**Opening remarks by Bibiana Aído Almagro, Regional Director of the Regional Office of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) for the Americas and the Caribbean, at the 67th Executive Committee of the Regional Conference on Women**

**December 1, 2025, Santiago, Chile**

Many thanks, Luis [Yañez],

Dear José Manuel Salazar, Executive Secretary of ECLAC.

Dear Citlali Hernández Mora, Secretary for Women of Mexico.

Dear Gabriela Rivadeneira, Director General of Technical Cooperation of the Secretariat for Women.

A greeting as well to Ambassador Jennifer Feller, Director General for Human Rights and Democracy.

Dear Ministers, high-level authorities, heads of delegations.

A special greeting to the representatives of feminist organizations and civil society.

Dear colleagues from ECLAC, dear Ana Güezmes, and from the agencies of the United Nations System. And to all the people who are joining us both in person and virtually.

It is an honor for UN Women to be here with all of you at the opening of this 67th meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Many thanks to ECLAC for hosting us at its headquarters, and thanks to Chile as well for welcoming us so warmly.

This is the first time I am participating in this space since assuming my role as Regional Director of UN Women for the Americas and the Caribbean, and I would like to begin by reaffirming our organization's commitment to strengthening this intergovernmental space, which is critical for advancing gender equality and the rights of women and girls in all their diversity.

We recently celebrated, with great success, just a few months ago in Mexico City, the adoption of the Tlatelolco Commitment, which marks a different paradigm. It is a visionary agreement that establishes a decade of action to achieve substantive gender equality and advance toward a care society.

This commitment implies a paradigm shift by placing care as a pillar of sustainable development, equality and peace: not as an individual burden, not as a family burden, but as a collective responsibility of the State and society. And this requires recognizing that care work, whether paid or unpaid, is essential, valuable, and must be made visible, recognized and institutionally supported.

In a global context where multilateralism is at risk and consensus is increasingly threatened, reaching agreements is more challenging. However, Latin America and the Caribbean was able to join forces, setting aside disagreements, to adopt a commitment whose ultimate goal is to build a society that puts care at the center, where women and men in all their diversity can live in peace.

This achievement did not happen by chance. The Regional Conference on Women —and I love its new name— has spent 48 years building consensus on a normative framework that sets regional standards on gender equality and women's autonomy: from the region, for the world.

This regional gender agenda provides a roadmap for achieving gender equality and full autonomy for women. And this is the sixth time that the Presiding Officers also include the Special Regional Consultation Session ahead of the Commission on the Status of Women, in what I believe is not only a strategic alliance, but also a virtuous one, in which Member States, feminist and women's organizations, ECLAC, UN Women and other UN agencies can join efforts to bring the voice of the region —with all its strength and diversity— to the global stage.

This year, CSW70, as the Secretary mentioned, has as its priority theme the access to justice for all women and girls. This is a fundamental human right and a cornerstone for the exercise of all rights, which requires guaranteeing conditions of equality and non-discrimination, as well as the real, timely and

effective possibility of obtaining protection, truth and reparation in cases of rights violations —so that access to justice becomes a reality for all women and girls, especially those who face multiple forms of discrimination, inequality and violence.

States have the obligation to remove the structural barriers that have historically limited its fulfillment.

Our region has a solid and robust normative framework, with clear standards to ensure access to justice with a gender perspective, intersectionality and reinforced due diligence. The standards exist, but their full and effective implementation remains a challenge — making that guiding principle of CEDAW a reality and moving from equality in the law to equality in life.

Likewise, it is necessary to advance legal frameworks to address new forms of discrimination and violence, such as technology-facilitated violence and digital violence, which is precisely the focus of this year's UNITE campaign of the Secretary-General and the 16 Days of Activism —a form of violence that affects 40% of women worldwide.

At UN Women, we welcome that this session also includes the presentation of the draft of CEDAW General Recommendation No. 41 on gender stereotypes. Stereotypes, along with discriminatory social norms, can affect access to justice, especially for women and girls who belong to historically

marginalized groups. And over the coming months, UN Women will also promote a series of consultations to gather contributions from feminist and women's organizations and ensure that this General Recommendation reflects the proposals and demands of the region.

As you know, in September, Member States agreed to revitalize the Commission on the Status of Women —and we should change its name too, to say "of Women"— which represents a renewed commitment to ensuring that this body continues to be the global engine for women's rights and gender equality.

Among the main outcomes adopted are strengthened accountability mechanisms to ensure the effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and the reaffirmation of the need for all stakeholders involved in the work of the Commission —including civil society organizations— to be heard at every stage of the process.

It is important that we celebrate the progress made. Last week, we had the great satisfaction of witnessing the adoption of the Gender Action Plan during COP30 held in Belém do Pará, and the adoption of this plan represents a decisive step toward keeping gender equality at the center of the global climate agenda and ensuring concrete results for all women and girls who today are on the front lines of the climate crisis.

This Action Plan seeks to incorporate earmarked resources so that gender equality is at the heart of climate decisions; to promote the development of solid and comparable data and monitoring systems; and to incorporate the intersectional dimension as a guiding principle to ensure that no woman, no girl —whether rural, Indigenous, Afro-descendant, with disabilities, migrant, or a defender of human or environmental rights— is left behind.

Our region is a region of peace, a region of justice, and also a region that is committed to prevention, peacebuilding, social cohesion, and a care society as pillars to face today's challenges. We trust that this message will also be clearly conveyed at next year's CSW.

It is also important to highlight another significant achievement mentioned by the Secretary: the biregional pact for Care adopted during the Fourth CELAC–European Union Summit held in Santa Marta, Colombia. This is an instrument that promotes the development of comprehensive care systems with shared standards between both regions; encourages social and state responsibility; the professionalization of care work; the strengthening of social protection policies; and underscores the importance of generating comparable data and advancing legal frameworks that recognize care as a right. It also establishes mechanisms for biregional cooperation.

We are also closing this month the commemoration of 2025 - thirty years since the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action. The Declaration and Platform for Action is a roadmap that guides us every day; it marked a turning

point in the world's vision of the rights of women and girls, and it continues to be a navigation chart for achieving gender equality and the exercise of women's and girls' rights worldwide.

We have assessed the progress made and also the enormous challenges that persist. And this balance leaves us with some clear certainties, such as the fact that one of the main obstacles that has prevented the Beijing Platform for Action from attaining higher levels of implementation has been the chronic lack of resources to advance this agenda. That is why we want to reiterate that we do not only need political will - which is, of course, important - but that it must also be translated into determined political action with clear budget allocations.

This is why we call for the establishment of formal mechanisms for dialogue with Ministers of Finance, to ensure that the commitments made are explicitly incorporated into budget planning and execution to advance gender equality and women's autonomy.

Today, December 1st, as was already mentioned, we commemorate World AIDS Day, and I do not want to finish without making a special acknowledgment of all women and girls living with HIV and AIDS and calling for their demands and proposals to be fully considered so they can exercise their rights free from discrimination and violence.

Finally, I want to sincerely acknowledge all the representatives of feminist and women's organizations —those present here and those joining us virtually. Thank you for your tireless work, sustained overtime, for keeping us alert, and for weaving together the care that we all need.

Thank you very much, and I wish us all an excellent session of the Presiding Officers.