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***FIRST INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR OF THE PARLIAMENTARY FRONT FOR EARLY
CHILDHOOD– NATIONAL CONGRESS OF BRAZIL***

**SECOND INTERNATIONAL MEETING OF THE HEMISPHERIC NETWORK OF LEGISLATORS
AND FORMER LEGISLATORS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD**

On

Building a Legal Framework for Public Policies on Early Childhood

FINAL REPORT

May 31, 2013

Brasilia, Brazil, April 16-18, 2013

The First International Seminar took place on April 16-18, 2013 in the Auditorium Narea Ramos- Chamber of Deputies and had as its purpose, to contribute to the building of a legal framework for public policies that guarantee sustainability, that are in line with new scientific discoveries, values and guarantees the most adequate comprehensive care for all children ages 0-6 of Brazil and the continent. In Brazil, early childhood public policies gained relevance in the last years through federal, state, and municipal programs.

The First International Seminar was convened by the Hemispheric Network of Legislators and Former Legislators for Early Childhood and the Parliamentary Front for Early Childhood of the National Congress of Brazil, in which deputies from nine political parties participate. It counted on the highest level of political support, represented by five federal ministers, congressional deputies, world level experts and legislators from: Argentina, Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, United States, Guatemala, Holland, Mexico, Panama, and Peru, who along with 500 governmental authorities, civil society and corporations of Brazil, developed an agenda, consistent with the objectives and expected results for the event.

The ministers and the technical, private, and academic authorities of Brazil agreed on counting with legislation that guarantees progress after evaluating best practices in early childhood public policies in various sectors and different levels within the government. Full support from the government of President Dilma Roussef was highlighted, with initiatives to care, protect, and educate children from 0 to 6 years of age, mothers, and most vulnerable populations.

Results from the group work are presented at the end of this report, their conclusions, and recommendations, which will serve as a guide in order to continue actions in Brazil and participating countries.

The presidency of the Hemispheric Network of Legislators and Former Legislators for Early Childhood convened the III Meeting of the Hemispheric Network in Monterrey, Nuevo Leon, Mexico from October 22-26, 2013. Here, the country participants must bring forth all progress carried out since the agreements in Brasilia.

MAIN ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

April 17, 2013

SPECIAL OPENING PROGRAM:

The president of the Chamber of Deputies of Brazil, Henrique Eduardo Alves, led the opening ceremony, along with Mrs. Lisa Jordan, Executive Director of the Bernard van Leer Foundation, Deputy Alberto Anaya Gutierrez, President of the Hemispheric Network of Legislators and Former Legislators for Early Childhood, and Deputy Osmar Terra, President of the Parliamentary Front for Early Childhood of Brazil.

Deputy Alves expressed that, “it is an urgent task for the State to create adequate conditions for Early Childhood. He pointed out that 2011 was very important because the **Parliamentary Front for Early Childhood of Brazil** was constituted, with the participation of nine parliamentary groups. Legislators from Brazil and Latin America, concerned about the health and education of children have been increasingly more attuned with this movement; all are contributing to the

drafting of efficient legislation, seeking the commitment from legislatures of other countries to obtain the necessary instruments in order to strengthen Early Childhood”. Regarding the transformation of the legal framework proposal in the legislative initiative, it was manifested that this would take place without a debate in the chamber of deputies, given that the first step would be the creation of a “Special Commission for Early Childhood” that would take care of pushing forth a framework law before the end of the year; with the objective to create an Early Childhood Statute that complements the Child and Adolescent Statute.

For his part, Deputy Osmar Terra, President of the Parliamentary Front for Early Childhood of Brazil said that the Seminary will serve to identify progress and challenges of public policies for Early Childhood in Brazil and other countries, “We will share experiences which will contribute to the creation of a legal framework that will truly protect, foster, and stimulate all children universally, with the objective to articulate all the public education, social, and health services”. He announced that after the event, a special commission will be created in order to address policies directed to early childhood that will be the most advanced in the whole world. He also highlighted that, “we, together with other countries of Latin America, have a legal point of reference of Early Childhood to be the most efficient in the world and that can sustain and develop healthy children universally”.

Mrs. Lisa Jordan, Executive Director from the Bernard van Leer Foundation, reflected upon her experience about the value of laws, their importance, their significance, and the responsibilities of those who represent the legislative power. She said that Brazil counts on a Constitution that guarantees social rights with 277 articles where children have rights to an education, health, and protection. To conclude, she summarized the following, “legislation is always under construction for a social base, it must be an easier task, there should not be differences between the legislative text and its practice, it must be worked as a whole”. She also said that laws also require a budget in order to show that they guarantee their implementation that is why the legal framework cannot remain only within the legislative phase, it must be transferred into mandates of law and policies that have success. She also mentioned examples of successful policy: “Chile Grows with Me”, “The Good Start” in Colombia, “Progress” in Mexico, “Better Early Childhood” in Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil. She concluded by underscoring the excellent opportunity that Brazil offered with the Seminar to reflect and verify if this is reflected in reality.

Finally, Deputy Alberto Anaya, President of the Hemispheric Network of Legislators and Former Legislators, underscored the importance of counting on legal frameworks that support and provide sustainability for early childhood policies. He underscored three tasks to reach such expectations: i) In order to legislate in favor of early childhood, we must consider starting from pre-conception and prenatal stages (between the 8th and the 12th week of pregnancy), that way, problems can be prevented, starting from the development of the brain; ii) we have to face the challenge to increase awareness to the political class and society, including parents and organizations; iii) we must “fight” for a sufficient budget. He congratulated the Congress of Brazil because it is a country with high degree of early childhood development.

1.- VIDEO CONFERENCE: “The economy of investing in young children, implications for policy and legislation in early childhood”. James Heckman, Noble Prize in Economics, 2000 (USA).

The economist Heckman supported, in a consistent manner, the rationale for early childhood policies, and mentioned that policies must be wiser, and takes research results from science on which to base them and must be well planned in order to transfer capabilities. He highlighted that the investment in early childhood public policies, starting from the youngest age groups, prevent and improve the welfare state and the approach to the potential of the human being,

which have an impact in the reduction of chronic illnesses in young children, in their social, cognitive, emotional skills, and in the performance and production during all their lives.

He presented a different approach to poverty and social inequity; he identified it with a focus based on the capabilities of the human being. He said that the capabilities are capacities to function in a multitude of tasks in life and that these can be acquired starting in early childhood since the human being is more flexible, more malleable and skills, are matters of education, therefore one has to give the families tools, so that as a basis of the capabilities that the child develops, he or she can perform better in school. He proposed a unified, holistic approach that points to all problems, using the strategy of human development.

He drew attention to those who wish to strengthen the economy, and how they must make a solid investment in early childhood. As proof that these are effective means, he presented the results of research completed in the United States through the Perry Preschool Program, showing that the experience of quality, early childhood programs for disadvantaged children, can change them into healthier adults, reduce percentages of crime and social burden to the government with an annual return on investment of 7-10%, increase the levels of schooling and professional performance. After analyzing research such as the Abecedarian Project of North Carolina and the Nurse Family Partnership in the US, and the Intervention in Jamaica (Caribbean), their contributions can be summarized as follows:

- Invest in less advantaged children is a public policy that promotes, in the long run, social justice and productivity in the economy and society.
- Early interventions have a higher return than later interventions, even though there is an overinvestment in later stages and an underinvestment in earlier years. The programs directed to early childhood are more effective than the programs for adolescents.
- It is important to sustain timely interventions, given that beneficial environments for children have the greatest impact if monitoring occurs with learning experiences in later periods.
- The modern state must go beyond transferring money to its population. It must make a different approach to poverty and inequity. It must worry about the capabilities and skills of the individuals.
- Investing in the education of young children (0-3 years), is a benefit for all their lives. “It is best to invest in early childhood than to save money”.
- Cognitive gaps start early among the most vulnerable groups. These affect the development and the behavior of children.
- The family is a decisive factor, the most important one for the development of children. Children from poor families see their skills reduced. Therefore, it is important to educate good families, who can educate and raise good sons and daughters. Necessary tools must be provided for them to educate their children.
- Finally, he concluded with how policy must learn from science, it must take it into account.

4

2.- CONFERENCE: “Vision for the future on policies for early childhood in Brazil”, Mr. Marcelo Neri, Acting Minister, Secretariat of Strategic Affairs, Presidency of the Republic of Brazil.

Neri commented that the socioeconomic and demographic inequality among the different groups in Brazil, has reduced, that the indicators of child development have also improved considerably in the last decade (poverty in children ages 0 to 15), mainly thanks to the **Bolsa Familia Program**. At the same time, he commented that as a government measure, the year 2012 launched the **Brazil Cariñoso Program**, which complements the income received by families with children between 0 to 6 years of age (more equality of opportunities).

Despite these progresses, the Minister recognized that the group most unprotected is that of 0 to 3 years, given that 52% of these children live in poor homes or in extreme poverty. Only 22% of these have access to early childhood services; in comparison to 80% of children from 4 to 5 years who receive preschool education. He informed that the government has a plan to build preschool centers in 2014.

He mentioned determinant factors for progress in the development of the child: i) national policies; ii) local policies; iii) legal and institutional advances.

