

Paraguay, 30 April 2011 - Paraguayan capital city Asunción hosted on 28-29 April the I South American Gathering on the Follow-up to UNVAC study recommendations convened by the Paraguayan Ministry for Children and the Latin American and Caribbean Chapter of the Global Movement for Children (MMI-CLAC).

The two-day event gathered high level representatives from a number countries in the region, NGOs, international experts and children who were able to exchange their experiences and voice their needs directly to child rights organisations and decision-makers. Among the long list of experts that participated in the meeting were Marta Santos Pais, UNSG Special Representative for violence against children, Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro, author of the UN Study on Violence against Children and the Paraguayan Minister for Children, Liz Torres.

The closing panel of the meeting was made up of Cecilia Anikama, on behalf of Marta Santos Pais RESG who had to leave earlier during the day, Hans Lind, regional director for Save The Children Sweden representing the MMI-CLAC, Marisa Graham from the Argentinian Government's Department for Children, Ricardo González, director of the National Office for Children in Paraguay and Liz Torres, Minister for Children in Paraguay. The panel was moderated by Redlamyc Regional Coordinator, Jorge Freyre.

The South American Gathering was the first in a series of three high level meetings to be organised across the continent in an effort to bring together the main actors to fight violence against children. The next meeting is expected to take place in October in Central America, while the third meeting will bring together English-speaking Caribbean countries towards the beginning of 2012.

The overall assessment of the South American Gathering was very positive, *"This meeting gives us fresh impetus and we wish to thank national and regional organisations as well as attending children for their participation"*

said Argentinian government representative, Marisa Graham. Furthermore, Paraguayan Minister Liz Torres announced that her country was already working on a national declaration incorporating the outcomes from the gathering that they would elevate to regional institutions in order to show their true commitment to fighting violence against children.

After the closing speeches, and giving children centre stage at the event, Jorge Freyre gave the floor to Alba Campos and Camila Ortega, from Paraguay and Chile respectively, to read the [children's manifesto](#) (in Spanish), which called for bigger commitment and concrete actions to fighting the scourge of violence against children in the region.

