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**SIXTH COORDINATION MEETING ON
INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION**
Population Division
Department of Economic and Social Affairs
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**ECLAC ACTIVITIES IN THE AREA OF INTERNATIONAL
MIGRATION, HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEVELOPMENT**

A. Background

ECLAC, mainly through its Population Division – the Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE), carries out various activities concerning international migration, human rights and development as part of its regular programme of work and with the support of the regional project of the United Nations Population Fund.

In year of the fiftieth anniversary of CELADE, the activities begun and planned for 2007 are focused on research, publications and technical assistance to countries, as well as the active participation in intergovernmental conferences, seminars and forums and preparations for a worldwide project involving the five regional commissions and headed by ECLAC.

B. Planned activities and those already under way

1. Research, publications and technical assistance

Following the presentation of the document *International migration, human rights and development: summary and conclusions* to the Ad Hoc Committee on Population and Development at the thirty-first session of the Commission (Montevideo, Uruguay, March 2006), CELADE updated the original work in the form of a small book that was presented at the seminar held to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Division (LC/L.2706, October 2007). Similarly, an expanded version of those texts in the *libros de la CEPAL* series was being completed in late 2007 for publication in 2008.

All of the above-mentioned documents, which have been widely disseminated and which were associated with the session of the Commission, study the trends and issues of international migration and put forward proposals to help the region's governments to tackle the most significant challenges and opportunities for development offered by migration, with a cross-cutting approach based on the human rights of migrants and their families. The main message that ECLAC wishes to convey to countries is the need to recognize that *international migration is a matter of development and rights*, which calls for comprehensive actions that are conducive to the governance of international migration from a Latin American and Caribbean perspective, and that help to further free up mobility, boost positive externalities and protect the human rights of all migrants.

The preparation of this document led to the adoption of a specific resolution at the session of the Commission in Uruguay, one which appears on the website of the Committee on Population and Development. Among other matters, the resolution calls for the ratification of international instruments on migration and welcomes the initiative to arrange an Ibero-American meeting on migration, organized by the Ibero-American Secretariat, with the support of ECLAC and the International Organization for Migration (OIM), which was eventually held in June 2006 in Madrid.

The resolution establishes the creation of an inter-agency group on migration, coordinated by ECLAC. In 2007, preparations began on implementing this mandate.

ECLAC expects this initiative to be a platform of convergence for the work of international and intergovernmental organizations, with the collaboration of expert networks, civil society bodies and intergovernmental forums.

As for other research and publications, two studies on census information were initiated in 2007. One constitutes an exhaustive analysis of census information based on microdata from the new questions included by some countries in the 2000 round, with view to making proposals concerning the round in 2010. The second study is a comparative analysis of census information in the Caribbean countries, the aim of which is to consider setting up a dedicated database.

In 2007 the project *Migration and development: the case of Latin America*, financed by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) was completed. The international migration component of the project was implemented by the ECLAC Economic Development Division. More specifically, an international seminar held in August 2007 summarized the content of the project: summary of the conceptual approach adopted and a presentation of the main empirical results regarding the role of country differences in per capita income, business cycles, functioning of the labour market and determinants of economic policy, inter alia, in selected countries of origin and destination. These results will be published at a later date.

ECLAC, through CELADE, has also been actively involved in meetings on international migration organized jointly by governments, research centres and universities, as well as by United Nations agencies and OIM. Examples include its participation in the commemoration of the thirtieth anniversary of Centre for Demographic Studies of the University of Havana, Cuba, in seminars organized by OIM in Chile and Ecuador and (as observers) in two regional consultative forums on migration (Regional Conference on Migration and South American Conference on Migration), including a workshop on migration and gender. A series of national seminars organized by researcher associations and networks provided an opportunity to disseminate the work of CELADE and provide technical assistance (for example at the ninth Argentine Symposium on Population Studies organized by local associations). Furthermore, CELADE presented its work at European seminars: the Conference on Migration between Latin America and Europe, organized in Brussels in November 2006 by the Institute of Development Studies of the Catholic University of Louvain; and the Seminar on Latin American Immigration in Spain: the State of Research, organized in Barcelona in November 2007 by the Centre for International Relations and Development Studies (CIDOB Foundation).

2. Collaboration with the Ibero-American Community

ECLAC, through CELADE, is actively involved in the process of the Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government, following those held in Salamanca (2005), Montevideo (2006) and Santiago, Chile (2007), where delegates recognized the transcendence of international migration within the Ibero-American Community. The *Declaration of Salamanca*, in addition to highlighting that it was a high-priority issue, established the principle that migration is a common good, with enormous potential for

the development and social cohesion of countries, and that dealing with it therefore required dialogue, cooperation and convergence to move forward in terms of governance within the framework of the principles of international human rights law.

In follow-up to the mandates arising from the Summit of Salamanca, the Ibero-American Secretariat (SEGIB), with the cooperation of ECLAC/CELADE, OIM and the Carolina Foundation of Spain, organized the Ibero-American Encounter on International Migration and Development, which was held in Madrid in July 2006. At the meeting, which was attended by around 700 participants, various aspects of migration were discussed by government authorities, academics, experts from civil society networks, representatives of subnational consultative processes and experts from international agencies (including ECLAC). One of the conclusions of the meeting was that the Ibero-American Community should establish an area of cooperation for countries of origin, transit and destination of migratory flows to discuss international migration, with a view to moving towards a full respect of the human rights of migrants and the humanization of migratory processes through a recognition of the positive contribution of international migration to countries' development. The meeting also called for the identification and dissemination of best practices within the management of migration, for the purposes of consolidating the coordination and convergence of actions that are to the benefit of the countries of the Ibero-American Conference and to migrants themselves.