Taking as a basis Dr. Heckman's conference, he underscored the objectives of the integration early childhood care:

- Promote the comprehensive development of each child: ensure opportunities, conditions and necessary incentives for all children to develop their full potential, therefore, to have a life of their choice and to contribute productively to the community in which they live.
- Ensure that each parent can give their child the best available care, and for that:
 - Must keep in one place, the information about all early childhood services in their community.
 - Must obtain all help, orientation, and necessary resources to promote the comprehensive development of their children.
 - Must enjoy in their totality the synergies between the diverse sectorial actions; through the integration of actions to expand benefits, reduce the costs and contribute to improve the quality of life.
- Promote greater participation from the community in early childhood care. It must be completed with an informative program about the importance of early childhood care and how all in the community can and must participate.
- Being good parents and good peer adolescent mentors, is based on good attachment relationships. Conscience and coherence, as important characteristics of any parent-teacher relationship.

5

The participation of Deputy Eduardo Barbosa, Parliamentary Front of Brazil (moderator)

Barbosa stressed the importance of the role of the family and the specific laws for the development of this age group. "We must provide nutrition, stimulation, and affection for early childhood". If this is translated into public policies, we have the expected result. This is the way," he underscored.

He also highlighted the importance of interventions for this age group. This would be done through the articulation of sectoral, early childhood policies, the creation of adequate environments that should be given to a person undergoing development.

"Children in favorable environments who receive some sort of support, will be more competent in order to face the daily problems of tomorrow, and are more productive for the country," he pointed out.

As has been informed, economists show that investing in children generates economic production that is ten times greater than investing in any other age group.

Lastly, he reiterated that the need for strategic policy will also improve the development of the nation. "To invest in early childhood, also provides a greater quality of life in the future, making the country more developed".

3. CONFERENCE: Mrs. Tereza Campello, Minister of Social Development and Plight Against Hunger. Brazil Cariñoso Program.

Minister Campello highlighter the political will of the government, evident in the program “Brazil Cariñoso”. She said that in the poverty map, improvements for the population come about as a result of an increase in capacities and opportunities, which is reflected in: guarantee of employment, productive inclusion in the urban and rural realm, and access to public services, which result in increase of income and consequently, an increase in conditions of well-being.

She expressed that **Brazil Cariñoso** is a program launched by President Dilma Rouseff which cares for families in extreme poverty, with children of 6 years or younger, and provides a monthly scholarship of US\$40, approximately, for each child. She pondered also increasing the amount of space in schools and family homes in the poorest localities of the country. This initiative emerges as a complement to the “Family Scholarship” that is the most notable social program of Brazil, which allowed between 30 to 40 million people to exit extreme poverty and be incorporated into the middle class, in the last decade. In the program *Brazil Cariñoso*, the poorest families receive 70 reales, on top of the amount that is transferred for rent, coined *Bolsa Familia*. The program has been praised internationally and has served as a model for other countries, which fight against poverty. Moreover, the age of children who participate in this program was increased to 15 years, thereby creating a total of 8.1 million children from 0 to 15 years to exit extreme poverty. With them, also their siblings and parents were exited, totaling 22 million people benefited.

Today, Brazil does not have any child or adult in extreme poverty and the country works, in particular, with early childhood in order to improve the care that is provided to children. Campello considers that the sectors that execute programs directed to early childhood must integrate policies and not work separately. Sectors must collaborate.

6

4. CONFERENCE: “Evolution of early childhood policies in Brazil”- Ricardo Paes e Barros, Under Secretary of Strategic Affairs of the Presidency of the Republic- Brazil

Paes e Barros informed that in the last decade, the programs and priorities of the government have tried to reduce shortcomings, given that there has been an increase in early childhood care. Among these:

-In the health sector: 34,000 teams of family health with 55% of the population covered; 260,000 community health workers and PACS; 21,000 dental health teams- ESB.

-In the social welfare sector: 8,000 social assistance reference centers- CRAS; 91% of coverage by the Comprehensive Program for the Family- PAIF; 98% of the Brazilian municipalities have a CRAS.

-In the education sector: 2 million children from 4 to 6 years, cared in 46,000 children centers, more than 20% of the population from 0 to 3 years are cared. The access to Day Care Houses (*casas cuna*) has increased.

He pointed out the legislative and institutional advances, among these: the Statute of the Child and Adolescent-ECA, the document from the UN, “A world fit for children”, signed. The Orientation Committees (*Consejos de Tutela*) have been strengthened and expanded in 98% of the municipalities; the State and Municipal Councils have been strengthened. In the defense of the Rights of the Child and Adolescent, councils were created in 92% of municipalities. The Fund for Childhood and Adolescence (FIA) has been strengthened, as have other legislations and measures against violence towards children, adolescents, and families.

He underscored as principal challenges: the integration of actions for early childhood, the increasing emphasis on positive rights, the monitoring of the development of the child, the evaluation of the impact of actions directed towards childhood, the definition of the roles of the

family and the state in early childhood care, the effective universalization of opportunities for the full development of children, the strategy for home day care in the whole country.

He finished by reflecting on 4 dilemmas of the strategy for home care, at the national level: i) care/responsibility versus teaching a baby skills; ii) early childhood care versus information for parents; iii) home care versus care outside the home; iv) universal care versus care focused towards vulnerable groups.

5. CONFERENCE: “Policy based on scientific evidence” Institute of the Brain, Mr. Jaderson Costa (Brazil)

Jaderson began recognizing that he stood in front of politicians who have a very important role, that which is to legislate and to take into account the result from research studies and investigations. Researchers play an important role in the challenges, the development, and the identification of scientific evidence for the establishment of solid public policies that support the educational and socio-emotional development, health and well-being of children.

Scientific evidences demonstrate that the development of the brain takes place in stages, pre and post natal, that during gestation there is a proliferation of nerve cells, the neuronal migration, the myelination and neuronal circuit; that the first years of life of the human being are characterized by elasticity and cerebral neuroplasticity.

Good science, he stated, must produce good public policy for early childhood. Researchers and responsible politicians must collaborate in the promotion and the challenges for the development of education and health programs. It is fundamental to change “good science” into “good public policy”.

He prosed, as part of the agenda for researchers, the following issues:

- Conditions that promote health, education, and socio-emotional development of the child.
- What are the best indicators to monitor these actions?
- What is the prevalence of the educational, socio-emotional, and health problems?
- What are the evidence-based interventions?
- What are the social and cultural factors that influence the success of an intervention?
- What are the individual differences that influence the result?

He finalized by pointing out the need to promote research through the formulating of experiments and data from systematic surveys in order to explore the relationship between the neurobiological and psychological dimension for education. He suggested determining the costs and benefits of different interventions for the development of the child.

6. CONFERENCE: “Public policies for early childhood health,” Alexandre Padilha, Minister of Health- Brazil

Padilha informed about the principal government programs in the health sector. He reviewed the principal causes for infant mortality in Brazil: i) among children under 1 year of age: 65% due to acute respiratory illnesses; in children from 1 to 4 years: 28% due to external causes (traffic accidents, drownings, fire explosions); in children from 4 to 5 years, 39%. He indicated that in 2011, a good percentage of children who go to the Day Care Houses (*casa cuna*) presented a case of underweight, for which in these institutions, the health program was expanded, with the administration of vitamin A and iron supplements, for children from 0 to 3 years. The next goal is to reach 6,500,000 children and to cover 397 municipalities.

Among the new actions from the government, he mentioned: the strategy to maximize breastfeeding in all states; the strengthening of the Brazilian network of human milk, the implementation of the program and National Plan of home visits directed towards the strengthening of family competencies for the health care and the stimulation of children under 3 years; the strategy for inter-sectoral health; the training of professionals of basic care, violence prevention, and the program “Live without limits” for children who are carriers of deficiencies.

7. PANEL: The application of health policies in Brazil in programs and services

7.1 Encyclopedia on early childhood, Ms. Alessandra Schneider, (CONASS/Brazil)

Schneider mentioned that this encyclopedia was created for online use, that it has as its purpose to improve the scientific knowledge of the development of children from 0 to 5 years of age. CONASS and the Maria Cecilia Soto Vidigal Foundation are partners with the Center for Excellence for Early Childhood Development in the making of the Encyclopedia in Portuguese, and for the Spanish version, there is another institution from Chile. It gathers articles from renowned researchers who carefully develop each subject. It covers 33 subjects related to the psychosocial development of the child, among these: play, aggression, autism, the brain, attachment, hyperactivity, maternal depression, numeracy, resilience, culture, the importance of childhood development, aggression, prevention of child abuse, poverty, and pregnancy, among others. The link for the Encyclopedia in Portuguese is: www.encyclopedia-crianca.com.

She also said that it is necessary to improve the environment in which the poorest children live, because they would be more capable of a healthier development in the social and educational realms. “When we are capable of having a quality program for early childhood, the environment in which a child lives through changes, which is ensured by coherent information given that his or her development is stimulated and finally, we have emotional security and education.”

8

7.2 Better Early Childhood (PIM/RS), Mrs. Ciro Simoni, Health Secretary from the State of Rio Grande do Sul (Brazil).

This is an institutional program of socio-educational action directed to families of children ages 0 to 6 years and expectant mothers who find themselves in a socially vulnerable situation. It integrates the policy of the government of the state of Rio Grande do Sul under the coordination of the Health Secretariat and with the support from the education, culture, work and social development secretariats. It is developed since the year 2003.

