

**FIFTH COORDINATION MEETING ON
INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION**

Population Division
Department of Economic and Social Affairs
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**REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN
AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (ECLAC), CONDUCTED THROUGH THE LATIN
AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN DEMOGRAPHIC CENTRE (CELADE)-POPULATION
DIVISION OF ECLAC IN FOLLOW-UP TO THE HIGH-LEVEL DIALOGUE ON
INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

Report on the activities of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), conducted through the Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE)-Population Division of ECLAC in follow-up to the High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development

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ECLAC, through the Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE) – Population Division of ECLAC, is closely following up the agreements adopted at the High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development. The activities already begun and those planned for 2007 concern mainly:

1. Follow-up to resolution 615(XXXI) on international migration adopted at the thirty-first session of the Commission, held in Uruguay in March 2006.
2. Follow-up to the mandates handed down at the sixteenth Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government, held in Uruguay in November 2006.
3. Preparation of a project on migration and development for the Development Account (2008-2009), jointly with the other regional commissions and the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) of the United Nations. The proposal was accepted in the first instance and, following suggestions made by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, a revised concept paper was prepared.

Further to the proposal of the Secretary-General to create a global forum as a venue for discussing issues related to international migration and development in a systematic and comprehensive way, ECLAC is fully backing the initiative and will actively support the organization of the meeting in Belgium in 2007, as agreed at the High-Level Dialogue after the Government of Belgium offered to host the event (United Nations, A/61/515).

The activities planned, which are set out below, aim to help bring the meeting to a successful conclusion by contributing a Latin American and Caribbean regional vision to complement the broader Ibero-American perspective. CELADE will also continue to analyse migratory data, looking at different ways of capturing information on international migration (for example, by examining responses to survey questions on household members residing abroad) and will update the data bank of the project on “Investigation of International Migration in Latin America” (IMILA). All of these efforts form a common denominator for the activities discussed below.

1. Thirty-first session of ECLAC

Further to the recommendation made by the ECLAC sessional Ad Hoc Committee on Population and Development during the thirtieth session of the Commission, held in San Juan, Puerto Rico in 2004, CELADE presented documentation on international migration

for the representatives of the countries to consider at the Committee's meeting during the thirty-first session of the Commission, held in Montevideo, Uruguay.

The documentation presented, entitled "*International migration, human rights and development in Latin America and the Caribbean: summary and conclusions*",¹ was based mainly on a series of works carried out by CELADE in recent years. This text offers guidance to the region's governments in facing the most important challenges and opportunities that migration raises with respect to development, from a cross-cutting perspective of the human rights of migrants and their families. The prior work benefited from the participation of CELADE in numerous meetings, workshops and seminars involving governments, academics, civil society and experts and from the conclusions reached at those gatherings. It also drew on many of the studies reported in CELADE publications, as well as the intensive efforts the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations Population Division and other agencies within the system, and the contributions of experts and academics in the region.

The central message of this document is that international migration must be acknowledged as *a question of development and of rights*. This requires the promotion of comprehensive measures that will ensure the governance of international migration from a Latin American and Caribbean perspective, enhance free mobility, strengthen positive externalities and protect the human rights of all migrants.

The approach taken in this document led to the adoption of a specific resolution at the thirty-first session of ECLAC. The resolution, which is reproduced on the Committee's web site, welcomed the report and mentioned important long-term repercussions and projections. Among other matters, it called for the ratification of international instruments on migration and welcomed the organization of an Ibero-American meeting on migration, to be organized by the Ibero-American Secretariat with the support of ECLAC and IOM. This meeting was held in July in Madrid.

The resolution requested the formation of an inter-agency group on migration issues, to be coordinated by ECLAC. This mandate will be implemented in 2007. ECLAC hopes that this initiative will provide a platform for the convergence of work carried out in this area by international and inter-governmental organizations, as well as networks of experts, civil society agencies and inter-governmental forums.

CELADE has taken part in meetings organized jointly with other United Nations agencies and IOM, such as the Expert Group Meeting on International Migration and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Mexico at the end of 2005 and organized together with the National Population Council of Mexico, the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations, the United Nations Population Fund and CELADE. As in 2006, CELADE will continue to participate as an observer in the two regional consultative forums on migration (the Regional Conference on Migration and the South American Conference on Migration).

¹ LC/G.2303(SES.31/11), March 2006.

2. Sixteenth Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government

The central theme of the sixteenth Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government, held in Uruguay in November 2006, was “migration and shared development”, further to the commitments undertaken at the Iberoamerican Encounter on International Migration and Development, which took place in Madrid, in July 2006.

The Ibero-American Summit was attended by some 700 people, including government representatives from the 22 Ibero-American States and guest countries, experts, and representatives of civil society, agencies and international organizations.

The report of the Ibero-American Encounter on International Migration and Development was presented at the Ibero-American Summit in November 2006. On that occasion, a number of conclusions were set out in the document entitled “Montevideo Commitment on Migration and Development” (Spanish only). These conclusions concerned the strengthening of Ibero-American cooperation on a wide range of migration and development issues, as well as a commitment to establish and convene, in 2008, an Ibero-American Forum on Migration and Development, which will provide a venue for the sharing of best practices and for the articulation of consensuses and joint action by the Ibero-American States in these matters. The first meeting is to be held in Cuenca, Ecuador.

ECLAC will collaborate with the Ibero-American Secretariat by conducting a study on migration and development, with inputs from IOM, the Migratory Forum of MERCOSUR, the South American Conference on Migration and the Regional Conference on Migration. In consultation with the member States, ECLAC will make proposals to assist with the establishment of the above-mentioned forum.

3. Development Account: Strengthening national capacities to deal with international migration: Maximizing development benefits and minimizing negative impact (2008-2009)

This project was prepared by ECLAC together with the other regional commissions and the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) of the United Nations. The proposal was approved in the first instance and, following suggestions put forward by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, a revised concept paper was prepared.

The project provides for the strengthening of existing networks and the development of new ones where they do not yet exist. It will be implemented jointly by the five regional commissions and DESA and will seek the collaboration of other partners, including the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Development

Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), regional development institutions (development banks, regional bodies), regional and international NGOs working in the field of migration and national and regional research centres. In each region, a research centre will be designated to carry out specific research activities. ECLAC will be responsible for the project's coordination.

The project will benefit from existing initiatives on migration information systems, as well as recent studies conducted by the respective regional commissions with the purpose of strengthening and creating networks of information on migration.

The objective is to strengthen national capacities to build international migration issues into national development strategies, in order to maximize the contribution of international migration to development while minimizing its negative impact. This is to be achieved by improving data quality and availability on international migration, highlighting female migration, increasing institutional and human capacities to design and implement policies and programmes, and promoting cooperation through an effective intra- and inter-regional network for the exchange of information, studies, policies, experiences and good practices among countries and regions.