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FOR LATIN AMERICA
AND THE CARIBBEAN - ECLAC**



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REPORT OF THE TWENTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

(New York, 6 June 1997)

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1. Mandate

1. The twenty-first session of the Committee of the Whole was convened by the Executive Secretary of ECLAC in accordance with the authority vested in him and the decision taken by the member countries at the second meeting of the ad hoc working group established pursuant to resolution 553(XXVI).

2. Place and date of the meeting

2. The twenty-first session of the Committee of the Whole of ECLAC was held in New York on 6 June 1997.

3. Attendance

3. The session was attended by representatives of the following States members of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Barbados, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Italy, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Netherlands, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Spain, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, United Kingdom, United States of America, Uruguay and Venezuela.

4. Representatives of the following associate members of the Commission also attended: Netherlands Antilles and United States Virgin Islands.

4. Agenda

5. The only item on the agenda of the Committee of the Whole and its sole purpose was the consideration and adoption of the resolution entitled "ECLAC in the context of the reform of the United Nations".

5. Decisions

6. Following a debate on the reform measures recently adopted by ECLAC,¹ on the basis of the two notes prepared for that purpose by the secretariat,² the Committee of the Whole of ECLAC unanimously approved the following resolution to be submitted for consideration by the Economic and Social Council:

¹ See the Report of the second meeting of the ad hoc working group established pursuant to resolution 553(XXVI) (New York, 5 June 1997).

² "Review of recent reforms adopted by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (Note by the secretariat)" (LC/G.1962) and "Management pilot scheme (Note by the secretariat)" (LC/G.1964).

563(PLEN.21) ECLAC IN THE CONTEXT OF THE REFORM
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

The Committee of the Whole of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean,

Recalling Commission resolution 553(XXVI) on reform of the United Nations and its impact on ECLAC and, in particular, its decision to establish an ad hoc working group open to all ECLAC member countries, which group was empowered, *inter alia*, to recommend to the Commission strategic directions for its future activities in the context of the ongoing process of reform of the United Nations,

Taking note of the discussions held at the second meeting of the ad hoc working group established pursuant to resolution 553(XXVI), held in New York on 5 June 1997,

Bearing in mind Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/41 and General Assembly resolution 50/227, which refer to the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields and call for "the review of the regional commissions, with a view to strengthening and enhancing their effectiveness as action- and policy-oriented bodies ...",

Bearing in mind also the request of the Economic and Social Council, that the regional commissions should continue undertaking their own assessments as called for in General Assembly resolution 50/227, and report to the Council at its substantive session of 1997,

Having before it the notes by the secretariat entitled "Review of recent reforms adopted by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean" and "Management pilot scheme",

Reaffirming that the initiative on the pilot management scheme presented by ECLAC's Secretariat is aimed at strengthening the role of the organization as a centre of excellence charged with collaborating with member States in a comprehensive analysis of development processes geared to the design, monitoring and evaluation of public policies and the resulting provision of operational services in the field of specialized information, advisory services, training and support for regional and international cooperation and coordination,

Convinced that it is essential for the United Nations, in carrying out activities in the economic, social and related fields, to take account of the regional dimension and the decentralization of tasks in accordance with the comparative advantages of its subsidiary bodies located in the developing regions,

1. Notes with satisfaction the progress made by the secretariat in fulfilling the instructions of the Commission, as expressed in its resolution 553(XXVI), particularly with regard to institutional matters and management improvement and the coordination of activities with other organizations; in order to maintain its validity and relevance in the face of evolving circumstances that affect not only Latin American and Caribbean development, but also the United Nations;

* LC/G.1962, 15 April 1997, and LC/G.1964, 21 April 1997, respectively.

2. Further notes with satisfaction the work carried out by the ad hoc working group established pursuant to resolution 553(XXVI) in defining priorities for all elements of the ECLAC work programme for the 1998-1999 biennium and progress achieved in formulating additional strategic directions;
3. Urges the ad hoc working group, in consultation with the Executive Secretary, to ensure that, notwithstanding the changing internal and external circumstances affecting the implementation of the work programme, the activities carried out by the secretariat are based on the priorities established and the guidelines contained in the progress report of the ad hoc working group, established pursuant to resolution 553(XXVI);
4. Supports the general thrust of the management pilot scheme described in document LC/G.1964, which will be developed and described in detail, in order to be submitted for consideration and approval by member countries of the Commission before its implementation, and taking into account the statements made by the members of the ad hoc working group during the second meeting, held in New York on 5 June 1997;
5. Requests the Executive Secretary of the Commission to keep members informed during the implementation phase of the management pilot scheme, through the ad hoc working group, with the aim of monitoring its effectiveness and impact on the work of the Commission;
6. Concurs with the general thrust of the secretariat's strategic proposal on deployment of human resources contained in the document on reform measures, with a view to generate, while ensuring the optimum utilization of expertise available within the Commission and the United Nations system, more effective results in accordance with the needs and requirements of the countries, for a given amount of resources by adequately altering the mix of in-house staff and outsourced expertise and services and welcomes further consultation between the secretariat and member States on details of such plan prior to implementation;
7. Recommends that, as reform of the United Nations proceeds in the economic, social and related areas, a clear division of responsibilities should be established with regard to regional activities in Latin America and the Caribbean between the Commission on the one hand and programs, agencies and funds from the United Nations system, and regional intergovernmental organizations, on the other, with a view to achieving appropriate coordination and mutual reinforcement in their respective activities;
8. Requests the Executive Secretary of ECLAC to continue to intensify, in the general context of the reform process of the United Nations in the economic, social and related areas, reform measures referred to in the present resolution and in resolution 553(XXVI) and to report thereon to the Commission at its next session, to be held in Aruba in April 1998.