It is inspired by the Cuban experience, “Educate your child”, from the Reference Center of Latin-American for Preschool Education (CELEP) from which advice was received for its development. It is directed towards the development of physical, intellectual, social, and emotional capacities of the human being. It has as its center point the community, the family, and the intersectorality.

Its objective is to guide families, starting from their culture and experiences, in order to promote the comprehensive development of children from gestation until 6 years of age. It consists of visiting each family by medical students during a year. They must do their practices in communities for a reduced salary. The costs of the program are shared with the municipalities. Currently, it exists in 255 municipalities, out of 497 total in the state. Its coverage reaches 48,500 families. The families who participate in the program also participate in “Bolsa Familia”. Its work strategy is implemented at the national level by the health sector.

7.3 Program, Madre Coruña Pernambucana, Ms. Ana Elizabeth de Andrade Lima.

Andrade Lima pointed out that this is a policy of the state of Pernambuco starting in 2007, which became law in 2009, with a population of 8,796,449 and with 12 regions. The objective of

the policy is to reduce maternal and childhood mortality. It is represented by a *Madre Buho* who must guarantee the comprehensive care to pregnant women of the National Health System and their children until 5 years of age; a network of care in order to reduce maternal and childhood mortality; the improvement of social indicators through strategic priorities that are articulated by 9 government secretariats, among these: health, education, social development, work, agriculture and agrarian reform, welfare, among others.

They offer social development services to all of the state through an inter-sectoral network; policies are tailored to each reality. They develop training courses from literacy to nutrition programs or the inclusion of breastfeeding, water infrastructure in the fields (construction of septic sewers), programs for the improvement to the quality of life in rural areas, and diffusion programs in 103 municipalities. Currently, they cover 45,000 children and their mothers.

8. CONFERENCE: The new science in early childhood development and the permanent challenges of informing public policies. Michael Boivin, School of Psychology, University of Laval, Quebec, Canada.

Early childhood is an extremely sensitive period during which the brain is shaped by the interplay of the child's genes and experiences. When the environment is a secure, positive one, these factors join forces to help maximize their potential. But when children face enduring obstacles to healthy development, such as poverty, inappropriate care, or violence, environment and biology may route them on a course to emotional, physical and mental health problems. An Expert Panel on Early Childhood Development from the Royal Society of Canada and the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences has recently examined the scientific evidence regarding the role of early adverse childhood experiences in developmental health (Boivin & Hertzman, 2012). <http://rsc-src.ca/en/expert-panels/rsc-reports/early-childhood-development-rscaahs>. The following conclusions were reached:

- An emerging science, which integrates genetics, epigenetics, neuroscience, and developmental science, now provides a deeper understanding of how the environment and biology jointly influence development over the life course.
- It is now clear from extended longitudinal research that young children facing chronic adversities such as family poverty, inappropriate care, and child maltreatment are more likely to experience a broad range of impairments later in life, ranging from emotional, behavioral, interpersonal, school and stress-related adjustment problems, to more severe difficulties such as mental health problems, delinquency and criminal offending.
- Developmental trajectories appear early in life and then are reinforced through a cascade of differential exposures to stressful and risky social contexts, possibly extending to the regulation of future parenting. At the same time, this is not inevitable. Rather, children vary tremendously in their response to adverse childhood experiences; there is no single path from early adversity to poor developmental health outcomes.

Early childhood is a sensitive period when children may be more susceptible to both negative and positive exposures. Some children may be more biologically susceptible to social context than others, and thus more predisposed to react to both stressful and nurturing environments, as well as to experience the most gains from intervention. Inequalities in development are indeed governed by a wide range of factors, from genes to community-level social support, interacting over time.

Recent advances in epigenetics, mainly using animal models, may now explain how brain development could be partly molded through changes in gene expression, embedding

early experience in our biology and leading to individual differences in developmental health trajectories. There is now a limited but promising body of research showing that child maltreatment, perhaps the most serious adversity that children may encounter, and its associated outcomes can be reduced if targeted, intensive and sustained services are deployed. At the same time, more general “universal” services, such as affordable, quality public daycare, are also needed to reach the majority of vulnerable children.

Thus, Proportionate Universality, that is programs, services, and policies that are universal, but with a scale and intensity that is proportionate to the level of disadvantage, should be the goal. Early childhood should be a high-priority window for interventions, and policies, services, and programs (1) should start strong early in life, (2) persist over time, (3) be tailored to children, families and communities, and (4) be systematically evaluated.

APRIL 17, 2013

1. CONFERENCE: “National Network for Early Childhood, A Way of Association”, Ms. Maria do Rosario, Minister of the Special Secretariat for Human Rights (Brazil); Luzia Torres Laffitte, President of the National Network for Early Childhood; and Vital Didonet, Legislative Consultant, Brazil.

When consolidating peace the instruments for human rights, a vast concept is formed in all areas of knowledge, economy, culture, democracy, education, and health. The Secretariat of Human Rights is mainly preventive, considering as principles:

- Human rights are indivisibles and interrelated; they are applied and they work as an interaction throughout sectors.
- The making of human rights public policies must consider defense at the family and community level.
- There is an existing proposal for the public policy plan of action to be exercised in the different levels or administrative proceedings of the country.
- The need to interlink sectoral plans in early childhood issues of the DDHH.
- A Statute for the Child and the Adolescents exists, Law 120609.

Ms. Laffitte and Mr. Didonet informed the National Network for Early Childhood (RNPI) coordinates and participates in the agenda of convergence, and has as its objectives, to promote development, the improvement, and the integration of national policies for children until 6 years of age, through the: i) monitoring and evaluation of their application; ii) consolidation and spread of knowledge; iii) Organizing of social and political mobilization, aimed to protect and promote the rights of the child.

The pointed out as strategies of the Network for Early Childhood i) legislative activity: debates about legislation in the early childhood field; ii) promotion: influence in the formation of public opinion and the configuration of policy; iii) actions with a purpose: proposals for the resolution of problems that affect early childhood; iv) social communication: the dissemination of information, the spread of the exchange of experiences, the dissemination of knowledge and better practices.

Finally, they shared as challenges: i) increase actions of the Network among indigenous communities, those who live by border river towns, black, brown, rural and segment groups, refugees, sentenced fathers and mothers, adolescents and children of drug addicts; ii) monitor and evaluate public policies in the 13 allocations of actions of the IPSF; and iii) expand and consolidate the state and municipal networks.

2. PANEL: “Advances and challenges of the legislative initiatives and actions in favor of early childhood in the countries of the continent”, Ms. Ivonne de Martinelli, Ms. Maribel Cormack, Ms. Gloria Lozano de Diaz.

2.1 Ivonne de Martinelli, Director of Special Projects; Cabinet of the First Lady of the Republic of Panama, explained that the conceptual principle of the Roadmap for the Program for Early Comprehensive Early Childhood Care (PAIPI), is a strategy that implements the government of Panama. It is based on comprehensive education as an issue of rights: children are subjects of rights and the rights are indivisible; the care is and must be comprehensive; we must exit from sectorial and partial care in order to plan policies that boost comprehensive care and work based on joint effort.

The Roadmap for Early Childhood Care (RAPI), she explained, is the general focus of a full exercise of children’s rights, requiring for 15 differentiated actions to be implemented in accordance of the life cycle. It is carried out through multiple services, programs, or benefits offered in quantity and quality; traces the sequence of planned, continued, and permanent care that contribute to the comprehensive care of boys and girls.

In 2010, the technical advisory committee of the First Lady elaborated a Plan for Comprehensive Care for Early Childhood (PAIPI), directed to girls and boys from 0 to 6 years, with the objective to strengthen the action aimed towards early childhood in Panama. Moreover, it ensures a technical platform that allows reinforcing guiding instances in the distinct areas through policies and programs at the national and local level.

Through the PAIPI, Stimulation Rooms (*Salas de Estimulación*) were organized (0-3) preschools (4-5) and Playgrounds/playrooms (*ludotecas*). In 2012, the Roadmap for the Comprehensive Early Childhood Care was implemented. The law, in order to institutionalize the Roadmap, must: establish a judicial and normative framework that adjusts to the requirements of the implementation of the RAPI as public policy; establish the governance of the RAPI, specifically the attributions and functions of the governing institution as well as the governing bodies; define a financing outline and its regulations; define mechanisms for accounting and transparency of the RAPI.

The Roadmap for Care: i) allows to provide comprehensive, child-centered care; ii) improves the conditions and guarantees for the effective exercise of the rights; iii) creates room for the coordination and systematic, inter-sectoral articulation geared towards early childhood; iv) lays the foundation for a monitoring and follow-up system of each child’s track record.

2.2 Gloria Lozano, President of the Board of Trustees of the Inter-American Children’s Institute (IIN) and General Director of Childhood, Adolescence, and Family (SENNIAF) – Panama.

Ms. Lozano made a thorough presentation about the **Inter-American Children’s Institute (IIN)**, among which can be summarized: The Inter-American Children’s Institute, in its capacity as specialized organism of the Organization of American States, OAS, comprised of all member states of the Inter-American system, is charged with promoting and protecting the rights of children and adolescents in the countries belonging to said organism.

Its mission is to contribute to the development of public policies that respond to the promotion, protection, and exercise of the rights of children and adolescents in the member states, as well as promoting a culture of rights and well-being for boys, girls, and adolescents within a framework of respect to human rights.

