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FOR LATIN AMERICA AND
THE CARIBBEAN - ECLAC**



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**REPORT OF THE FIFTH MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
STATISTICAL CONFERENCE OF THE AMERICAS OF THE ECONOMIC
COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

Mexico City, 14 and 15 November 2005

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A. ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

Place and date of meeting

1. The Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) held its fifth meeting in Mexico City, on 14 and 15 November 2005.

Attendance

2. The meeting was attended by representatives of the following member countries of ECLAC which serve on the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean: Chile, Colombia, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Spain and the United States of America.

3. Representatives of the following member countries of the Conference were also present: Argentina, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Canada, Cuba, Dominican Republic, France and Guatemala.

4. The Secretariat of the United Nations was represented by members of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA).

5. Also present were representatives of the following United Nations bodies and programmes: the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (Habitat) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

6. Representatives of the following United Nations specialized agencies were also present: the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

7. Representatives of the following intergovernmental organizations were also present: the Latin American Integration Association (LAIA), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Inter-American Statistical Institute (IASI), the Statistical Office of the European Communities (EUROSTAT) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

Chairperson

8. Mr. Gilberto Calvillo, President of the National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Informatics of Mexico (INEGI) chaired the meeting in his capacity as Chairperson of the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

B. AGENDA

9. The Committee adopted the following agenda:
 1. Adoption of the agenda
 2. Review of the draft strategic plan 2005-2015 of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC with a view to its finalization
 3. Definition of the terms of reference of the working groups established by the Statistical Conference of the Americas
 4. Review and implementation of the programme of regional statistical work for Latin America and the Caribbean, July 2005-June 2007
 - (a) Activities of the working groups for the period 2005-2007
 - (b) Coordination with the statistical activities of ECLAC
 - (c) Coordination with subregional statistical activities
 - (d) Follow-up modalities
 5. Mobilization of the resources necessary for the implementation of the programme of work 2005-2007
 - (a) Project relating to regional public goods
 - (b) Other initiatives
 6. The regional perspective of the international statistical agenda
 - (a) Preparations for the thirty-seventh session of the United Nations Statistical Commission (2006)
 - (b) Selection of the substantive issues for the fourth Statistical Conference of the Americas (2007)
 7. Agreements and decisions
 8. Other matters

C. PROCEEDINGS

10. At the opening session, statements were made by Gilberto Calvillo, President of the National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Informatics of Mexico (INEGI), in his capacity as Chairperson of the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of the Americas, and Marta Maurás, Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean.

11. The Chairperson said he was pleased to be chairing the meeting, which ensured continuity in the work of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC, and shared some information on follow-up

activities, as well as his thoughts on the role of the Conference. He described the mandate of the Conference, emphasizing various points including coordination of the development of official statistics in the region, the strengthening of national statistical systems and the enhancement of technical quality. He underscored the importance of creating new infrastructure which would contribute to the continuity of working groups and entailed the involvement of facilitators, as well as the development and maintenance of a virtual collaboration site.

12. The Secretary of the Commission said that all the statistical bodies of Latin America and the Caribbean were committed to a shared project: the achieve the recognition of their statistical systems for technical excellence and the creation of public value. She also emphasized the historical responsibility of the members of the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of the Americas for achieving the ambitious goals agreed at the third meeting of the Conference, as well as its new strategic vision, to translate them into projects, activities and working groups. She also recalled that in the context of the Conference, it had been stated that official statistics played a social role by serving the population, a role which went far beyond the traditional function of producing data.

13. The agenda was then adopted, and the Committee appointed Máximo Aguilera, National Director of the National Institute of Statistics of Chile, to serve as Rapporteur of the fifth meeting of the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of the Americas.

Review of the draft strategic plan 2005-2015 of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC with a view to its finalization (agenda item 2)

14. The representative of the Secretariat of the Executive Committee, presenting document LC/L.2388, entitled “Revised draft strategic plan of the Statistical Conference of the Americas 2005-2015”, noted that this new proposal revised by the Chairperson had a high operational content, in which each of the four strategic objectives was set out as a series of targets and lines of action. The strategic plan of the Conference also provided guidance for the programme of regional statistical work for Latin America and the Caribbean, July 2005-June 2007, which was based on the same thematic axes.

