

612(XXX) SAN JUAN RESOLUTION ON PRODUCTIVE DEVELOPMENT IN OPEN ECONOMIES

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean,

Bearing in mind resolution 595(XXIX) as adopted at its twenty-ninth session, in which it urged the secretariat to analyse the relationship existing between the liberalization agendas of the countries of the region and the associated productive development policies, including, in particular, their links with trade, national and international financing and social and environmental issues, in order to ensure that those policies take into account the interests of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean,

Recognizing that progress has been made in the gradual dissemination of economic and social reforms but that this has not been manifested in high, stable rates of growth that would create the necessary conditions to provide the individual and shared resources that would meet the inherent need for economic, social and cultural rights, as is emphasized, in particular, in the United Nations Millennium Declaration,

Noting that the emergence of signs of growing interdependence among countries in a number of areas, such as trade, international finance and the environment, opens up new opportunities but also hinders national authorities' policy-making autonomy,

Aware of the profound processes of productive, trade and financial restructuring now taking place worldwide, with the active participation of transnational corporations at the helm of internationally integrated production systems into which some countries of the region are being incorporated,

Observing that the expansion of trade has not resulted in rapid worldwide economic growth, that the inflow of capital to the region, including foreign direct investment, has declined, and that this has been a factor in widening the gap in knowledge and technological innovation with the industrialized countries,

Noting that a trend towards income disparities across countries persists; that, within the countries of the region, the low density of the processes involved in changing production patterns has exacerbated the heterogeneity of the production structure, with some sectors displaying differing patterns; and that, through their impact on the composition and quality of employment, they have an influence on the disparity among households' levels of well-being,

Underlining, in sum, that the current phase of access to international markets offers a range of opportunities for productive development, some of which have been fully utilized by some sectors in developing countries, but that it also entails negative consequences owing to the structural change required to adapt to changing conditions in terms of competitiveness,

Underlining also the tradition and vitality of subregional integration schemes and the potential for deepening them within a framework of open regionalism, along with the rich pool of regional institutions present in Latin America and the Caribbean,

Aware of the various means demonstrated by the countries of the region of expanding their trade both within and outside the region and the difficult conditions under which they attract financial resources, including resources in the form of foreign direct investment, and the fact that in many cases the procyclical behaviour of capital flows to the region has led to unsustainable indebtedness,

Highlighting the progress attained by many countries in the area of macroeconomic management, especially with regard to the control of public finances and inflation; the strides made towards a more effective incorporation of the sustainable development agenda; the expansion, in many cases, of public expenditure on education, which has made it possible to increase the coverage of basic and intermediate education and to launch activities aimed at giving the population access to computerized information networks and audiovisual media; the efforts being devoted to making the labour market more adaptable by introducing new worker training arrangements and unemployment insurance; the participation of the private sector in the modernization of various infrastructure sectors and in interacting with the public sector to develop innovative approaches in the area of social security; and the fact that, nonetheless, efforts should be made to place greater emphasis on devoting attention to the difficulties that the implementation of pension reforms has raised in some countries,

Observing that obstacles to the process of changing production patterns with social equity and environmental sustainability in the region persist; that poverty levels regrettably persist; that economic growth has been insufficient and volatile; that the increase in productivity has not narrowed the gap with the developed world; that the linkages of export activities and foreign direct investment with other economic activities remain insufficient; that institutions for sustainable development have few instruments and scant resources at their disposal; that the insufficient creation of quality jobs continues to impede a reduction in open unemployment and informal employment; that the educational gap with the developed world persists in terms of both coverage (secondary and higher education) and learning outcomes; and that increased demands are being made for social security systems to cover traditional risks (health care, old age and illness) and new risks associated with the increased vulnerability of employment and income,

1. Welcomes the document prepared by the secretariat, entitled “Productive development in open economies”, considering that, thanks to the concepts it explores, the information it contains and the proposals it sets forth regarding international linkages, productive development and social vulnerability, it makes a significant contribution to the current phase of trade liberalization, levels of competitiveness and development of labour markets, education and training;

2. Welcomes the proactive agenda proposed by the secretariat for meeting the challenges posed by the current phase of the productive development process, in particular the reaffirmation of national strategies for improving linkages with the world economy as pillars of the process of strengthening competitiveness; the region’s potential contribution to building cohesive societies that can mitigate social vulnerability and give the countries greater room for manoeuvre in restructuring production systems; and the stress laid on the importance of an integral approach in which macroeconomic solvency is consistent with productive development and social cohesion policies;

3. Requests the secretariat to ensure the wide dissemination of the document “Productive development in open economies” and to encourage its consideration in the following areas:

- (i) Political, social, academic and business spheres and civil-society organizations in the region, through national, subregional and regional dialogues on the chief components of the proposed agenda, and
 - (ii) International organizations dealing with the various dimensions of economic development, with a view, in particular, to fostering an exchange of ideas regarding proposals for correcting asymmetries and gaps in the international agenda, especially with the International Labour Organization in relation to employment and social cohesion policies and the creation of decent jobs for a just form of globalization;
4. Urges the Executive Secretary to undertake a more in-depth analysis of the following issues:
- (i) Education, science and technology, highlighting the development of national and regional innovation systems that unite the efforts of the public and private sectors;
 - (ii) Social protection and active labour-market policies aimed at achieving complementarity between public and private mechanisms in order to broaden coverage and adopt solidarity-based approaches, as part of a major effort to enhance social cohesion;
 - (iii) Countercyclical macroeconomic management, adding national, subregional and regional measures to complement the changes required at the international level;
 - (iv) Production linkages, defining policies for developing and deepening them and for forming production clusters;
 - (v) Sustainable development and competitiveness, devoting special attention to the economic valuation of environmental goods and services and to the improvement of their market access conditions;
 - (vi) Financing for development, placing special emphasis on the financial development needed to replace intermediation systems dominated by banks with systems that include large capital markets; strengthening of development banks with a view to promoting the institutional changes needed to capture and extend long-term financing and to design risk management instruments to give different types of enterprises easier access to financing; reliance on subregional financial institutions to provide countercyclical financing, correct situations of illiquidity and support investment programmes for sustainable development; and the role of infrastructure in productive development and competitiveness;
 - (vii) Trade integration and development, paying special attention to trade in agricultural goods and access to markets that can enable the region's economies to capitalize on their competitive advantages and use appropriate technology;

5. Calls upon the secretariat to pursue its examination of the development strategies of the Latin American and Caribbean countries in the context of the globalization process, based on an integrated approach to economic, social and environmental issues which also incorporates gender analysis, and to identify the measures that should be adopted at the national, regional and international levels.