Among the activities it organizes: generation of new knowledge from internships in the region; technical cooperation to strengthen the capacities of the States; training of human resources; promotion of horizontal cooperation.

Why place a priority on early childhood? Scientific evidence shows the malleability of the young child to the conditions of his or her environment. We have a challenge to offer environments, “favorable to development” starting from the beginning of life and the need of efficient, social policies.

As challenges, she commented that policies require a greater inter-sectoral articulation, involving institutions of a higher level: ministries, major coordination between international organisms and among States.

2.3 Ms. Maribel Cormack, International Consultant for Early Childhood, Peru.

Ms. Cormack pointed out that Peru has been making significant progress with regards to comprehensive care of girls and boys less than 6 years of age.

Among the most relevant are the ones from the health sector. She mentioned the registering of births in the National Registry of People, the decrease of malnutrition and maternal-infant mortality rates, the incorporation of children to the Public Health Insurance Scheme and the application of a screening data sheet for the detection of interfamily violence of all types.

The education sector promotes an increase to the coverage for children from 3 to 5 years, through diverse strategies, especially in rural zones of relatively less developed areas, through the Coverage Program 100. In coordination with UNICEF and the World Health Organization, indicators and quality standards have been formulated in order to evaluate non-school centers and programs. Parents have been incorporated into associations for the formulation of the Educational Institution Project.

The Ministry of Inclusion and Social Development, through the Program “Cuna Mas” has been serving children under 3 years in marginal urban and rural areas. With the Program “Qali Warma”, food is offered to children from 3 to 5 years as well as primary education in public schools.

Among the challenges, there is an increase for the care of children under 3 years, to improve inter-sectoral coordination and greater participation of parents to guarantee a successful transition for children in the educational process.

Panel Conclusions, Moderator Maria Elena Ebeda, Development Specialist for Early Childhood, UNICEF, TACRO, Panama.

Among the principal advances, we can mention: i) the existence of efforts in the region to improve the coverage and quality of services, mainly in the health and education sectors; ii) the development of policies in favor of early childhood in some countries speak of the investment in early childhood; iii) commitment from entrepreneurs with regards to concrete actions in favor of early childhood; iv) efforts to articulate different services in order to ensure comprehensive care for early childhood; v) expanding the coverage, especially for vulnerable groups, with preference to rural areas and indigenous populations.

As challenges for the region, these were mentioned: i) commitment of the entrepreneur with concrete actions in favor of early childhood; ii) efforts articulated by diverse sector in order to care for early childhood; iii) expansion of coverage, especially for vulnerable groups, with preference to

rural areas and indigenous populations; iv) promote and improve normativity in the following aspects: registry of births, breastfeeding, parental leave; v) expansion of services, ensuring intersectorality that allows comprehensive care to childhood; vi) legislate in favor of measures that ensure responsible parenting.

3. PANEL: PRESENTATION OF THE HEMISPHERIC NETWORK OF LEGISLATORS AND FORMER LEGISLATORS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD, progress, challenges, and work plan

A video on the Hemispheric Network of Legislators and Former Legislators was presented.

3.1 Deputy. Osmar Terra, President, Parliamentary Front for Early Childhood of Brazil.

Terra reiterated the progress made in Brazil regarding legislative matters. Mentioned that the Seminar is a result of the Work Plan 2012-2013 that was approved in the city of Campeche, Mexico. He said that public policies and laws in defense of children's rights are being revised in order to propose a new legal framework, along with an early childhood federal law. He mentioned the need to establish legislation according to new scientific discoveries of value and guarantee the comprehensive care to children in Brazil and all of the Americas.

3.2. Congresswoman Leyla Chihuan Ramos, Peru.

Chihuan Ramos pointed out that, "It is very important to work for a legal framework to benefic early childhood in the region. For my part, concerned about early childhood, I have presented a project on the Law of Food and Nutrition during Pregnancy, which seeks to provide nutritional supplements and fortified foods to pregnant women of low economic resources. Poor nutrition during pregnancy can cause effects to the newborn that can affect him or her for life. For this reason, it is important to solve a problem that affects the most vulnerable populations" pointed out the congresswoman.

3.3 Dr. Enrique Ku Herrera, Executive Secretary of the Hemispheric Network, Mexico.

Dr. Ku Herrera presented the developments on the main agreements made since the First International Meeting of the Network of Legislators and Former Legislators for Early Childhood, from August 16-17, 2012:

- To convene this First International Seminar of the "Parliamentarian Front for Early Childhood of Brazil"
- Expand the organization of state networks for early childhood in Mexico (Nuevo Leon, 2011 and Michoacán 2012, among others).
- Expand the Hemispheric Network to other countries.
- Information exchange between PARLACEN, the Dominican Republic, Chile, Guatemala, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Panama, Uruguay and other countries.
- Support and organize joint activities among with networks of entrepreneurs and legislators, among these: Colombia, Brazil, Campeche, Puebla and Michoacán in Mexico.
- Production of the Hemispheric Network video.
- Promote the drafting of legislation to benefit children, women, the family, against violence and child abuse, the support of minorities, the indigenous, and the fight against bullying, among others.
- The institutionalization of the Hemispheric Network in Mexico.
- Join efforts, as part of civil society, in international organizations. The creation of the Hemispheric Network website: www.redhpi.org and the publication of progress made on: www.redem.org

3.4 Deputy Alberto Anaya, President of the Hemispheric Network of Legislators and Former Legislators for Early Childhood, Mexico.

Anaya underscored that to invest in early childhood is the best investment against organized crime, and as has been said in the interventions made by the scientists in this event, the earlier the better. He made an invitation to the III Meeting of the Hemispheric Network, which will take place in the city of Monterrey, Nuevo Leon, Mexico on Oct. 23-27, 2013.

After presenting the objectives and goals of the Network, he summarized the **Work Plan for 2013-2014:**

- Strengthen the Hemispheric Network.
- Continue with the integration of national networks in each of the 34 member states of the OAS and consolidate the national and state networks that have been created.
- Promote and disseminate the rights of the child, agreements, and international provisions, laws and practice standards for the protection and comprehensive development of early childhood. Unify and apply legislative progress made in the countries.
- Carrying out diagnostics on the situation of the countries, in as much as legislative matter as public policies and significant actions. To promote comparative legislative studies and an inventory of existing laws in favor of early childhood. Collect studies on the fulfillment of laws through the analysis of existing services in the following sectors: health, education, health-nutrition, social development, and human rights.
- Spread information on successful experiences of the governments, countries, NGOs, and international organizations.
- Continue to advocate and support the efforts made by the countries to achieve universal early childhood education, to come to fruition as a state policy, and for it to have priority in the structure of educational systems.

14

4. CONFERENCE: Policies for the development of early childhood in the world. Dr. Mary Young, International Consultant for Global Health and Early Childhood Development and Senior Advisor from the Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University (USA)

The policy perspectives of DIT have advanced, taking as foundation, the explanation from science about how the experience from the early life, affects the neurobiological pathways that influence the course of life; at the same time, why the investment in expectant women and their babies is a potent equalizer and a key tool for economic and social stability. The economic prosperity of a nation depends on a high proportion of employment-population and the quality of its human capital.

The development of human capital is a dynamic process that takes place throughout the long term of life. Other reasons for which to invest in DIT are: i) increase participation of women in the work place; ii) balance work with family responsibilities in the most equitable way for women; iii) ensure the offer for labor for the future (with the aging of the population and the reduction of birth rates; iv) treat high rates of child poverty and persistent educational disadvantages (given that the effects from poverty are greater and have a more profound impact in babies).

Research, from various perspectives, demonstrates that human development in the first stages of life, are a complex and dynamic interaction between nature, care, genes, and the environment. Genes listen to the environment and the environment adapts the matrix. From birth, care, stimulation, and nutrition interact with genetic predispositions and shape the architecture of the brain and its nerve cells, which influence learning, behavior, and physical and mental health for the rest of life.

In the countries of the OECD, the ECD policies, in general have an emphasis in: i) integration, care, and education of children; ii) universal access to care and education; iii) are centered around poor, disadvantaged, or at risk children; iv) substantial public investment; v) quality care; vi) expansion of the offer to provide early interventions up to three years of age.

As implications for policies, she underscored the need to integrate the ECD programs, more than just the pilot programs and reach a central strategy. Only through public policies, it is possible to realize permanent and sustainable changes for a better future.

Key areas for responsible politicians in the definition of ECD policy:

- i) Ensure that the coordination at the central, government level in order to develop a global strategy for the child, supported by an administrative unit and a committee for early childhood at the cabinet level, presided by the Ministry of Finances. Establish an ample vision but realistic about the services for early childhood so all ministries, local authorities, and parents can associate themselves.
- ii) Place ECD policy in the Ministry that has a strong focus on early childhood development. It does not matter which Ministry.
- iii) Build capacity-building in the Ministry in order to create a systematic focus for early childhood- map out common services, evaluation of needs, regulation, financing, proceedings, licenses, previous training at the service stage, the development of curriculum, evaluation of programs, and evaluation of quality. Collaborative and participative focus for reform. Even though the government will carry on a leadership role, regional and local authorities, business representatives, civil society and community groups need to involve themselves in the formulation and application of policy.
- iv) Delegate management at the municipal level. This is most efficient for practice management. Central coordination- at a decentralized level- with a shared responsibility between the national and local government. In the delegation process, it is important to guarantee that DIT services are part of a national policy that is well conceived with powers assigned to the local authorities. At the national level, the definition of goals, legislation and regulation, financing, and criteria for human resources and program norms are at the center.
- v) Strengthen knowledge with independent experts from universities, research institutes and associations. Train and specialize the Ministry personnel.
- vi) Establish links between services, professionals, and parents at the local level- the association between diverse means of providing services- families and other services (health, schools, special education).