15. The Chairperson of the Executive Committee said that the strategic plan, guided by the standards embodied in the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics adopted by the United Nations Statistical Commission, represented a significant qualitative advance for the Conference and for statistical development in the region. The Committee’s four strategic goals were: (i) to strengthen strategic management practices and organization in national statistical offices and systems; (ii) to promote the training of human resources competent in the production of statistical data, the management of national statistical systems, and research on statistical methodology; (iii) to promote the development of statistical data in the region, and (iv) to promote coordination between the States members of the Statistical Conference of the Americas and international bodies.

16. The participants then held a lively exchange of views on goals, targets and plans of action. They discussed matters such as the degree of precision and specificity of lines of action and the study of best practices in the developed countries, and considered the need for a public management framework and the relative importance of various targets and monitoring of compliance with the goals and targets of the strategic plan.

17. Participants also proposed some concrete changes to the targets and plans of action of the strategic plan. Those changes were taken into account by the Secretariat and the Chairperson of the

Executive Committee, who would make the necessary adjustments and submit them for consideration by the members of the Committee.

Definition of the terms of reference of the working groups established by the Statistical Conference of the Americas (agenda item 3)

18. The Chairperson introduced document DDR/3, entitled “Implementation and monitoring of the programme of regional statistical work, July 2005-June 2007: responsibilities of the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of the Americas, and tentative terms of reference of the working groups.” He emphasized the importance of the activities conducted by the working groups since their establishment in June 2005 on the occasion of the third meeting of the Statistical Conference, particularly in relation to the preparation of proposed statistical projects which would help to carry out their work. Each working group should organize its efforts in light of the initiatives already existing both within and outside the region, and the activities of other working groups. Measures should also be adopted for the monitoring of progress and the problems encountered by the various working groups.

19. Participants commented on the terms of reference of the working groups, stressing the need for them to be informed of the activities of expert groups, city groups and other initiatives relating to statistics conducted within the United Nations system.

20. The following six working groups which would carry forward the activities of the Statistical Conference, and the proposed projects in that area, presented their work: (i) institution-building (presented by Mexico); (ii) human resources (Argentina and Spain); (iii) censuses (Chile); (iv) the Millennium Development Goals (the Secretariat, in the absence of Peru¹); (v) national accounts (the Secretariat, in the absence of Brazil), and (vi) information and communications technologies (Dominican Republic).

21. Participants then made a number of statements concerning each of the working groups, seeking to clarify and obtain more details regarding a number of matters. They also mentioned the need to include not only national statistical institutes, but all those involved in national statistical systems, and the importance of administrative registers for follow-up of the Millennium Development Goals and for statistics in general. They expressed concern at the great quantity and complexity of the proposed activities and projects.

Review and implementation of the programme of regional statistical work for Latin America and the Caribbean, July 2005-June 2007 (agenda item 4)

22. Pursuant to the commitment entered into at the third meeting of the Conference, the representative of the Secretariat introduced a document entitled “Programme of regional statistical work for Latin America and the Caribbean, July 2005-June 2007, and ECLAC activities: a consolidated presentation” (DDR/2), which combined two documents presented at the third meeting of the Conference: one on the programme of regional statistical work for Latin America and the Caribbean (LC/L.2294) and the other on the draft programme of statistical work of the ECLAC system, 2006-2007 (LC/L.2316).

¹ The representative of the Secretariat informed participants that the Head of the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics of Peru (INEI) had expressed regret at being unable to attend the meeting of the Executive Committee.

23. The document was an overview combining the two programmes of work. It was clear that ECLAC could directly and indirectly support the main lines of action of the Conference, not only through the work of the Statistics and Economic Projections Division but also through other divisions.

24. Delegations took note of the support provided by ECLAC to the work of the Conference and its working groups, but expressed concern at the inadequacy of the resources available to the Secretariat to deal with the commitments it had entered into with the Conference. They once again called on the Secretariat to find some mechanism to bring the process of definition of the ECLAC programme of work into line with that of the Conference. The representative of the Secretariat described the programme design process used in the Secretariat of the United Nations, which ECLAC was also required to follow.

25. The Chairperson stressed the importance of coordination efforts in the various subregional areas, such as those of MERCOSUR in the field of censuses and those of the Central American countries relating to migration and remittances, in order to avoid duplication of work and support important initiatives.

