

**U.S. Mission to the Organization of American States: Joint Statement on Strengthening the Family and the Rights of Women – OASGA 2020, October 22, 2020**

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Great Seal of the United States

**JOINT STATEMENT**

**“Strengthening the Family and the Rights of Women of All Ages”**

(Presented by the Delegations of Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras, Paraguay, the United States of America, St. Lucia, and Venezuela; in the context of the 50th Annual OAS General Assembly)

AWARE OF the importance the OAS has placed on family as foundational to a healthy society; on gender equality for women and girls, and the full exercise of their human rights regardless of age, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, we

REAFFIRM that “every human being has the right to life, liberty and the security of his person;” and that “all persons are equal before the law;”

EMPHASIZE that “ the family is the natural and fundamental unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the state. “ that “all children have the right to special protection, care, and aid”  
and that the family as an institution has functioned as a solid pillar on which to rely in confronting the pandemic and its consequences;

EMPHASIZE that “women and men enjoy the same status and have equal opportunities to realize their full human rights and their potential to contribute to political, economic, social, and cultural development and benefit from the results;” the human rights of women are “inalienable, integral, and indivisible part of universal human rights and that “education ought to enable everyone to participate effectively in a democratic and pluralistic society and achieve a decent existence;”

EMPHASIZE that women and men have different health-care needs, and an equal right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health.

WE DECLARE our commitment to work together during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond:

1. To ensure the full enjoyment of optimal health, human rights, and equal opportunity for women at all levels of political, economic, and public life.
2. To protect the family as foundational to society and as a source of health, support, and care throughout the Americas.
3. To defend the sovereign right of nations to make their own laws related to the protection of life from the moment of conception; and
4. To work in solidarity until these goals are fully accomplished.