5. CONFERENCE: The role of private, international cooperation with early childhood in Latin America and the Caribbean, Mr. Leonardo Yanez, Program Officer for Latin America, Bernard van Leer Foundation (Holland).

Yanez pointed out that the previous presentations and the one by Dr. Young provided clear arguments about the relevance of the programs for early childhood, the progress made until today, the pending debt and why to invest in early childhood. However, only in Brazil, about 8 million boys and girls do not have access to a support service for their parents to guarantee a good start and those who have it, are not the ones who most need it. How can we change these scenarios?

Daily caretaking is a visible example of a rendered service primarily provided by the private sector, if we notice that the majority of people who take care of boys and girls from other families

are not public employees. In the majority of countries around the world, this service is provided by private initiatives that compete for clients. Many times, those who most need it are excluded. Although, few times, early childhood care is an activity from the corporate world, the private sector is in a privileged condition to persuade governments and business leaders for this to be done. At the same time, leaders from the public sector can seek for private, allied cooperation in order to influence the internal debates in the state and guarantee the rights of the youngest citizens, in particular those who most need it.

There are many existing models of care, an infinite amount of curricula and pilot experiences. We know that the pillars of investment are: evidence, leadership, advocacy, communication, training, alternative financing, incidence and search for capital. Now, it is pressing to pay more attention to the true obstacles that prevent that the programs that have these characteristics expand, without sacrificing quality- comprehensive, effective, and evaluable programs.

Brazil has passed through a long and interesting process of coming together and formulating a National Plan for early childhood that combines the multisectoral and multidimensional vision of the required actions in order to guarantee the rights of young boys and girls, without these being left behind in a place that is below public policies.

The Brazilian entrepreneur has the sensitivity and the interest, but there has to be a search of new technologies, nourish talent and leadership, make for children to be more responsible within society, and search for alternative, distinct financing from donations and public investments.

Deputy Darcisio Perondi, President of the Commission on Health of the Congress of Brazil (Moderator)

16

Perondi commented that he considered that private investment is too insignificant. "\$150 millions is too small for a savings of \$2 000 millions". He argued that more than the search for private resources; there needs to be a bigger emphasis in volunteerism. "That feeling of love for others must be wished", he said. He also mentioned that, according to the Parliament, longevity is increasing in Brazil, and there are many older people as well as the search for older people to participate and stay healthy. Finally, he reminded all that there is an urgent need for a judicial framework for early childhood, given that the development of the human brain is fastest during the first three years of life.

6. PANEL: "Participation from Entrepreneurs and Civil Society, in the rendering of services in support for the development and comprehensive care for early childhood.

Mr. Sergio Amoroso, panel moderator, informed that entrepreneurs have invested in issues of violence, rights of children, and experiences in (Day Care Centers) *Cunas* or *Creches*, actions against childhood undernourishment, among others. However, he pointed out that private investment does not provide receipts. He considered that it is necessary to create models by corporations so that the government sector can take them to scale. The challenge, he said, is to count on a legal framework that connects all three powers, that produces more innovation, and that expands these sectors.

6.1 Mr. Javier Rodriguez, ARCOR Foundation, Argentina.

Rodriguez informed about the activities that are conducted in Argentina with other corporations. He referenced to the actions that joined the rights of the child and entrepreneurial principles, with the support from UNICEF, Global Pact, Save the Children, which have been joined as 10 principles titled, "Corporations for early childhood". These promote work in favor of early childhood, from a children's rights perspective, through the axes of work such as: research to

produce knowledge; promotion and socialization of information; dissemination, mobilization and incidence; working in the orientation of corporations that want to incorporate themselves to the actions of social responsibility that ARCOR leads; promotion of linguistic and equitable development. These count on programs associated to the commitment of health life habits, with institutions such as Ethos, IARSE, SITEAL-SIPI, among others.

6.2 Mr. Ingo Ploger, President of the Council for Entrepreneurs for Latin America (CEAL).

CEAL groups together entrepreneurs from 20 countries. In Rio de Janeiro, CEAL approved to work with 3 objectives: i) retake economic growth; ii) reduce poverty; and iii) care for the environment. The Brazil Chapter has chosen to work with the issue of poverty and within this, early childhood as a priority. It is in agreement to stimulate the search for excellence, even though in education it is not that easy for financing. He expressed his agreement with the findings of neuroscience in order to sustain actions and motivations such as those supported by Shakira, in order to raise the awareness of the population and attract more enterprises and foundations to support commitments to early childhood.

6.3 Mr. Eduardo Queiroz, President of the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation, Brazil.

Queiroz said that there exist many great entrepreneurs, federal government representatives, civil society networks, and legislators, but that they must meet periodically in order to work together. For example, in this meeting, entrepreneurs are missing, he emphasized. At the time, he commented that, in partnership with CEAL, they want to create a movement for early childhood, same as Argentina, which has established it. He expressed his wish to motivate more mayors, given that the experiences with the Foundation have been successful in some municipalities.

17

Mr. Sergio Amoroso, President of the Jari Foundation (moderator).

Amoroso manifested that panelists agreed in point out that the participation and support from corporations with concrete actions in favor of early childhood is fundamental in order to contribute with public policies. Regarding the support to programs directed to the family, keeping in mind that nothing substitutes a good family, given that this is constitutes a good support for the development of boys and girls.

Mr. Amoroso closed the panel asking to create conditions, strategies and incentives to attract more enterprises. He considers that there is a need to be flexible with some laws regarding early childhood, and that we must prioritize with legislators on decisions that lead a world movement of alliance for early childhood in order to work for their rights.

7. PANEL: “Achievements and Challenges of Legislative Initiatives and Actions in favor of Early Childhood in Countries of the Hemisphere”

7.1 Deputies of the Association of Legislators and Former Legislators for Early Childhood with a Priority in Early Childhood of Michoacán, Mexico:

Deputy Rosa Maria Molina Rojas stressed the importance of timely, relevant, and quality early childhood education. She pointed out that as deputies; they are seeking to prioritize it. As the first step for social mobility, they will try to apply public policies in an efficient manner. She highlighted that in Mexico, they already have federal law for the protection of the rights of children and adolescents.

Invited all to the International Congress on Early Childhood that will take place from Sept. 26-27, 2013 in Morelia, Michoacán, Mexico, an event organized by deputies.

Dip. Laura González Martínez emphasized that the development of effective skills and language, along with a healthy physical development that includes proper immunizations and nutrition during early childhood, will represent, for the countries to have children, youth, and adults who are more competitive, with better and more affectionate family and work relationships.

She spoke about the program, *Oportunidades* and the experience of having coordinated the program in Michoacán, providing services to 360,000 families, which benefited 1.2 million people, where the main challenge was to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty. Recognized that poverty hurts because it is inherited from parents to children. She said that the challenge in Mexico, regarding early childhood is: to make it visible, to promote it, and push forth for specific budgets to be assigned.

Deputy Cristina Portillo spoke about the law approved by the government of Michoacán, for the protection of children and adolescents. Through this law, a state council for the protection of children has been created, as well as a program that reaches the municipal councils, where all children are protected, including children with disabilities, AIDS, cancer, and other problems such as sexual or work exploitation, among others. The challenge they wish to solve is to count on a database with important issues, as were highlighted in the report.

Deputy Sarbelio Molina spoke about the law that he pushed forth, in order to prevent school violence, remembering that this, starts in the family, and children grow up believing that is the normal way families live together; moreover, he stated that ways will be sought for schools to be free of violence, in environments of peace and no violence. At the same time, he informed about the creation of a council against school violence that will be implemented in the 113 municipalities of the state.

For early childhood years to be full it was pledged to reduce the educational gap that exists between the elite classes and those least favorable, for those who do not have access to education and care from early years.

Deputy Fernando Gonzalez spoke about child care centers and explained that child care and development, intended to put the law and regulations homogeneously for early childhood centers to safeguard the integrity, growth, and comprehensive development of children with nutrition, health, balanced meals, health, and quality education services, promoting gender equity. He highlighted that minimum requirements in educational material, health, and protection have been established for the opening of new childcare centers; and that these will be public, private, and both.

7.2 Congresswoman Karla Schaefer Cuculiza, President of the Health Commission and Population of the Republic of Peru, Presidency of the Network of Legislators and Former Legislators for Early Childhood.

Schaefer Cuculiza reflected on some issues that pertain to the reality of Peru: i) 12.5% of female adolescents from ages 15 to 19 are already mothers or are pregnant for the first time. ii) Only 4 out of 10 female adolescents from rural areas (43%) finish a secondary education; iii) The greatest percentage of adolescents who are mothers or are pregnant, represent women without education or with only a primary education (19,7% and 33,9%, respectively); iv) For year 2010, there still exists a rate of 19 deaths of children under 5 years of age for every one thousand children born. In 1990, the rate was 78 deaths; v) the rate of child mortality of children under 1 year of age was, in 2010, 15 for every one thousand who live. In 1990, it was 55; vi) The rate of neonatal deaths

(within the first 28 days of birth), up to 2010, was 9 for every one thousand who were born alive; vii) The rate of births is almost 600,000 boys and girls per year.