26. The representative of the Secretariat reported that, in order to successfully monitor progress in the various subprogrammes of the regional statistical programme, the challenge was to keep communications open between the members of the Executive Committee, in addition to its meetings. The Chairperson of the Executive Committee had made an important contribution by providing a virtual collaboration site. A representative of the National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Informatics of Mexico (INEGI) introduced the virtual collaboration site, which would enable members of the Executive Committee to interact continuously in a virtual space, thereby facilitating discussions.

Mobilization of the resources necessary for the implementation of the programme of work 2005-2007
(agenda item 5)

27. The representative of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) introduced the project relating to regional public goods which had been launched in 2004, and for which financing of US\$ 1.8 million had been approved in 2005 to support activities of a statistical nature. The Statistical Conference of the Americas would be involved in coordinating the use of that financing, although IDB, for administrative reasons, would continue to be responsible for allocating financial resources and for monitoring projects and the use of funds. The IDB representative reiterated that those funds would be accessible only to new projects responding to the needs of the region as a whole or a group of countries in the region, and the benefits of which would translate into tangible and sustainable benefits.

28. The Chairperson said that there were more than 50 proposed projects submitted by the working groups, and efforts were being made to mobilize financial resources in the framework of the IDB project relating to regional public goods. Since the financial cost of those projects amounted to almost US\$ 4 million, a sum which exceeded the financing available to IDB, the projects could be consolidated around proposals which were less limited in time and had a clear strategic content. The Chairperson recommended that the working groups should prepare their consolidated proposals by 30 November 2005. He also recognized that additional sources of funding would have to be sought.

29. The Chairperson offered other bodies the opportunity to present their possible contributions to the work programme of the Conference. Having thanked IDB for its important presentation, the national delegations and international bodies shared information on regional and subregional training activities. The representative of the National Statistical Office of Spain, presenting his programme for statistical training in Latin America, favoured the idea of holding a course on modernization for national statistical

offices in some of the countries which had offered to host them. Other participants emphasized the need for an electronic learning platform, to increase the number of public officials receiving training.

30. The representative of the Secretariat reported on the technical and logistical support it was providing to several of the working groups. Giving examples of inter-agency cooperation, he stressed that the Conference had a central role in initiatives by regional and subregional organs and bodies, and could be instrumental in mobilizing resources for activities in support of the member countries, as could be inferred from the projects on information and communications technologies and on the Millennium Development Goals.

31. The Chairperson mentioned a number of initiatives relating to regional public goods involving the National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Informatics of Mexico (INEGI): the adoption of a new Internet infrastructure to facilitate the organization of virtual meetings and distance-learning courses, the creation of a database of international standards and an inventory of classifiers for national accounts available in the region.

Preparations for the thirty-seventh session of the United Nations Statistical Commission (2006) (agenda item 6a)

32. The representative of the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations (DESA) presented to the Executive Committee a report on the issues to be discussed at the thirty-seventh session of the United Nations Statistical Commission, to be held in March 2006 (DDR/5). He shared substantive information on the Statistical Commission, the only global forum responsible for the area of statistics, and presented its agenda, which was divided into items for decision and items for information. The Statistical Commission had 24 members, six of whom were from the Americas. All the countries of the region were, in any case, invited to participate as observers.

Selection of the substantive issues for the fourth Statistical Conference of the Americas (2007) (agenda item 6b)

33. The representative of the Secretariat recalled that at its second and third meetings, among other activities, the Statistical Conference of the Americas had devoted some time to substantive thinking, whether technical or institutional, and that practice would continue at the fourth meeting. In response to a request made at the third meeting of the Conference, the Secretariat presented a document entitled “Substantive topics considered at the Conference of European Statisticians” (DDR/1), on the basis of which the substantive issues discussed at that Conference, and the mechanism used for their selection, could be analysed.

34. The participants commended the Secretariat for its useful presentation, and proposed a number of subjects for the agenda of the fourth meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas. Those included the dissemination and use of microdata for research, the use of information from fiscal and, more generally, administrative registers when dealing with the issue of statistical confidentiality, the 2010 round of censuses, the link between formulation and monitoring of public policies and national statistical offices, statistics on migration and the impact of migratory phenomena on demographic and economic measurements and the design of household surveys, human resources and training, institutional credibility and autonomy, the harmonization of social and economic statistics, and the development of a methodology on municipal micro areas.

