

**EXTRACT OF THE REPORT SUBMITTED BY MR. JOSÉ ANTONIO  
OCAMPO, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION  
FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (ECLAC),  
TO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL  
AT ITS SUBSTANTIVE SESSION OF 2002**

**(New York, 19 July 2002)**

Main activities carried out by ECLAC since July 2001

ECLAC has continued to work with the countries of the region through the implementation of its programme of work. This programme combines activities stemming from its role as a forum for regional dialogue and as a facilitator of regional consensus-building on development issues with the Commission's work in the areas of integrated analysis of the development process, public policy and other operational activities (such as technical assistance, specialized information and training).

In this regard, I would like to begin by stating that for ECLAC, as for the entire United Nations, the *Millennium Declaration* has become the primary point of reference for our efforts. Its goals have been incorporated into both the medium-term plan and our regular programme of work. In particular, I should like to highlight three key priorities for the Commission's work which derive from the Declaration.

- Poverty reduction policies, including not only social policies but also the impact that economic policies have on poverty and inequality. It is our understanding that the objective set out in the Declaration refers not only to extreme poverty (for which specific targets are established in the Declaration), but also the alternative definitions of absolute and relative poverty that the Commission has been using in its work for some time. In addition, special attention is paid to gender equity;
- National policies and regional and international cooperation mechanisms for strengthening and improving our countries' linkages with the international economy, as well as the interrelationship between economic and social development that has arisen during the current phase of globalization; and
- The links between economic and environmental strategies.

We are determined to make these three priorities an increasingly central focus of our work.

With regard to the role of ECLAC as a facilitator of regional consensus-building, the Commission has been playing a substantially more active and decisive role in United Nations conferences and summits. In line with the mandates established by the General Assembly and in close cooperation with the Government of Brazil, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, ECLAC organized the Regional Preparatory Conference of Latin America and the Caribbean for the World Summit on Sustainable Development. For that meeting, ECLAC and UNEP prepared an assessment of the challenges and opportunities for the region in this connection, entitled *The sustainability of development in Latin America and the Caribbean: challenges and opportunities*.

As a means of coordinating the regional preparatory processes for the two most important United Nations conferences being held this year while at the same time addressing one of the issues that is most pressing from the region's point of view, in 2001 ECLAC, together with UNDP, embarked upon a project to study how to best approach the challenge of financing for sustainable development. As part of this initiative, ECLAC prepared a study entitled *Financing for sustainable development in Latin America and the Caribbean*. That study served as the basis for two meetings which were held to discuss this issue with economic authorities and representatives of the private sector in the region. The first took place during the Regional Preparatory Conference and the second during the International Conference on Financing for Development, held in Monterrey, Mexico, this past March. At the Johannesburg Summit another event of this type will be held with the collaboration of UNDP and the Andean Development Corporation.

During the past year, ECLAC also continued to work on the regional preparations for the International Conference on Financing for Development. The Commission was actively involved in the formulation of the document which the Secretary-General of the United Nations presented to the Preparatory Committee for the Conference and in the discussion of the various drafts of the "Monterrey Consensus". Subsequent to the Regional Consultation on Financing for Development, held in Bogotá, Colombia, in November 2000, ECLAC organized two other regional preparatory events: a meeting on development banking and a meeting on international and regional financial cooperation, at the request, in this instance, of the Rio Group. ECLAC also coordinated an interregional meeting organized by the five regional commissions, which was held in Mexico City in January of this year. The Monterrey Consensus represents both a step forward and a firm commitment on the part of the international community, and we will continue to collaborate with all the countries of the region in implementing this accord.

In response to a request made at the Tenth Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government, held in Panama City in November 2000, ECLAC, in close collaboration with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Secretariat for Ibero-American Cooperation (SECIB), in conjunction with the Government of Peru in its capacity as Secretariat Pro Tempore of the Ibero-American Summit, spearheaded an initiative in which various organizations of the United Nations system, the Ibero-American and the Inter-American systems took part and which culminated in the publication of a document entitled *Building equity from the beginning: the children and adolescents of Ibero-America*. This analysis highlights the considerable progress made in overcoming some of the problems that have had a significant impact on children and adolescents in Ibero-America, particularly in the areas of health care, education and nutrition. This document was submitted to the Ibero-American Summit held in late 2001

in Lima and to the special session of the General Assembly on children, which was held in May of this year.

We have also proceeded with the work we carry out on a regular basis in order to monitor and follow up on the outcomes of the World Summit for Social Development, the World Conference on Women, the International Conference on Population and Development, the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements and the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. We have been involved in the preparations for the Second World Assembly on Ageing and are looking forward to making an active contribution to the World Summit on the Information Society.

I should like to take this opportunity to address the forum responsible for the coordination and follow-up of United Nations world conferences in order to draw attention to the fact that, if the participation of ECLAC and the other regional commissions in United Nations summits and conferences is to be strengthened, our role must not be confined to the organization and follow-up of the corresponding regional processes and the provision of technical inputs for the respective regional deliberations. The regional commissions must make the transition to a role as central actors in those global processes and must engage in an ongoing dialogue with substantive departments of the United Nations Secretariat and the specialized agencies, funds and programmes of the Organization.

