

**Conclusions** (Raul Henriquez, Secretary General of CES-Curaçao):

I sincerely thank Miloushka for granting me the floor in this important regional webinar, organized by the WORLD ASSOCIATION OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCILS OF LATIN AMERICA, AICESIS.

Through the detailed analysis of various countries, we have highlighted the importance of gender equality and youth employability. We have also emphasized how institutionalized forms of social dialogue in our region can reinforce greater equality, in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), thus contributing to sustainable socioeconomic growth.

Gender equality in the Latin American and Caribbean region has made significant progress in recent decades, such as:

- Legal Advances: Several countries in the region have implemented progressive legislation to protect women's rights and promote gender equality. For example, in Mexico, as Mrs. Otequi mentioned today, addressing issues like gender-based violence, access to education, and political participation.
- Political Participation: In recent years, there has been an increase in women's political representation in various countries in the region. Gender quotas and affirmative measures have contributed to this progress, allowing greater inclusion and voice for women in decision-making.
- Economic Empowerment: Improvements have been observed in women's labor force participation and their access to leadership positions in different sectors. Initiatives to promote entrepreneurship and training have supported women's economic empowerment.

On the other hand, significant challenges persist that require ongoing attention and effective actions, such as:

- Gender Wage Gap: Despite progress, a significant gender wage gap persists between men and women in the region. Inequalities in wages and job opportunities remain obstacles to economic equality.
- Gender-Based Violence: Gender-based violence, including domestic violence and femicide, remains a serious issue in the region. Broader efforts are needed to prevent and address these forms of violence.
- Education and Health: Although there have been improvements in women's access to education and healthcare, disparities still exist in some areas, especially in rural and marginalized areas.
- Stereotypes and Cultural Norms: Deep-rooted gender stereotypes and restrictive cultural norms continue to limit opportunities and the development of women in the region. Within this context, the family and household care responsibilities assigned to women hinder their participation in education or paid/formal work.

To advance true gender equality in Latin America and the Caribbean, a comprehensive approach is essential that addresses both achievements and challenges. This includes:

- Strengthening and effectively implementing existing laws and policies that promote gender equality.
- Continuing to encourage active and meaningful women's participation in politics and decision-making.

- Addressing the root causes of gender-based violence and promoting education and awareness.
- Working collaboratively with communities and leaders to challenge and change stereotypes and cultural norms that perpetuate gender inequality.

Regarding the young population in the Latin American and Caribbean region:

- (Education and Employment) Despite efforts, many young people face obstacles to accessing quality education and suitable job opportunities. The lack of formal and stable jobs can lead to discontent and economic inequalities.
- (Political Participation) Although young people represent a significant portion of the population, their involvement in political decision-making is often limited. Fostering their engagement is essential to ensure diverse representation and a long-term vision in the political agenda.

On the other hand, young people present promising opportunities, such as:

- (Innovation and Technology) Young people in the region have shown a great ability to adopt technology and innovation. The creative use of technology can drive entrepreneurship and economic development.
- (Social Change) The energy and passion of young people can be catalysts for positive social change. Their commitment to issues such as the environment, equality, and human rights can influence societal transformation.
- (Education for Development) Investing in inclusive and quality education for professional training to enhance labor and work-related skills, taking the recommendations from the ILO presented by Mr. Granara, can prepare young people to face future challenges and contribute to sustainable economic growth.

To harness the potential of young people in Latin America and the Caribbean, it is crucial to:

- Design policies and programs that address the educational and employment challenges young people face.
- Foster active youth participation in politics and decision-making, creating spaces for their voices and perspectives.

Young people in Latin America and the Caribbean represent a valuable resource for sustainable development and positive transformation in the region. Empowering them, providing opportunities, and listening to their voices are fundamental steps toward building a more promising and equitable future for all.

CES and IS play an essential role in the Latin American and Caribbean region by contributing to the formulation of policies and regulations that promote greater social and economic inclusion. These councils provide a space for dialogue and collaboration where key challenges are addressed and strategies are developed for a more equitable and just society, allowing different groups in society, including young people, women, indigenous communities, and minorities, to express their needs and concerns. This translates into inclusive policies that address accessible education, adequate healthcare, and combating discrimination, thereby fostering greater equal opportunities.

Collaboration among diverse sectors and actors, taking the activities of CNPTE in Peru as an example, allows for the design of holistic policies and regulations, considering multiple perspectives and population needs. Additionally, their focus on transparency and citizen participation ensures that decisions are endorsed and understood by society as a whole.

Speaking of collaborations, it is important to note that individual countries are not alone in the challenges they face. Therefore, sharing best practices and ideas, as the CES of Argentina did, as mentioned by Mrs. Irma, is recommended to progress in public policy proposals on common issues and their impact in different regions, as we have been doing for some time and as the goal of platforms like this is.

In summary, the path toward gender equality in Latin America and the Caribbean and a sustainable future for young people is advancing, but there is still much to be done. With sustained efforts and coordinated actions, the region can move toward a fairer and more inclusive future for all its inhabitants.

Lastly, allow me to focus our attention on an important upcoming event on the horizon of our collaboration. As stipulated in the Statutes, the presidency of AICESIS, starting from the beginning of November this year, will fall within the geographic area of Latin America and the Caribbean. This transition symbolizes not only a geographical shift but also a renewed opportunity to reaffirm and strengthen our joint commitment to an effective and efficient global agenda. From that moment, we count on the active contribution of all of you to drive this agenda forward, which lies at the heart of our shared aspirations.

I reiterate my gratitude to Miloushka and all present for your significant and elaborate contributions to today's topic. Your continuous support and collaboration will be essential in this new chapter that lies ahead of us. Let's continue working together with determination and unity, promoting a more equitable and sustainable Latin America and Caribbean, and thereby contributing to the well-being and prosperity of our region within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Thank you very much."