**Intervention by the CIM at the first meeting of the IACNDR, June 23rd, 2022**

Prepared by: Yasmin Solitahe Odlum, CIM Specialist and Coordinator for the Caribbean (rev.1)

* The CIM is pleased to continue to be actively associated with the IACNDR as one of its key members, as we come together to participate in this first meeting convened for 2022. This meeting falls in the timely aftermath of the holding of the 9th Summit of the Americas at which our Heads adopted a Declaration on ***Our Sustainable Green Future*** on June 9th, 2022, giving us an up-to-date blueprint for developing lines of action to further address the increasing impacts of climate change and natural disasters throughout the hemisphere and in concert with global efforts to save our planet.
* We thank the Chair, Ambassador Nestor Mendez, Assistant Secretary General for convening this crucial meeting as we plan, strategize and coordinate at the Inter-American level to reduce and mitigate the threats posed by deforestation, land degradation, loss of biodiversity and critical ecosystems, green house gas emissions, food and water insecurity, marine degradation and pollution. Then we also are contending with an exponential increase in natural disasters from earthquakes, droughts, hurricanes, tsunamis, storms, floods and the dangerous rise in sea-levels.
* As the premier hemispheric forum for advancing women’s rights and gender equality, CIM listened with great intent and interest to the enlightening presentations that were made by Mr. Jamie Rhome of NOAA, Mr. Tim Callaghan of BHA, H.E. Anthony Phillips Spencer, Chair of the Committee on Hemispheric Security – and our sole woman presenter, Ms. Charlene Solozano of DSD/SEDI.
* In making gender-specific observations on these presentations, we note that:
* The data on the fatalities from hurricanes etc. within a specific time frame that was given by Mr. Rhone would have given a better idea of vulnerability risk along gender lines if it had been sex-disaggregated.
* We also note that some of the SEDI projects could have utilized a gender lens for analysis since in both Tourism and SME’s the sector is dominated by women workers and entrepreneurs.
* With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, CIM was one of the pioneering institutional voices to underscore its differential - and more so heavily disproportionate - impact on women and girls. CIM is of the view that managing the fallout of the pandemic without employing a gender and intersectional lens in recovery strategies, has exposed the risk of prolonging the recovery process in our economies and exacerbating poverty among the most vulnerable groups. CIM links this to the absence of women in decision-making positions and spaces; and the glaring gap in leadership and representation of women in all their diversity. This view can also be extended to addressing the onslaught of climate change and the impact of natural disasters.
* To provide an update on our work since we last met in April 2021, at the 4th Regular Executive Committee of the CIM held on December 9th, 2021, the delegation of Costa Rica specifically requested that the new CIM Strategic Plan 2022-2026 consider the issue of climate change and its mitigation, adaptation and risk management from a gender perspective. It was noted that a backlash of climate change is that it engenders higher costs and that those living in poverty – predominantly women and children – are the most affected. Costa Rica called for a rethinking to produce a new development model to generate efforts and solutions to help us engage differently in relation to our use and misuse of natural resources. Costa Rica noted that within the feminist agenda there is a different way to look at the relationship between climate change and sustainability. Strategically, Costa Rica called for a separate line of work along this thematic axis to be reflected in the new CIM Strategic Plan 2022-2026.
* From the perspective of our Caribbean Member States, in identifying their top priority areas for the CIM, they indicated the importance of including a gendered approach in: ***Resilience Building for Climate Change and Disasters***. They also highlighted that a new and emerging area for the region lay in gender mainstreaming and women’s leadership in climate change, disaster risk reduction and preparedness.
* The new 5-year CIM Strategic Plan was adopted at the conclusion of the 39th Assembly of the CIM held in Panama City, Panama from May 25th-26th, 2022. At this Assembly, the Ministers - with particular support from the Caribbean delegations - mandated the CIM to initiate a new line of work on ***Climate Change and Women's Leadership in Environmental and Disaster Risk Management,*** which on the one hand aims to strengthen the gender perspective in agreements on climate change and related issues, and on the other hand aims to generate knowledge and spaces for dialogue, exchange and training on the gender approach, and the participation and leadership of women in decision-making, around climate change, environmental management and disaster risk.
* We wish to recall the 2003 Declaration of Security in the Americas which noted the strategic importance of women’s participation and leadership in efforts to promote peace and security; and the need to integrate a gender approach in all policies, programs, projects, initiatives etc. of the Inter-American System. Emulating this approach will enhance the value proposition that CIM brings to the work of the IACNDR. Any effective - even successful - prevention, mitigation and coordination to address Climate Change and Natural Disaster Risk Reduction among the hemispheric political and technical actors, calls for more women to be in the forefront of decision-making processes and to have equal power with men as leaders in civil society and within the public, political and private sectors. Within the context of multidimensional security, women cannot be marginalized and left on the periphery of sustainable development efforts since they form half of the world.
* The outcome of the recently concluded 9th Summit of the Americas noted in its preamble that increased attention should be given to those in historically marginalized, discriminated against, and/or in vulnerable situations – recognizing that women and girls in all their diverse conditions and situations need specific attention. Yet overall, the Summit Declaration could be seen as being somewhat diluted in its focus on gender-specific approaches and mainstreamed actions to promote women’s leadership in climate change. However, Section 4c specifically called for the inclusion of women’s organizations to enhance environmental education, research and capacity-building in climate change adaptation and mitigation.
* Please be assured that CIM will continue to do its part in ensuring that women and girls are substantively represented, integrated - and at the forefront of actions to address structural, political, economic, social, and environmental challenges.