Throughout the last year, ECLAC has continued to devote particular attention to the preparation of multidisciplinary and interdivisional studies, which reflect the secretariat's integral approach to the study of the choices and factors that influence the economic and social development of the countries of the region. The most significant output of these multidisciplinary and interdivisional efforts was the document *Globalization and development*, which was presented to the Commission at its twenty-ninth session, held in Brasilia from 6 to 10 May this year.

The document argues that many of the risks inherent in globalization derive from two disturbing features of the process: asymmetric factor mobility and the incomplete nature of the international programme that accompanies the globalization process. It examines globalization from an integral perspective, taking account of the social, political and cultural dimensions, and then goes on to propose a positive agenda for the region in an era of globalization. The point of departure for this proposal is the recognition that Latin America and the Caribbean must adopt a proactive agenda for building a new international order and must be effectively committed to that agenda. The ECLAC proposal for attaining this objective begins by defining four basic principles: shared objectives; rules and institutions that respect diversity; complementarity among national, regional and international authorities; and equitable participation under appropriate rules of international governance.

The Governments adopted the Brasilia resolution on Globalization and Development, which approved the positive agenda proposed by the secretariat to deal

with the challenges inherent in the current phase of the globalization process, particularly the vindication of national strategies as pillars of democratic consolidation; the region's potential contribution to the construction of a global institutional structure that would serve to lessen external vulnerability and provide more manoeuvring room for designing and implementing national policies; and the conception of the regional and subregional agencies as forums for cooperation and analysis.

As a regional think-tank focusing on economic, social and environmental development issues, ECLAC has continued to carry out analytical tasks and technical cooperation activities involving advisory services and training which contribute to the institutional strengthening and capacity-building of the countries of the region. In this connection, I would like to mention the progress made in relation to our five annual publications, which together constitute the most comprehensive source of information on the economic and social situation in the region. These publications are the *Preliminary Overview of the Economies of Latin America and the Caribbean*, the *Economic Survey of Latin America and the Caribbean*, the *Social Panorama of Latin America*, the report on *Foreign Investment in Latin America and the Caribbean*, and *Latin America and the Caribbean in the World Economy*. All of these documents have become an indispensable reference for experts in these fields, as is demonstrated by the considerable and ever increasing number of citations of these works. In addition, there is the *Statistical Yearbook for Latin America and the Caribbean*, the foremost output among the Commission's wide range of publications and activities in the area of statistics and projections.

One of my priorities as Executive Secretary of ECLAC has been to improve the system we use to disseminate our analyses and studies. To this end, we have been working on all three elements of this system: (i) dissemination via the media, which is accomplished mainly through "ECLAC Notes," press releases and press conferences; (ii) a publications strategy involving the creation of a unified and improved graphic presentation and the promotion of co-publications with commercial publishers; and (iii) the development of an ECLAC Internet portal. In addition, a major effort is being made to publish the Commission's publications in more languages. We have increased the number of publications in English and, with the assistance of the Government of France, this year we will begin to produce more documents in French. In addition, just before the twenty-ninth session of the Commission, we launched three books in Portuguese, in addition to the regular publications of our Office in Brasilia. In order to ensure the continuity and further development of these strategies, it will be necessary both to adopt new technologies and to mobilize more resources.

I should like to make particular mention of the ECLAC portal or web site, which has enabled us to disseminate our work and activities on a broad scale. In 2001, the site attracted more than one and a half million visitors, who downloaded over three million files. Traffic on the site has expanded steadily over the last five years, and this means that our documents can now be made available much more quickly and can be consulted much more widely than they could in the past when our publications were available in printed form only. Last year we inaugurated a new, completely decentralized scheme for

managing the web site, under which each substantive division, subregional headquarters and national office is responsible for posting the activities it conducts in its field of competence. Thanks to these efforts, we currently have 16 thematically and geographically specialized sub-sites.

With regard to inter-agency coordination, in line with the resolutions adopted at the second United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Meeting for the Latin American and Caribbean Region, held in 2000, ECLAC convened the first United Nations Inter-Agency Technical Coordination Meeting on Regional Statistical Information, which took place on 8 May 2001. The purpose of this meeting was to exchange ideas, arrive at a consensus and define measures to be adopted in the short and medium terms in order to gradually harmonize and streamline the statistical activities conducted in the region by United Nations organizations and by the regional and sectoral agencies working in this field. In addition, ECLAC has developed a decentralized management system to monitor contributions to the achievement of the targets and objectives established at the various world summits and conferences by the different United Nations agencies working in the region as a means of disseminating information on those activities at the regional level.

ECLAC has continued to actively support its member States in the implementation of regional and subregional integration agreements, while at the same time building bridges with other prominent regional and subregional organizations.

In the area of institutional development, ECLAC has carried forward its efforts to retrain its staff in order to adapt to the new environment generated by the process of modernization under way within the United Nations system, which includes the incorporation of new technologies that will permit increased transparency, better oversight and virtual “on-line” management of the entire system.

The changing demands of our member countries also call for highly qualified and adaptable staff and for new, more flexible programming and budgeting systems. With regard to our staff members, it should be stressed that the institution’s human capital is a function not only of their expertise in their respective fields, but also of their in-depth familiarity with events in the countries of the region and with the analysis and policy networks that are in place in those countries. It is therefore important to ensure that the Organization’s new human resources management system will consolidate those institutional assets.