The forum took place in Medellin, Colombia, last October 27th and 28th and it is maybe an unprecedented event of this kind, since it brought together to representatives of domestic workers of 10 Latin American and the Caribbean countries in order to know the emerging organizations, go deeper on the International Federation opportunities, share and exchange good practices, identify any common difficulties, nurture confidence that is necessary in these processes, define a regional agenda and develop the public statement we present here.

In the meeting were representatives from Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Brazil, Mexico, Peru, Nicaragua, Ecuador, Dominican Republic, Uruguay and, from Colombia made presence SINTRA SEDOM, UTRASD and Sintraimagra whose articulation we celebrated.

- We thank to the organizing entities and to the organizations supporting the event, because they allowed its realization: “Unión de Trabajadoras Afrodescendientes del Servicio Doméstico – Utrasd” (Colombia), “National Union of Domestic Employees – NUDE” (Trinidad and Tobago) and “Federación Nacional de Trabajadoras y Trabajadores del Hogar del Perú –Fenttrahop” (Peru), with the support of Escuela Nacional Sindical, FESCOL, United Nations, SASK and the Municipality of Medellin.

- As a continent, Latin America has its peculiarities, and that is why we look to enrich with our culture to the International Domestic Workers Federation –
IDWF and the Latin American Domestic Workers Confederation – Conlactraho, founded in Colombia in 1988, thanks to the support of SINTRASEDOM, in order to allow the fluidity of the union processes of our sector.

- We urge society in general to recognize the great contribution that we as women do to the economy, which is already possible to measure in monetary terms and has been valued at approximately 20% of the productivity in the countries. The non-recognition of the value of unpaid domestic and care work goes directly to the detriment of the well-being of paid women workers.

- We congratulate all the domestic workers around the world, but especially the millions of workers in Latin American and the Caribbean for their fundamental contribution to the well-being of lots of homes, and of course, to the thousands who have worked tirelessly for decades to promote decent work, gender equality, dignity and the recognition of this work, to those who have promoted organizational processes and have achieved changes that have made it possible for the labor agenda of domestic workers to be visible in our countries nowadays.

- We perceive that the Convention 189 of the International Labor Organization, on decent work for domestic workers, has been a fundamental tool for the generation of a new international legislation and national transformations defending our labor rights. The great challenge at this time lies in its implementation.

- We are aware of the need to include migration and human trafficking topics as an inherent problem due to the informality of domestic work and inequity faced by women. And that it requires an urgent and effective action on the part of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.
• We found out in all the countries present that although there have been some advances, paid domestic workers keep on being victims of gender, racial, labor discrimination and because of identity and sexual orientation. This must be part of the set of labor risks, in such way that should be implemented mechanisms of prevention, penalty and access to justice.

• We insist on the need that our Federation, organizations of domestic workers of the region, and the different organizational expressions of women to promote their labor agendas, as well as all the trade unions, should be inclusive, tend to have a unified voice to strengthen their advocacy capacity and, in general, their role in society.

• It is essential that we, domestic workers, get trained in the use of ICT tools and especially Internet and social networks, to achieve the implementation of the ILO Convention 189. States should promote strategies for the development of these and other skills.

• We call to employers to inform themselves about the existing legislation in their countries, as well as the ethical guidelines that should govern at the time of hiring and treating a domestic worker. We insist that in this space mediates a labor relationship and that dignity of this job goes through this recognition.

• We are convinced that demanding for a written contract of employment is a component with multiple positive effects on our formalization and therefore, we urge to domestic workers to demand to employers to comply with this and to governments to demand it.

• We require of governments that have ratified the Convention 189 to accelerate its implementation, specifically with regard to inspection, the elaboration of public campaigns on labor legislation, access to justice, freedom of association,
migrant workers, protection against occupational risks and discrimination and gender-based violence.

- We point out the importance of ensuring sectorial and tripartite social dialogue, for the realization of union freedom, with its broad range of rights and obligations, as it is considered in the ILO Convention 189, 87, 98 and 154.

- We perceive the importance of analyzing different ways to refer to the people performing paid domestic work, (domestic worker, housekeeper, domestic service employee, among others) as naming us properly makes part of our demands as a sector and as working women. However, it is important to respect local expressions and agreed by women, in recognition of our diversity as movement.

We highlight as a pleased coincidence that this Statement is enacted today, on the occasion of the second anniversary of the foundation of the International Domestic Workers Federation - IDWF. The event was held with the participation of Ernestina Ochoa, its Vice-President and Representative of Latin America, of Marcelina Bautista, Regional Coordinator for Latin America, and Shirley Pryce, Regional Coordinator for the Caribbean.

Finally, we highlight the importance that the whole society could assume as their own this struggle, so that at houses peace and democracy could fit with the respect of the labor rights of domestic workers, which are human rights.

We urge governments and international cooperation to invest in overcoming inequality, where the decent work is one of the key drivers for sustainable and long-lasting peace.

Medellin, October 2015,
Signed by the following organizations:

- International Domestic Workers Federation - IDWF
- Caribbean Domestic Workers’ Network
- (Trinidad and Tobago) – National Union of Domestic Employees
- (Nicaragua) - FETRADOMOV
- (Peru) - Federación Nacional de Trabajadoras y Trabajadores del Hogar del Perú – FENTTRAHOP
- (Peru) – FENTRAHOGARP
- (Ecuador) - Asociación de Trabajadoras Remuneradas del Hogar
- (Mexico) - Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadoras y Trabajadores del Hogar
- (Uruguay) - Sindicato Único de Trabajadoras Domésticas del Uruguay
- (Brazil) - FENATRAD
- (Dominican Republic) - Unión Nacional Fenamutra Trabajadoras del Hogar (UNFETRAH)
- (Colombia) - Sindicato de Trabajadoras del Servicio Doméstico-SINTRASEDOM
- (Colombia) - Asociación Nacional de Trabajadores/as de la Economía del Cuidado. ANTEC
- (Colombia) - Unión de Trabajadoras Afrodescendientes del Servicio Doméstico – UTRASD
- (Colombia) – Sintraimagra
- (Colombia) – Asociación de Trabajadoras del Hogar de Bucaramanga - ATH