

Endeavor to implement and follow up on the scientific and technological activities mentioned above, counting on the support of hemispheric cooperation and coordination mechanisms related to this field;

#### **14. HEALTH**

Recognizing - further to the commitments made at the Miami and Santiago Summits and in accordance with agreed-upon international development goals in the areas of maternal, infant, child and reproductive health - that good physical and mental health is essential for a productive and fulfilling life, and that equitable access to quality health services is a critical element in the development of democratic societies, and for the stability and prosperity of nations; that the enjoyment of the highest standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition, as set forth in the *Constitution of the World Health Organization*; that gender equality and concern for indigenous peoples, children, the elderly and under-served groups must be of paramount concern in the development of health policy; that health outcomes are affected by physical, social, economic and political factors and that the technical cooperation of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and other relevant international organizations should continue to support health actions in the Hemisphere, in a manner consistent with the *Shared Agenda for Health in the Americas* signed by PAHO, the IDB, and the World Bank:

##### **Health Sector Reform**

Reaffirm their commitment to an equity-oriented health sector reform process, emphasizing their concerns for essential public health functions, quality of care, equal access to health services and health coverage, especially in the fields of disease prevention and health promotion, and improving the use of resources and administration of health services; promote the continued use of scientifically validated, agreed-upon, common indicators for assessing effectiveness, equity and efficiency of health systems;

Strengthen and promote development of domestic standards of practice, accreditation and licensing procedures, codes of ethics, and education and training programs for health personnel; improve the mix of health personnel in the provision of health services to better respond to national health priorities;

Intensify efforts and share and promote best practices to:

- reduce maternal and infant morbidity and mortality;
- provide quality reproductive health care and services for women, men and adolescents; and
- carry out commitments made at the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development and its five-year follow-up in New York;