35. Lastly, the Chairperson declared that the open meeting had ended, and received the congratulations of all the participants for his excellent organization of the meeting. He invited participants to a presentation prepared by INEGI and based on data on international standards.

Other matters (agenda item 8)

36. The members of the Executive Committee held a closed meeting in order to consider the report of the Rapporteur and adopt the related decisions. They discussed the possibility of holding informal exchanges in the coming months, taking advantage of electronic tools as well as events involving the directors of national statistical offices. They invited the representative of IDB to present some details regarding the mechanisms of the project relating to regional public goods, and considered possible dates for the fourth meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas. In principle, the next meeting of the Conference would be held in June 2007, but the final decision would be taken at the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

37. The delegation of Spain proposed that a meeting of the Executive Committee could be held in Spain in October 2006. The representative of the Secretariat said that it would be available to organize an additional meeting of the Executive Committee in Santiago.

38. Regarding the opportunities for members of the Conference, in accordance with the institution's procedures, to approve the statistical activities included in the programme of work of ECLAC, the representative of the Secretariat explained that during the next session, to be held in Montevideo from 20 to 24 March 2006, the member States of ECLAC would approve the ECLAC Work Programme for the biennium 2008-2009. That would provide a concrete opportunity to adjust the statistical work programme of ECLAC. Consequently, the representatives of the Executive Committee were advised to take part in that meeting, as part of the delegations from their countries.

Agreements and decisions (agenda item 7)

39. Lastly, the Executive Committee approved the report on its fifth meeting, presented by the Rapporteur, and proceeded to adopt the following decisions.

D. AGREEMENTS

At its fifth meeting, held in Mexico City on 14 and 15 November 2005, the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean agreed to:

1. Take note of the document containing the programme of regional statistical work for Latin America and the Caribbean, July 2005-June 2007, and activities of ECLAC: consolidated presentation.
2. Adopt the document entitled "Implementation and monitoring of the programme of regional statistical work for Latin America and the Caribbean, July 2005-June 2007: responsibilities of the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of the Americas and tentative terms of reference of the working groups."

3. Adopt the revised draft strategic plan 2005-2015 of the Statistical Conference of the Americas, with the contributions of the participating delegations, and request the Chairperson to prepare the final version of the plan with the help of the Secretariat, to be submitted for approval by the Statistical Conference of the Americas at its fourth meeting.
4. Intensify efforts to improve the collection, processing and dissemination of statistics with a gender perspective, particularly with a view to achieving appropriate follow-up to the Millennium Development Goals and the various forms of inequality affecting the region, and reiterate the importance of time-use surveys.
5. Give preliminary approval, in the framework of the IDB project relating to regional public goods, to the following group of projects: institution-building, taking into account the document on integration and harmonization of statistical tools presented by Colombia; the census round, taking into account the expanded-MERCOSUR document, presented by the working group on censuses; the Millennium Development Goals, through the corresponding working group; and migration and remittances, the final version of which, approved by the Executive Committee by 15 December, was to be submitted to IDB for the allocation of the corresponding resources.
6. Request the Secretariat, with the support of the working groups and the members of the Executive Committee, to explore sources of international financing to ensure the fulfilment of the goals contained in the strategic plan 2005-2015 of the Statistical Conference of the Americas, and its work programme.
7. Commend the Chairperson for the decision to develop and maintain a virtual collaboration site to facilitate the work of the various working groups.
8. Request the Secretariat to prepare a summary of the substantive issues to be dealt with at the fourth meeting of the Conference.
9. Welcome the offer by the delegation of Spain to host a meeting of the Executive Committee in Madrid in October 2006.
10. Express thanks to the Government of Mexico, particularly the National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Informatics of Mexico (INEGI), for their excellent work in organizing the meeting and for the hospitality extended to participants.