Schaefer Cuculiza shared the approved laws: i) extension of the obligation to the establishment of breast-feeding spaces (lactarios) not only in public entities, also in private ii) increase in maternity leave when it involves multiple births or children with disabilities; iii) promotion of the implementation to the right of food in favor of children and the mother; iv) legislation against family violence and against women, same laws are being revised to be improved; v) a law that declares a national holiday against human trafficking, (68% of victims are children); vi) screening to prevent pre-eclampsia in pregnant women.

Mentioned as pending: i) the timely access of comprehensive health services; ii) education within better comprehensive conditions for the development of children; iii) the strengthening of families with a shared responsibility between mother and father in regards to their children; iv) the empowerment of women and the community; v) the protection of children during the gestational stage and during their first years of life; vi) the respect to cultural diversity; vii) the necessary budget to fulfill policies, plans, and programs.

7.3 Luis Morales Solis, Deputy of Ecuador.

Morales Solis referred to the new Political Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador and said that it strengthens the harmonization between national legislation with an emphasis on rights and labor issues, migration, rights, labor issues, migration, border country issues, environment, social, educational, cultural and public health according to principles of progression not regression.

He mentioned that among the approved laws: the “Solidarity Bonus” for single mothers, the presence of the father during the birth and the 10 days of vacation to accompany the mother and the child. Similarly, he manifested his commitment to promote, primarily, comprehensive development and to ensure the full exercise of the rights of the child; with equality and no discrimination, above all.

7.4 Rosa Alma Cruz, Rappporteur of the Commission for the Family, Childhood, Adolescence, and the Adult. Deputy of El Salvador.

Rosa Alma Cruz informed about the progress and the process of implementation for the rights of children for 32% of their population (boys, girls, and adolescents). There exists a national policy for children and adolescents, which passed through a consulting process, in which 55 of 262 municipalities of the country participated, including a total of 5135 girls and boys. Also, she informed the national system of protection is being strengthened, and that to this date they count on the design and mechanism for the national and local coordination, in which public and private institutions participate.

She highlighted that in 2010, a law for the comprehensive protection of children and adolescents with social and judicial mechanisms was approved. The government has invested significantly in social programs: Program for Nutrition and School Health (PASE), the Glass of Milk, as part of a plan of action for education, since good health is part of a good well-being.

7.5 Deputy Corina Morales Miranda, Commissioner on the Affairs of Women, Children, the Family, Credentials of Health. Representative of Women from the Indigenous Peoples, Congress of Panama.

Morales Miranda highlighted the legislative progress made in favor of early childhood: the approval of the law for food allowances through 18 years of age; the reception to the project and Pilot Plan, “Ann Sullivan” for children with autism, with the slogans: “I want to live happily in my

country” and “Together we can make possible the impossible”. Similarly, she informed that currently there are projects for adoption laws, which address people and pedophilia.

At the end of the presentations, the moderator, Dr. Gaby Fujimoto, summarized the following:

- In all the countries, there exists consensus about the importance of counting on legal frameworks, which will facilitate the good intentions, expressed by the legislators.
- All the countries work around the answers to the needs of the child, the mother, the family, and those most vulnerable.
- There is sensitivity among the legislators to legislate in favor of the demand for early childhood.
- There exists concern in the region, given that the care of children requires being a multi-party task in the Congresses.
- There is a process that shows evidence for the need to provide a follow-up to the networks of legislators regarding material on early childhood, which also includes the follow-up of adequate budgets for the programs and actions.
- There needs to be legal frameworks to provide sustainability to the progress made in policies, programs, and services for early childhood.

8. CONFERENCCEL: Evaluation of Programs for Early Childhood, Mr. Rodrigo Pinto (Brazil/USA).

Pinto pointed out that human capital is responsible for almost 70% of the riches produced by a society. There exists ample academic literature that studies the accumulation of human capital in adulthood. This literature suggests investing in early childhood.

20

He mentioned the speech by the President of the United States (2013) where he states that every dollar invested in high quality early childhood education represents a savings of more than US \$7 of the government budget.

This economy is measured in terms of higher high school graduation rates, reduction in the number of pregnant teenagers, reduction in the rate of violent crimes.

He mentioned data, advantages, and results that have resulted in many effects of the Perry Project and the use of the Perry curriculum in the 30% of Head Start Centers. He highlighted that the Perry Curriculum is centered on cognitive skills; in capacity-planning, execute, and evaluate tasks; that emphasize: self-control, resolution planning of inter-personal conflicts (social and cognitive skills). The executive functions of greater order are: the problem resolution/conflicts, reasoning, planning.

The Perry Curriculum is influenced by Piaget because it improves the teacher-student interaction and the learning of monitored schooling; and from Vigotsky: the zone of proximal growth, learning mediated through cultural values, with a focus inspired in "*Herramientas de la Mente*" (Tools of the Mind).

Conversely, the Abecedarian Curriculum helps to improve language, the cognitive and emotional development. Compared to Perry, this had a major impact in cognitive skills and provided better results in terms of antisocial attitudes and criminal conduct. The Abecedarian curriculum developed mixed skills, and it is less expensive in its implementation cost.

He also presented the results from the intervention in Jamaica which provided the following results: i) Improved the interaction between the mother and child during early childhood; ii). **Permanent increase in the cognitive capacity/ability of women;** iii) Particularly strong results during

the adult age; iv) Increased and average of 49% of the monthly income of the workers in the treatment group v) increased from 2% to 60% the monthly income of youth in permanent employment.

APRIL 18, 2013

1. CONFERENCE: “Invest in Early Childhood Development for the Reduction of Poverty”, Experience from China. Dr. Fan Jin- Director of Research for Early Childhood Development (China)

China Development Research Foundation (CDRF) was created to promote social development and improved nutrition. Among the strategies to fight against poverty, it was concluded that economic development only, will not reduce poverty problems. The experience in China, applied by the CDRF, given the achieved results, has been converted into an alternative to be copied in various provinces. It has as characteristics:

- In the 1970s, the government decided that economic development was not enough; early childhood was a new strategy, but had to be proved to the government.
- It was identified that there exists a strong relation between early childhood development and poverty reduction.
- The project was placed within the poorest population of China, in the central part of the country, in the rural areas where 23% of the children were diagnosed as underweight due to undernourishment.
- This project was worked around the subject of subsidies for poor students, ages 3 to 5 years, and the school nutrition subsidy with nutritional diets.
- Nutritional intervention took place for children from 9-24 months. Micronutrients were provided, nutritional packet for children from 6 to 24 months and the evaluation of expectant mothers. The nutritional packet costs 0.40 ctvs of a US Dollar.
- The educational intervention was done through the daycare centers with teachers in charge; it takes place with strong participation from the families (mothers who are trained).
- The results from the intervention were: malnutrition fell to 40%. Among other improvements, there was an excellent increase in language, psychomotor, and memory development.
- Much interest has been placed in the participation of parents, caretakers, and home visits in the future of the project.

He highlighted that President Xi Jinping has approved the National Plan that presented CDRF Foundation, based on the experiences from 9 projects and as results from the research. In the Plan, the political vision is always present. There is a national council and councils in each state, where each sector is assigned a specific topic and must coordinate at the national, state, and local level.

He pointed out that social capital must be invested; government financing and policy implementation must be ensured. The proposal from the Foundation carries a strong component of training at all levels, even to parents and grandparents, providing much support to the rural areas. He recommends that in this century, in order to invest in the strategy of human capital, infrastructure must be updated in order to count with qualified manpower.

2. PANEL: “Municipal political commitments and results regarding the rights of children and their comprehensive care during the earliest years”.

2.1 Edward Reategui, Mayor of Mazan, province of Maynas, Loreto-Peru.

Reategui presented the project, “Growing Together”, which is developed in 3 municipalities of the Mazan District, province of Maynas, Loreto. This is a successful experience, which evolves around improving local management, intersectorial and community work. The axels of attention for children and their families are centered around: health, education, nutrition, identity, and habitability.

The implementation of a community data center which covers 168 families, offers workshops for the consumption of safe water, the washing of hands, sessions to prepare meals, workshops on breastfeeding, sessions on early stimulation, among others. For the sustainability of the project and future actions for early childhood, an Office for Comprehensive Care of Early Child has been created within each district municipality, where the project is executed.

Among the achievements of the project, he mentioned that it counts on an initial baseline, it decreased the district’s childhood undernourishment by 2 points; it has reinstated control of children’s growth and development, it has produced an increase in the percentage of children with DNI, from 65% to 90%; considers to serve 504 families by the year 2014. Currently, 550 children were serviced.

2.2 Deputy Elida Rasino, Former Minister of Education, Santa Fe Province. Former Secretary of Social Promotion of the city of Rosario, Argentina.

Presented the plan of action from the Ministry of Education and comprehensive management experience for early childhood in the municipality.

From the Ministry of Education, actions with a strong component in the formation of teachers were highlighted, with a strong emphasis on play, multiple languages, and the philosophy with children; a service of professionals who work with the educational problem of the child articulating the family and school as the experimental proposal from the school which combines play in open spaces in the neighborhood and regulations, as much for pregnant women as all childhood and adolescence.

