

Message

María de los Dolores Aguilar Marmolejo
Director General

The Inter-American Children’s Institute, as a Specialized Organization for children’s issues of the Organization of American States (OAS), fulfils its purposes through its bodies, one of which is the Pan American Child Congress. As a ministerial-level Inter-American meeting held every five years, its goal is to promote the sharing of experience and knowledge among the peoples of the Americas in relation to the topics that the Institute is concerned with, and to draft recommendations in their regard.

The 21st Pan American Child Congress, which was declared an Inter-American Specialized Conference by means of resolution AG/Res 2836, which was adopted at the 44th General Assembly of the Organization of American States, was held in Brasilia, Brazil, from 10 to 12 December, 2014. Likewise, the event was in compliance with resolution CD/RES 05 (88-R/13), adopted during the 88th Regular Meeting of the Directing Council of the IIN, held in September 2013, in Medellín, Colombia.

In this **report**, you will find the documents produced prior to and during the 21st Pan American Congress, which contain a summary of significant discussions and experience-sharing opportunities, in the voices of the twenty-seven member States of the Organization of American States that took part in this event: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Barbados, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Lucia, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, United States of America, Uruguay and Venezuela.

For the Inter-American System, this was an opportunity to convene the heads of the agencies in charge of childhood issues in the member States, representing a broad range of enriching experience, which became apparent at the various events that took place during the Congress, such as plenary sessions, keynote addresses, specialist panels and group sessions for discussion and experience-sharing among member States. These made it possible to provide “an overview of the situation in the American continent”, acknowledge the coexistence of **developments and challenges** and conduct analyses of and reflect upon **government efforts** to prevent, prohibit, combat, address, protect from and punish violence against children. In addition, there was experience sharing on the **implementation of public policies for children** with a rights-based approach. Finally, the **2nd Pan**

American Child Forum provided opportunities for adolescents in the region to express their opinions on the thoughts and decisions agreed by the most senior authorities on children's issues gathered in the Congress.

The key subject of this **21st Pan American Child Congress** was violence against children, as reflected by the title, "Childhood: Building Peaceful Environments".

It focused on three basic topics:

- Violence against children. "Twenty-five years after the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child: building peaceful environments".
- Adolescents in Conflict with the Law and Juvenile Justice Systems.
- The sexual exploitation of children.

The keynote addresses were delivered by distinguished speakers such as Ms Marta Santos Pais, United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children, Ms Rosa María Ortiz, Commissioner and Rapporteur on the Rights of Children of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR-OAS), and Ms Paulina Duarte, Director of the Department of Public Security of the Secretariat for Multidimensional Security of the Organization of the American States.

Other specialists also took part, such as Ms Sara Oviedo, Vice-President of the Committee on the Rights of the Child of the United Nations, Mr Wanderlino Nogueira, member of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, Mr Emilio Álvarez Icaza, Executive Secretary of IACHR-OAS, and Mr Beat Rohr, representing the Latin American and Caribbean Chapter of the Global Movement for Children .

It should be noted that during the **plenary session held for heads of delegation**, a significant democratic and proactive process took place, which was the outcome of the decisive commitment of the representatives of the member States towards the children of the Americas and led to the adoption by acclamation of the following resolutions:

- **CPNNA/RES. 1 (XXI-14)** UNIFIED RESOLUTION ARISING FROM THE TWENTY-FIRST PAN AMERICAN CHILD CONGRESS "Childhood: Building Peaceful Environments". In its operational paragraphs it refers to *prevention, regulatory adjustments and multilateral cooperation in order to overcome the challenges that the region faces with regard to violence against children in different settings, particularly in relation to the rights of adolescents in contact with the juvenile justice system and the fight against child sexual exploitation.*
- **CPNNA/RES.02 (XXI-14)** ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO THE FEDERATIVE REPUBLIC OF BRAZIL FOR HOSTING THE 21st PAN AMERICAN CHILD CONGRESS.

Finally, I wish to express my deepest **gratitude** for the commitment towards children's rights in the region shown by member States, international agencies, civil society organizations, observers and the children who took part in the 21st Congress and the 2nd Forum, in the conviction that joint regional action in which the various American nations converge is a contribution that will ensure the improvement of the processes and outcomes of public policies for children in the region.

NIÑEZ Y ADOLESCENCIA: CONSTRUYENDO AMBIENTES DE PAZ

CONFERENCIA ESPECIALIZADA INTERAMERICANA DE LA OEA

CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENCE: BUILDING ENVIRONMENTS OF PEACE

OAS SPECIALIZED INTER-AMERICAN CONFERENCE

INFÂNCIA E ADOLESCÊNCIA: CONSTRUINDO AMBIENTES DE PAZ

CONFERÊNCIA ESPECIALIZADA INTERAMERICANA DA OEA

L' ENFANCE ET L' ADOLESCENCE: EN CONSTRUISANT ENVIRONNEMENTS DE PAIX

CONFÉRENCE SPÉCIALISÉE INTERAMÉRICAINNE DE L' OEA