN MIND:**

OAS General Assembly Resolution AG/RES. 2887 (XLVI-O/16) Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, reaffirmed by OAS General Assembly Resolution AG/RES. 2908 (XLVII-O/17), which resolves “(...) To help strengthen comprehensive systems for promoting and protecting the rights of children and adolescents in the region by fostering universal and inclusive public policies that pay special attention to groups that have traditionally been excluded and/or are vulnerable, including girls, indigenous and Afro descendent children, and children with disabilities. (…)”;

Resolution CPNNA/RES. 1 (XX-09) of the Pan American Child Congress, which urges “(...) member States to renew their commitment to children by strengthening comprehensive protection systems for children, through close coordination among institutions and sufficient, timely resources to improve their conditions for development and social inclusion and to ensure that their rights are fully respected. (…)”;


That one of the conclusions and recommendations arising from the Special Meeting of the Directing Council of the Inter-American Children’s Institute (IIN-OAS), held in Quito, Ecuador, in 2007, was “(...) There has been heterogeneous and unequal progress in the definition and implementation of Integral Protection Systems for children and adolescents. Joint work needs to be done to promote horizontal cooperation among countries towards the strengthening of existing systems, as well as the design and implementation of these in countries which have not yet developed them. (…)”;

Regional experiences and discussions held in various forums such as the Inter-American Forum on National Comprehensive Protection Systems for Children;

**RESOLVES:**

1. To encourage member States in their efforts to achieve updated domestic regulations in keeping with the international commitments they have undertaken regarding the comprehensive promotion and protection of child rights, always expanding these rights for the benefit of this priority group, and to be inclusive of all, while avoiding the adoption of regulations which may be regressive in relation to the standards they have already reached.

2. To invite member States to build or strengthen, in keeping with the international standards they have undertaken to follow and their domestic regulatory frameworks, harmonized inter-agency and cross-sectoral institutions at the various levels of government existing in each State, and
within sub-systems and levels of specialization, with clear roles and responsibilities, in order to ensure the promotion, comprehensive protection and exercise of the human rights of all children, including groups that have traditionally been excluded and/or live or may live in vulnerable situations.

3. To invite the States to promote horizontal cooperation which will enable mutual technical assistance in this area; as well as to continue setting up opportunities for Inter-American discussion with the effective participation of children and civil society, such as those organized in Mexico in 2017, and in Uruguay in 2018.

4. To include as a line of action in Action Plan 2019-2023 of the IIN-OAS, building and strengthening systems for the comprehensive protection of children and adolescents.