The municipal proposal is an experience developed from 1995 to 2001, which was highlighted for: approaching the problem of poverty creating bonds and networks in a preventive manner and from pedagogical programs. This program expressed all the resources and services of the Secretary for Social Promotion through three intervention levels: 1- the area with socio-educational care for all ages (educating habits and skills in nutrition, auto-production of meals, natural medicine, the caring of a child and child rearing, family organization, projects between neighbors and complete academic inclusion in the first basic level. 2- attention to special cases: violence, abandonment, critical situations; and 3- construction of inter-institutional networks to strengthen bonds between state/civil society.

The diagnostics, she commented, highlight that there exists inequality as an economic system; and that violence exists as a culture of survival, public policies lack a systematic vision and do not resolve the cause of the problems; fragment the subject; replicate social fragmentation; and are centralized and unidirectional.

This will allow managing budgetary resources with superior efficiency, given that in the period 1995/2001, with the same budget, previous structure expenses were created and settled. Moreover, 56 new institutions were created ad hoc in the Secretariat for Social Promotion. All these

institutions counted with professional personnel (preschool teachers, agro technicians, anthropologists, and family counselors).

From there, early childhood was addressed with budgets for education and promotion directed to the family group. This project had 5400 families as direct beneficiaries and 130,000 indirect beneficiaries from impoverished neighborhoods.

Starting from the premise that inequality is inherent to the economic system and it derives from a culture of surviving, in occasions with violence, the speaker advocated for policies that address the early childhood problem in a systematic way, making it the center point within families. Also, she highlighted the need to prevent to copy social fragmentation with formulas that are highly focused in the poor population, and showed that comprehensive policies guarantee the greater result for human development and optimize budgets.

In this sense, the city of Rosario, Argentina framed the policy of the Secretariat for Social Promotion with comprehensive actions for early childhood, from outstanding care in public health, passing through an urban transformation with the centerpiece of the public space to a sociocultural dynamic based in peaceful coexistence (*convivencia*) and participation. Among the multiple actions, the city adhered to the Italian pedagogical project, Francesco Tonucci named, “City of Children”. It created Children Councils to plan out the city; and by municipal ordinance, established a day dedicated for play and peaceful coexistence (*convivencia*).

2.3 Mr. Julio Lossio, Mayor of Petrolina, Pernambuco, Brazil presented the program NOVA SEMENTE, for the care of children from 0 to 5 years, with pre-literacy, nutrition, and health programs in the city of Petrolina. Care of children is provided through Casas-Cuna, which take care of boys and girls from 0 to 4 years (18%) and preschool from 4 to 5 years, which covers 89%. The strategy is to make synergies with institutions that work with children: the prefecture, private institutions, entrepreneurs, and the community.

He also presented the program “Nueva Semilla” and the effects of education on early childhood. The results are the following: i) longer stay in schools, reaching greater academic grades; ii) lower the drop out rates; iii) better earnings in adulthood; iv) lower likelihood to delinquency.

He commented on the challenge to the formation and training of those responsible for working with children and families, the protagonism of families in the health and quality of care.

2.4 Ms. Valserina Gassen, Mayor of Sao Joao do Polesine, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil.

Gassen presented the program that is carried out in the rural area of the San Juan de Polesine Municipality (fourth Italian colony) through the PIM project. The strategy utilized to care for children from 0 to 6 years are home visits, which include support to parents. The teacher goes to the assigned homes, carrying with him or her kit of support material for the work with the boys and girls.

The comments in this Panel pointed out that there a great challenge with the curricular formation of professionals, among these the pediatrician who is trained to treat the sick, what needs to be modified for a formation geared towards childhood development in order to support the family work teams. Another challenge detected by the researcher from the University of Parana recommended more to invest in the zero to three-year age group, with the support from enterprises.

Work Groups:

Coordination: Gaby Fujimoto, Hemispheric Network/USA and Vital Didonet, Legislative Consultant of the Chamber of Deputies/Brazil

The participants of the event were divided into two groups:

- i) Group 1 of Brazil.
- ii) Group 2. Consisting of delegations and conference speakers from Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, United States, Guatemala, Holland, Mexico, Panama and Peru.

The directions for the group work were the following: Define the building of a legal framework for early childhood public policies. What does a legal framework mean? What do we recommend, what important components can be part of this legal framework? Which strategies do we need to carry this into practice? After the plenary, both groups elaborated their proposals with greater detail. See Attachment 1 and Attachment 2.

5.- Final plenary session/ event closure

Presided by Dr. Osmar Terra, President of the Parliamentary Front for Early Childhood of Brazil, he thanked the organizing team and assistants of Brazil for having carried through the Seminar. He thanked the Governing Council of the Hemispheric Network of Legislators and Former Legislators for Early Childhood. The president, Alberto Anaya, the Executive Secretary, Enrique Ku Herrera, and Gaby Fujimoto, Technical Secretariat for International Affairs, presided.

Dr. Gaby Fujimoto commented on the results of Group 2 and Mr. Vital Didonet, with Carolina Drügg and Renata Martins, shared the results from Group 1 (See Attachments 1 and 2).

The Work Plan for the Hemispheric Network was approved and an invitation was made for the III Meeting of the Hemispheric Network of Legislators and Former Legislators for Early Childhood, to take place in Monterrey, Nuevo Leon, Mexico during October 24 – 25, 2013. Deputy Alberto Anaya conducted the closing of the Seminar.

ATTACHMENT 1

Results from Work Group 1, coordination by Mr. Vital Didonet, Legislative Consultant, Brazil. Contributions recognized by Carolina Drügg and Renata Martins.

These suggestions and proposals are presented as a subsidy of the National Congress, particularly to the deputies of the Parliamentary Front for Early Childhood, who have presented their wish to compliment and improve the legal framework for early childhood in Brazil.

The parameter followed by the group was that children, in this country, have their rights guaranteed. This objective implies a careful look geographic inequality, cultural and social economy, and the historical exclusions of ethnic groups, among these, particularly children.

New problems emerge with economic progress, with technological development, with the progress in communications. Legislation and public policies must be attentive to these, placing adequate and efficient measures to prevent and when prevention fails, correct and minimize the pain caused to the life and development of children.

The group expressed the expectation that the federal legislature could receive these suggestions, making the clarification that could come as a legislative matter and that which relates to the political field and administrative decisions, considering that, in the latter case, can serve as inspiration for legal measures.

ISSUE	AREA, SUGGESTIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS
PUBLIC MANAGEMENT	
Intersectorial Focus and global actions	Investment in inter-sectoral actions that assign special importance between the shared management between correspondents of co-responsible policies for early childhood, integrity in the care and multidisciplinary in the formation of groups. Use of social and emotional indicators, not just cognitive indicators.
Cooperation between the three spheres of the government	Inclusion of the Law for Early Childhood in the Organic Law of Municipalities Regulation of Article 23 da CF, which addresses the cooperation between the Union, the states, and the municipalities, clearly defining the competencies of each sphere.
Territorializacion	Coordination of actions within the territory, increasing capacity to increase efficiency. Attention to the capacity to increase initiatives for early childhood care.
Attention to diversity and the specificity of each age	Promoting actions that prioritize differences between the 0-3 and 3-6 age groups and solving problems associated to the cut in these groups' age. Sensitive attention to the “excluded from the excluded”. For example: a child with disabilities, children of parents with disabilities, indigenous, border river towns, “ <i>quilombolas</i> ” (populations of African descent).
Planning	Guideline for the legal framework with parameters from the National Plan for Early Childhood.
Financing	Estimation of the exclusive financing to be invested in actions directed towards early childhood in the areas that correspond this phase, within the three spheres of government. Reserve resources without linking them to a determined sector of organism within the government, rather place them in a single instance to allow shared management. Ensure predictable funding for early childhood budgets within the general budget of the union, the state, the federal district, and the municipalities. Strengthening of funds for children and adolescents to be more effective in the financing of policies and plans for children and adolescents.
FORMATION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (ECD)	
Pre-school education formation/ graduation from universities	Include issues related to capacity-building for early childhood education in the plan of studies, among different professionals who work with early childhood children.
Managers of public policy	Training for managers in specific courses of short duration, with the purpose of updating the science of investigation on early childhood.
	In-service training for professionals who work with early childhood, regardless of their educational level. Example: teachers, counselors, community health workers. Definition