**LISTA DE PARTICIPANTES
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**A. Estados miembros de la Comisión
Member States of the Commission
États Membres de la Commission**

ARGENTINA

- Mario Krieger, Director adjunto, Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos (INDEC)
- Ana María Edwin, Directora de Recursos Humanos y Organización, Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos (INDEC)

CANADÁ/CANADA

- Béla Prigly, Director, International Relations Division, Statistics Canada

CHILE

- Máximo Aguilera, Director Nacional, Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE)
- René Saa Vidal, Coordinador de cooperación técnica internacional, Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE)

COLOMBIA

- Jaime Obregón, Asesor de relaciones nacionales e internacionales, Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística (DANE)

CUBA

- Oscar Mederos, Director General, Oficina Nacional de Estadística (ONE)
- Caridad Fernández, Directora de información, Oficina Nacional de Estadística (ONE)

ESPAÑA/SPAIN

- Antonio Martínez López, Jefe del Gabinete de la Presidencia y Coordinación y Planificación Estadística, Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE)
- Antonio Martínez Serrano, Director de Relaciones Internacionales, Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE)
- Sueli Lorenzo, Jefa de Área de cooperación internacional, Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE)

ESTADOS UNIDOS DE AMÉRICA/UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

- Charles Louis Kincannon, Director, United States Census Bureau
- Glenn Ferri, Chief, Methodology and Software Development Branch, United States Census Bureau

FRANCIA/FRANCE

- Victor-Pierre Morales, Responsable des relations avec l'Amérique latine, Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques (INSEE)

GUATEMALA

- Sigfredo Lee, Gerente, Instituto Nacional de Estadística

HONDURAS

- María Magdalena García, Directora Ejecutiva, Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE)
- Yolanda Casco, Encargada de relaciones públicas y difusión, Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE)
- Gustavo Sáenz, Asesor, Dirección Ejecutiva, Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE)

JAMAICA

- Sonia Jackson, Director General, Statistical Institute of Jamaica

MÉXICO/MEXICO

- Gilberto Calvillo, Presidente, Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática (INEGI)
- Francisco Javier Gutiérrez, Director General de Estadística, Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática (INEGI)
- Enrique Ordaz, Director General Adjunto de Coordinación Regional y Sectorial, Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática (INEGI)
- Francisco Escobar, Director General Adjunto de Relaciones Internacionales, Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática (INEGI)

REPÚBLICA BOLIVARIANA DE VENEZUELA/BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA

- Elías Eljuri Abraham, Presidente, Instituto Nacional de Estadística

REPÚBLICA DOMINICANA/DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

- Héctor Duarte, Encargado de información y tecnología, Oficina Nacional de Estadística (ONE)

B. Secretaría de la Organización de las Naciones Unidas United Nations Secretariat Secrétariat de l'Organisation des Nations Unies

Departamento de Asuntos Económicos y Sociales (DAES)/Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)/Département des affaires économiques et sociales (DAES)

- Paul Cheung, Director, División de Estadística/Director, Statistics Division
- Stefan Schweinfest, Subdivisión de Servicios Estadísticos/Statistical Services Branch

C. Organismos de las Naciones Unidas
United Nations bodies
Organisations rattachées à l'Organisation des Nations Unies

**Fondo de Población de las Naciones Unidas (UNFPA)/United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)/
 Fonds des Nations Unies pour la Population (UNFPA)**

- Carlos Ellis, Asesor Regional para América Latina y el Caribe, Equipo Regional/Regional Adviser for Latin America and the Caribbean, Regional Team

**Programa de las Naciones Unidas para los Asentamientos Humanos (Naciones Unidas-Hábitat)/
 United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)/Programme des Nations Unies pour
 les établissements humains**

- Cecilia Martínez, Coordinadora Nacional de Programa/Habitat Programme Manager

**Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Medio Ambiente (PNUMA)/United Nations Environment
 Programme (UNEP)/Programme des Nations Unies pour l'environnement (PNUE)**

- Kakuko Nagatani-Yoshida, Coordinadora interina para América Latina y el Caribe, División de Evaluación y Alerta Temprana/Acting Regional Coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean/Division of Early Warning and Assessment

D. Organismos especializados
Specialized Agencies
Institutions spécialisées

**Organización Internacional del Trabajo (OIT)/International Labour Organization (ILO)/
 Organisation Internationale du Travail (OIT)**

- Thomas Wissing, Oficial de Programas, Oficina para Cuba y México/Programme Officer, Office for Cuba and Mexico

**Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Agricultura y la Alimentación (FAO)/Food and
 Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)/Organisation des Nations Unies pour
 l'alimentation et l'agriculture (FAO)**

- Gilberto Moncada, Coordinador Programa MECOVI/MECOVI Program Coordinator

**Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Educación, la Ciencia y la Cultura (UNESCO)/United
 Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)/Organisation des Nations
 Unies pour l'éducation, la science et la culture (UNESCO)**

- Cesar Guadalupe, Asesor Regional, Instituto de Estadística de la UNESCO/Regional Adviser, UNESCO Institute for Statistics

Banco Mundial-Banco Internacional de Reconstrucción y Fomento (BIRF)/World Bank-International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)/Banque internationale pour la reconstruction et le développement (BIRD)

- Carlos Sobrado, Economista, Departamento de Reducción de la Pobreza y Gestión Económica/Economist, Poverty Reduction and Economic Management (PREM) Network

Fondo Monetario Internacional (FMI)/International Monetary Fund (IMF)/Fonds monétaire international (FMI)

- Alfredo Leone, Asesor Principal, Departamento de Estadística/Senior Advisor, Statistics Department

**E. Otras organizaciones intergubernamentales
Other Intergovernmental Organizations
Autres organisations intergouvernementales**

Asociación Latinoamericana de Integración (ALADI)/Latin American Integration Association (LAIA)

- Luiz Gonzaga, Director del Departamento de Información y Estadística (DIE)/Director of the Information and Statistics Department

Banco Interamericano del Desarrollo (BID)/Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)/Banque Interaméricaine de Développement (BID)

- José Antonio Mejía, Coordinador Programa MECOVI/Administrator of MECOVI

Comunidad del Caribe (CARICOM)/Caribbean Community (CARICOM)/Communauté des Caraïbes (CARICOM)

- Philomen Harrison, Director Adjunto del Programa de Estadística, Secretaría/Programme Manager, Statistics, Secretariat

Instituto Interamericano de Estadística/Inter-American Statistical Institute (IASI)/Institut interaméricain de statistique

- Evelio O. Fabbioni, Secretario Técnico, Contraloría General de la República/Technical Secretary, Comptroller-General of the Republic

Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática (INEGI)/National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Informatics (INEGI)/Institut national de statistique, de géographie et d'informatique (INEGI)

- Víctor Alfredo Bustos y de la Tijera, asesor del Presidente
- Francisco Guillen, asesor del Presidente

- Jesús Romo, asesor del Presidente
- Ricardo Rodríguez, Director de Cooperación Técnica y Científica
- Abdón Sánchez Arroyo, Director General Adjunto de Investigación y Normatividad
- María Eugenia Gómez Luna, Coordinadora de asesores
- Virginia Abrin, Directora de vinculación con la Academia

Oficina de Estadística de las Comunidades Europeas (EUROSTAT)/Statistical Office of the European Communities (EUROSTAT)/Office statistique des Communautés européennes (EUROSTAT)

- Ernesto Azorín, Encargado de la Cooperación Técnica para Asia y América Latina/Technical Cooperation - non-European Third Countries Responsible

Organización Internacional para las Migraciones (OIM)/International Organization for Migration (IOM)/Organisation internationale pour les Migrations (OIM)

- Juan Artola, Jefe de Misión/Chief of Mission
- David Lara Bicarío

**F. Secretaría
Secretariat
Secrétariat**

Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe (CEPAL)/Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)/Commission économique pour l'Amérique latine et les Caraïbes (CEPALC)

- Marta Maurás, Secretaria de la Comisión/Secretary of the Commission
- Hubert Escaith, Director, División de Estadística y Proyecciones Económicas/Director, Statistics and Economic Projections Division
- Juan Carlos Feres, Jefe, Unidad Estadísticas Sociales, División de Estadística y Proyecciones Económicas/Chief, Social Statistics Unit, Statistics and Economic Projections Division
- André Hofman, Jefe, Unidad Proyecciones Económicas, División de Estadística y Proyecciones Económicas/Economic Affairs Officer, Statistics and Economic Projections Division
- Simone Cecchini, Oficial de Asuntos Económicos, División de Estadística y Proyecciones Económicas/Economic Affairs Officer, Statistics and Economic Projections Division
- Luis F. Yáñez, Asesor Legal/Legal Adviser