



**General Assembly**

Distr.  
GENERAL

A/43/433  
30 June 1988  
ENGLISH  
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH/SPANISH

Forty-third session  
Item 28 of the preliminary list\*

**CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS  
AND THE LATIN AMERICAN ECONOMIC SYSTEM**

Report of the Secretary-General

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Since the establishment of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) 40 years ago, it has been the wish of the Governments of the region to ensure efficient co-ordination among the organizations operating in the economic and social fields in Latin America and the Caribbean. This is out of a desire not only to avoid the duplication of efforts, but also to increase the dividends of the programmes carried out by the different organizations, through effective inter-agency co-operation.

2. This concern of the Governments was reflected in the approval, in 1948, of paragraph 9 of the terms of reference of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, which states:

"The Commission shall co-operate with and take the necessary measures to co-ordinate its activities with the appropriate organs of the Inter-American System in order to avoid any unnecessary duplication of effort between those organs and itself; to this end the Commission is empowered to, and shall seek to, make working arrangements with the appropriate organs of the Inter-American System regarding the joint or independent study or execution of economic problems within its competence and the fullest exchange of information necessary for the co-ordination of efforts in the economic field. The Commission shall invite the Organization of American States and other

\* A/43/50.

regional bodies to nominate a representative to attend meetings of the Commission in a consultative capacity."

3. Throughout the years, organizations at the regional and world levels have played an active part in the sessions of ECLAC as well as in other meetings of various kinds sponsored by the Commission. In addition, the ECLAC secretariat has collaborated with these organizations by attending a large number of meetings frequently making written or oral contributions on topics related to the Commission's programme of work.

## II. CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE LATIN AMERICAN ECONOMIC SYSTEM

4. Since the establishment of the Latin American Economic System (SELA) in October 1975, the ECLAC secretariat has frequently provided the Permanent Secretariat of SELA with direct support and collaboration. A number of joint projects of importance for the Governments of the region have been carried out, noteworthy among which was the Quito meeting of Presidents convened by President Osvaldo Hurtado in January 1984, at which the Quito Declaration and Plan of Action were adopted. On a number of occasions SELA has also requested advisory services of a technical nature from ECLAC in order to provide its member Governments with information on which to base their policy decisions.

5. In recent years Governments have in a number of Commission resolutions restated the significance they attach to co-ordinating the activities of the intergovernmental organizations operating in Latin America and the Caribbean (see resolutions 425 (XIX), 431 (XIX), 439 (XIX), 457 (XX), 458 (XX) and 476 (XXI)).

6. In the first of these - ECLAC resolution 425 (XIX), entitled "Institutional aspects" - it was decided, among other things:

(b) That the CEPAL system should strengthen its links with Latin American agencies of regional and subregional integration and economic co-operation, lending them its full support;

(e) That representatives of the CEPAL secretariat should meet annually with representatives of the secretariats of Latin American regional and subregional agencies for integration and economic co-operation for the co-ordination of studies, the obtaining and use of economic data possessed by those agencies, and the provision of the necessary mutual support;

(f) That the CEPAL system, within the context of the Regional Programme of Action and in the form of the execution of studies, should furnish all necessary and possible support to the meetings of high-level government experts, referred to in Decision 101 of the Latin American Council of SELA, held within the framework of SELA.

7. In 1987, the General Assembly included in its agenda an item entitled "Co-operation between the United Nations and the Latin American Economic System".

As a result of the debate which took place on this item at its forty-second session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 42/12, in which it stressed the need to reinforce collaboration between the United Nations and SELA.

8. In view of the fact that this organization operates in Latin America and the Caribbean and that ECLAC is the United Nations organization that works in the economic and social field in that region, the Commission is directly involved in the fulfilment of this resolution. The member Governments have shown particular interest in this topic, over and above the general interest of the States Members of the United Nations in increasing the Organization's efficiency in the economic and social field. A synthesis of the areas of collaboration and of the activities conducted by ECLAC in conjunction with SELA is given below.

9. Co-operation between ECLAC and SELA has been highly varied and fruitful and has involved frequent participation in meetings convened by the Permanent Secretariat of the latter and the preparation of specialized documents, which are too numerous to be listed.

10. Nevertheless, mention should be made of support that culminated in the publication of a document on regional economic security in 1982 and of the preparation of the document on Latin America's response to the international economic crisis (E/CEPAL/G.1246), which constituted the starting point for the Quito Declaration and Plan of Action, adopted in 1984.