Field professionals	of the profile for people who work with early childhood children.
Managers of public policies	Training in DIT, social protection networks, and other issues in areas regarding judges, prosecutors, and attorneys who are interested in working in the field of children's rights.
ACTION INSTRUMENT	
National Plan for Early Childhood (PNPI)	<p>Adoption of the "PNPI" plan as a reference instrument for the conception of the child and childhood, for purposes of management, management duties and actions; for being a political, technically comprehensive, and long-term document, approved by CONANZA and confirmed by the government (SDH) for inter-sectoral actions in the realm of children's rights (through six years of age).</p> <p>Creation of a legal mechanism that determines the formulation of state and municipality plans for the rights of children up to six years of age, within the guidelines of the PNPI</p>
FAMILY	
Strengthening Family Competencies	<p>Support from the state for families, through initiatives that prioritize the greater role and care and education of children.</p> <p>Support from the states for families made up of young parents, starting from pregnancy.</p> <p>Clarification on prenatal care, with approaches that promote not only the physical and emotional aspects of pregnancy, but also to include issues that include the care of children, the building of boundary limits, among others.</p> <p>Promote initiatives that favor the participation of parents/couples. For example: work assignments that make possible the follow-up of prenatal doctor visits, delivery, and postpartum visits.</p> <p>Creation of a mechanism that keeps the child and mother together until the child is six months old, guaranteeing the minimum lactation time, and the creation of a family bond and family life.</p> <p>Indication of a prenatal protocol with information on various areas of child development (improvement of the children's book).</p>
Responsible Parenthood	<p>Ensure six months of maternity leave for private-sector working women, contributing the major presence of the child with his or her family and the guarantee of exclusive breastfeeding.</p> <p>Legal authorization for the father to follow-up on prenatal exams.</p>
COUNCILS OF RIGHTS	
Guardian Council	<p>Improves work conditions among the Councils: space for meetings, IT, secretariat support, technical and legal support, vehicles, etc.</p> <p>Pre-service and in-service training.</p> <p>Intersectorial action.</p> <p>Revision to the number of councils depending on the population size.</p> <p>Guarantee the presence of advisors regarding early childhood issues.</p>
Children and Adolescents' Rights	<p>Guarantee the representation of early childhood concerns (advisors for this age group)</p> <p>Improve the work conditions of the Councils: space for meetings, IT, secretariat support, technical and legal support, vehicles, etc.</p>

Council	Training for inter-sectoral/integrated performance.
ADVOCACY	
Legislative material on the sciences of DIT	Promoting actions to mobilize and increase awareness on the importance to invest in DIT. For example: Day of the Baby, the Week of the Baby/Child Increase the wide dissemination and easy understanding of laws related to the protection, care, and education of children in early childhood.
HEALTH-NUTRITION- HEALTHY NUTRITION	
At school and with the family	Strengthening of initiatives for the promotion of good health in early childhood establishments, centers of daily care, public preschools, and those associated with early childhood (school health programs in preschool education, health, nutrition, and healthy eating habits in the family). Preventive care in the area of pediatric dentistry and the development of language.
PROTECTION	
Accident Prevention	More stringent and specific legal measures in order to prevent accidents at home, in traffic, in motor vehicles, at amusement parks and playgrounds.
Advertising	Regulations on advertising and marketing geared to children.
THE RIGHT TO PLAY	
Within public spaces	Determination that master city plans must provide and guarantee spaces for courtyards and parks, their maintenance and security. Promoting “play” as a public, compulsory activity by the government for the citizens and children.
EVALUATION OF POLICIES AND ACTIONS	
Parameters and indicators	Establishment of minimum, quality parameters for the DIT programs. In the ECA, define criteria for approving and evaluating children programs and services.
CHILD PROTAGONISM	
Participation	Inclusion of children’s voices within the early childhood framework. Explicit mentioning in the legislation, of the right of the child to participate in the defining and application of all things that concern him or her.
STUDIES AND RESEACH	
Incentives	Create incentives for the investigation and studies in the area of children’s rights, childhood development, and the impact of actions directed towards children.
Dissemination of Information	Determination that the media, as far as public concession, discloses information to parents, research data, studies, and evaluations regarding early childhood development and that they transmit practical guidance regarding topics of interest for the protection,

	care, and education of the child.
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ATTACHMENT 2

RESULTS FROM WORK GROUP 2

AGREEMENTS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS. PROPOSAL FOR THE BUILDING OF A LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD.

The work group, consisting of delegations and speakers from *Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, United States, Guatemala, Holland, Mexico, Panama and Peru*, who worked under the coordination of *Drs. Gaby Fujimoto; Alberto Anaya and Enrique Ku*, with the support from the rapporteur committee consisting of: *Juana Shedan, Bernardo Aguilar y Rosalio Tabla*.

The legislators, convened by the Parliamentary Front for Early Childhood of Brazil and the Hemispheric Network of Legislators and Former Legislators for Early Childhood, gathered in Brasilia, during April 16-18, 2013, agreed, in order to define the building of a legal framework for public policies for early childhood, to the following:

THE FRAMEWORK MUST:

- Respect, as a reference framework, the agreements among the countries, which ratified the Convention on Children's Rights, the General Commentaries 7, 9, 11 and 13; and the signed agreements from different international forums and in the countries, in order to harmonize and make adequate the existing laws in each country.
- Notwithstanding the existence of international agreements and laws in the countries, elaborate a specific national policy law in each country, that allows them to comply with international and national commitments; and considers the child as a subject of rights, from preconception, gestation, birth, postpartum, and through their comprehensive development until the age of six.
- Consider all boys and girls from 0 to 6 years of age, the ones who must be subjects of comprehensive character geared towards their full development; with no distinction nor discrimination of ethnicity, religion and gender, socio-economic condition.
- Ensure the principle of integrity and intersectorality in early childhood care, given that in the present, this care is provided in a fragmented manner.
- Prioritize the protection and care of children in vulnerable situations, the most excluded who live in poverty, those with disabilities, displaced, those living in the street, the indigenous, those who live in indigenous zones, afro-descendants, border town dwellers, and others.
- Ensure that all national policies incorporate the participation of the family, civil society, corporations, councils, among others.
- Guarantee the highest quality in the presentation of programs, services, and actions for the comprehensive care of boys and girls ages 0 to 6 years.
- Ensure the allocation of adequate budgets in order to carry out actions of comprehensive care, protection, and care for early childhood and develop shared actions among sectors, from the national level through the state and municipal sector.

The components, programs, activities of the legal framework, according to the reality of each country, can be:

- The early childhood situation diagnosis (profile) of each country, starting from the analysis of education and indicators of comprehensive care of children in their early years, particularly from 0 to 4 years.
- The diagnosis of the situation of early childhood in each country (profile), starting from the education analysis and indicators of comprehensive care of children in early childhood, particularly from 0 to 4 years of age.
- Comparative legislative studies on development and early childhood care in the hemisphere.
- Public awareness programs and training of local and national legislators from various realms, through an offer for a Master's or certification programs, designed according to the needs of the legislators.
- Public awareness programs and training for fathers, mothers, and educational agents who respect the right to play and the creation of public spaces for this objective.
- Information systems with guidelines, criteria, and quality standards and their evaluation mechanisms, defined to monitor and make
- Information systems with guidelines, criteria and quality standards and defined evaluation mechanisms to monitor and follow-up compliance with the children's rights and the quality of programs and services for early childhood care.
- An inter-sectoral curriculum elaborated, specifically to holistically care for the child or the modification of some programs by specialty within the field of social careers (medicine, social work, education, etc.).
- Studies that include the revision and enrichment of legislation that addresses issues on protection, maltreatment, revictimization, abuse, childhood violence, and bullying against boys and girls in early childhood, especially from 0 to 3 years.
- Information systems with revised indicators for mistreatment, violence, child labor, abuse, and prevention of organized gang formation.
- Advocacy and protection laws that promote and prioritize early childhood, in particular those to benefit children from 0 to 3 years.
- Laws to promote responsible parenthood and the fulfillment of maternity leave and mothers' right to work.

ACTION PLAN TO IMPLEMENT THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK, IT WAS RECOMMENDED, AS STRATEGIES:

- Agree, at an international level, supported by the Hemispheric Network and the Parliamentary Front, what the Legal Framework entails, define the stakeholders, the responsibilities and the process to follow in each country.
- Bring up for consultation to the national, state, and local congresses (particularly in the case of Mexico) all that was agreed in the current meeting, convened in Brazil (April 16-18, 2013). Bring up for popular consultation all progress made in early childhood. Carry out to referendum, advances in early childhood issues.
- Organize work groups and commissions of legislators within their respective countries and congresses in order to carry out the agreements from this meeting.
- Create an Advisory National Council and Early Childhood Rector or an Early Childhood Secretariat that integrates public and private institutions, civil society, and authorities from the Ministries of Economy and/or Housing, in order to facilitate the integration of policies and programs in response to the distinct dimensions of the child. This Council will define the rectory of national policy for early childhood and facilitate its implementation. The Advisory Council will have its departmental, state, or provincial councils, as well as municipal councils.
- Create networks to establish mechanisms that facilitate inter-sectoral and territorial articulation therefore stated policy between the different government levels (national, state, and local).

- Convene organisms and international institutions that support: all organism of the United Nations, the Inter-American Development Bank, the Organization of American States, and others.
- Outline a road map to reach the legal framework, starting with the diagnosis of the early childhood situation in each country. Define coherent budgets with proposed actions, starting from the diagnosis (in each sector of the national government through the local government) and according to dimensions of child development.
- Consider the creation of a follow-up and monitoring system and evaluation of policies to make known progress made by the countries.
- Search for alternatives to exchange curricula from teachers and professionals from social careers, which is adequate to the demands of early childhood.
- Search for alternatives to change curricula of teachers and professionals of social careers that are appropriate to the demands of early childhood.

Prepared by Dr. Gaby Fujimoto
 Technical Secretariat for International Affairs
 Hemispheric Network of Legislators and Former Legislators for Early Childhood
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NOTE: This report is open for changes by the participants. Send contributions to: proyectos@innovacd.com and gfujimoto46@gmail.com