The valuable contributions presented at the Ibero-American Encounter on International Migration and Development and the conclusions of the debate, as included in a book published by the Ibero-American Secretariat (SEGIB) (*Unidos por las Migraciones*), served as inputs for the sixteenth Summit held in Montevideo in 2006, which had as its main theme the links between migration and development. The resulting Montevideo Commitment on Migration and Development, signed by Heads of State and Government of the Ibero-American Community, begins by stating that the history of Ibero-America is full of migrations and that migration marks the Community's present and will play a major role in its future. It goes on to say that Ibero-American peoples have benefited from the cultural, scientific, academic, economic, political and social contribution of migrants, and that there is a common obligation and responsibility to continue ensuring the positive impact of migration.

Continuing along the same lines as the Declaration of Salamanca, the Montevideo Commitment identifies a wide range of matters that need to be dealt with jointly by Ibero-American countries. With a view to effectively enforcing the guidelines contained in the Declaration of Salamanca and the Montevideo Commitment, the Heads of State and Government of the Ibero-American Community decided to establish and organize, by 2008, an Inter-American Forum on Migration and Development for the exchange of good practices and the coordination of consensuses and joint actions by Ibero-American nations in such matters. Ecuador offered to host the next meeting of the Forum in Cuenca.

The Montevideo Commitment outlines the main contents of the meeting of the Inter-American Forum on Migration and Development and requests that the Ibero-American

Secretariat carry out a study on migration and development, with contributions from, inter alia, ECLAC, OIM, the MERCOSUR Specialized Forum on Migration, the South American Conference on Migration and the Regional Conference on Migration (or Puebla Process), and in consultation with Member States make proposals aimed at establishing that Forum. The Montevideo Commitment also instructs the Ibero-American Secretariat to coordinate, in collaboration with ECLAC, a study into the social and economic impact of the integration of migrants in countries of destination. Work in this regard was begun in late 2007.

At the seventeenth Ibero-American Summit in 2007, Heads of State and Government adopted the Declaration of Santiago, in which they reiterated the Montevideo Commitment, convinced as they were that integral and multidimensional attention to migration is an essential element for ensuring social cohesion. They emphasized the need for a multidisciplinary approach in keeping with the principle of shared responsibility among countries of origin, transit and destination, as part of international cooperation for development. Leaders undertook to fully guarantee the human rights of migrants in the framework of each State's legal system, independent of migratory status. Point 8 of the Declaration states that, in compliance with the agreements of the fifteenth and sixteenth Ibero-American Summits, member countries were adopting the text of the Ibero-American Multilateral Convention for Social Security and committed to promote internal procedures for its rapid entry into force. In the Programme of Action agreed at the seventeenth Summit, article 21 instructs the Cuenca Forum to devise an action programme on migration that, in keeping with the Montevideo Commitment on Migration and Development, promotes the protection of the human rights of migrants. Article 48 of the same documents requests that ECLAC, in the framework of its powers and mandate, continue to support the Ibero-American Secretariat in the implementation of that Programme of Action.

As decided by Heads of State and Government of the Ibero-American Community, the Inter-American Forum on Migration and Development shall meet in Cuenca, Ecuador. This is scheduled for 10 and 11 April 2008. Preparations for the meeting include defining the contents, making contact with relevant national and local authorities for planning and monitoring purposes, identifying speakers and commentators and producing the two studies mentioned in the Montevideo Commitment. The Ibero-American Secretariat has requested the participation of ECLAC in these tasks.

C. Project for the Development Account (6th tranche)

In the 2008-2009 biennium, ECLAC through CELADE intends to implement the Project "*Strengthening national capacities to deal with international migration: Maximizing development benefits and minimizing negative impact*" in the context of the Development Account. The Project will involve the Regional Commissions (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)) and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) as implementing agencies. In its capacity as Leading Agency for the Project, in late 2007 ECLAC has been working on formulating and presenting the Project for

approval by the Programme Manager of the Account. The Fifth Committee will consider the fascicle on the Development Account in the context of the review of the Proposed Programme Budget.

The general objective of this Project is to strengthen national capacities to incorporate international migration issues into national development strategies in order to maximize the development benefits of international migration and minimize its negative impacts.

Other specific objectives of the Project are to improve data quality and availability on international migration, to highlight female migration, to increase institutional and human capacities in designing and implementing policies and programmes, and to promote cooperation through an effective intra- and inter-regional network for the exchange of information, studies, policies, experiences and best practices among countries and regions.

In order to have such an impact, the project identifies three specific expected accomplishments of its implementation: establishment of an effective interregional network of national and regional centres, institutions and experts aimed at increasing knowledge and exchange of best practices on policy responses to migration and development challenges in the five regions; increased availability of information on international migration and its development impacts; increased national skills and capacities to design and implement policies and programmes taking into account the particular challenges of international migration.

The coordinated action of the five Regional Commissions and DESA, as well as the collaboration of other partners such as intergovernmental organizations, regional development entities, and research centres, will help build a critical mass of existing knowledge on international migration and its impact on development.

The beneficiaries of the Project will be Governments, international and intergovernmental organizations, research centres, academia, non-governmental organizations, and civil society agents related to migration issues.