11. The UNDP/UNCTAD/CEPAL project and support for the external sector of Latin America has provided a stimulus for activities designed to contribute to the work of SELA. As part of this project, approval was given to a joint programme of work for 1986 with regard to services, commodities and multilateral international negotiations, in respect of which a number of meetings were held at government level. In 1987 the Plan of Action on commodities was approved in Guatemala, and the regional position was defined in respect of the main issues dealt with at the most recent meeting of UNCTAD and of the trade negotiations now under way within GATT (the Uruguay Round). In practical terms, all of these issues provide an ongoing working link between ECLAC and SELA. It should also be mentioned that in respect of services, relations between ECLAC and SELA have made it possible to promote co-ordinated work among a number of institutions, such as JUNAC, ALADI and INTAL, thanks to which considerable progress has been made in this field.

12. In 1987 ECLAC was the venue of the annual meeting of integration and co-operation organizations convened by SELA. Its participants included representatives of most of these institutions and a detailed examination was made of the situation in respect of intra-regional trade, financing and payments.

13. In addition, in recent months the ECLAC secretariat has participated in SELA meetings, held to prepare a regional co-operation strategy to establish the Latin American and Caribbean Trade Information and External Sector Support Programme (PLACIEX) and to analyse a proposal for the creation of a Latin American reserve fund.

14. With regard to science and technology, the Regional Microelectronics Network for Latin America and the Caribbean (REMLAC) was recently established on an experimental basis under the auspices of UNIDO, ECLAC and SELA. The overall objective of the Network is to carry out joint activities aimed at strengthening the individual and collective technological capacity of participating countries and to use technology for satisfying their specific needs. For this purpose, it has been envisaged that the Network will perform joint information exchange and research activities as well as activities related to research and development, training and industrial co-operation in specific areas such as the design of integrated circuits and the manufacture of semi-conductors.

15. In addition, the ECLAC/UNIDO Joint Industrial Development and Technological Division worked with SELA and UNIDO in holding the first Latin American meeting on industrial co-ordination in the capital goods sector, which took place in Caracas in July 1987.

16. In the field of transport, the relevant ECLAC division collaborated decisively for the creation, early in 1986 within SELA, of the Maritime Transport Commission (COLTRAM). The study entitled "Cambios estructurales en el transporte regular por buques de línea: perspectivas y consecuencias para la formulación de políticas" (LC/G.1493) was prepared as the basis for a seminar organized jointly by ECLAC and COLTRAM on structural changes in maritime transport.

17. With regard to transnational corporations, ECLAC has worked with SELA in the preparation of documents, including, in particular, that entitled "Las relaciones de América Latina con los Estados Unidos - Empresas transnacionales" (SP/RC/AL.EU/1-DT, No. 1) issued by SELA.

### III. CONCLUSIONS

18. During its 40 years of existence, ECLAC has, in accordance with its statutes, attached great importance to the co-ordination of its activities, first with those conducted by the Organization of American States and then, after the creation of SELA, with those of both organizations. To this end, a steady flow of communications and consultations has been maintained among the respective secretariats.

19. Where ECLAC is concerned, the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 42/12 constitutes a commitment to revive such co-operation, which has always existed but can be increased or improved.

20. In resolution 42/12 the General Assembly:

(a) Acknowledged with satisfaction the efforts made by the Latin American Economic System to promote co-operate among Latin American and Caribbean countries and consultation on and co-ordination of their positions, as well as to stimulate their economic and social development;

(b) Decided to strengthen and broaden co-operation between the United Nations system and the Latin American Economic System through permanent liaison which would allow for ongoing consultation on matters of common interest, exchange of information between secretariats and increased co-operation, so as to improve the capacity of the two organisations for the attainment of their goals and objectives;

(c) Emphasized the importance of close co-operation between the United Nations system and the Latin American Economic System for the implementation of the new international economic order in keeping with the relevant resolutions and decisions adopted by the General Assembly and the Latin American Council;

(d) Requested the Secretary-General to take the necessary measures to strengthen and broaden co-operation between the United Nations and the Latin American Economic System;

(e) Urged the specialized agencies and other organisations and programmes of the United Nations system to continue to intensify their co-operation in the activities of the Latin American Economic System.

21. The Secretary-General is also requested to report to the General Assembly at its forty-third session on the implementation of the resolution and on the evolution of co-operation between the United Nations system and the Latin American Economic System.

22. In the middle of January 1988 a meeting promoted by SELA was held at Caracas with bodies that have close links to SELA and whose programmes of work had much in common. On that occasion some areas of co-ordinated activities between SELA and ECLAC were identified, including, *inter alia*, those relating to the industrialization of Latin America and the use to which its purchasing power was put. The Permanent Secretary of SELA and the Executive Secretary of ECLAC agreed to intensify co-operation between the two institutions in the following months when ECLAC would provide support through its documents and studies and SELA would concentrate on areas of action. During 1988 the possibility would be explored of holding joint seminars on items of interest to the countries of the region.

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