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Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

Meeting of Directors of Statistics of the Americas

Santiago, Chile, 24 - 26 March 1999

**PROPOSAL FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE STATISTICAL
CONFERENCE OF THE AMERICAS */**

***/** This document contains a proposal prepared by the Governments of Canada, Mexico and Peru and ECLAC's Secretariat. It has been reproduced without formal editing.

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. The Permanent Executive Committee of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CEPCIDI) of the Organization of American States (OAS) in its recent resolution No. 34, dated 6 October 1998, decided to bring to an end the existence of the Inter-American Statistical Conference of the OAS. It recommended that OAS member states integrate their efforts to coordinate statistical matters within a single entity in the framework of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).
2. ECLAC's work program provides for a Joint OAS-ECLAC Meeting on Statistical Matters. Therefore, there is no problem in establishing a Statistical Conference of the Americas as one of the subsidiary organs of ECLAC, replacing the previous Joint Meeting.
3. The CEPCIDI resolution No. 34 previously mentioned further recommended that the Statistical Offices of Canada, Mexico and Peru consider how the Conference mentioned in paragraph 2 above might be brought into being.
4. In fulfillment of this request, representatives of the national statistical offices of Canada, Mexico and Peru, and of the Secretariat of ECLAC prepared the enclosed proposal to be submitted to the Meeting of Directors of Statistics of the Americas to be held at ECLAC Headquarters in Santiago, Chile on 24-25 March 1999.

PROPOSAL

A. Statistical Conference of the Americas

1. Definition

ECLAC will create a subsidiary organ to be called the Statistical Conference of the Americas. It will be an international body, contributing to the advancement of statistical policies and practices in the countries of the region.

2. Objectives

- a) To promote the development and improvement of national statistics and their international comparability having regard to the recommendations of the Statistical Commission of the United Nations, the Specialized Agencies and other appropriate bodies as necessary.
- b) To encourage international, regional and bilateral cooperation among national statistical offices and international and regional organizations.
- c) To approve a biennial program of activities of international and regional cooperation that responds, subject to the availability of resources, to the needs of countries of the region.

3. Membership

Membership of the conference consists of the member states of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin-America and the Caribbean. They will be represented by the Heads of the National Statistical Offices or by their appointed representatives.

4. Sessions of the Conference

Regular Sessions of the Conference shall take place every two years, normally at ECLAC's Headquarters in Santiago, Chile. The Conference may accept the invitation of a member government to hold the Regular Session in that country, provided that the host country assumes the additional expenses of the ECLAC Secretariat. The Bureau may call a Special Session between Regular Sessions, at whatever place it decides, if the required funds are available.

5. Officers

The Conference shall elect a Bureau according to rules laid down by the Conference. The Chairperson of the Bureau also chairs the Sessions of the conference.

6. Secretariat

The Division of Statistics and Economic Projections of ECLAC will act as Secretariat of the Conference. The Executive Secretariat of the Economic Commission for Latin-America and the Caribbean will place at the disposal of the Conference documents and facilities as approved in the work program of the Commission.

7. Participation of International and Regional Organizations in the Work of the Conference

International and Regional Organizations will be invited to participate in the work of the Conference when their special fields of interest are involved, and will be recognized as observers in the Conference.

B. Bureau of the Conference

1. Definition

The Statistical Conference of the Americas will establish a Bureau to assist the Conference as specified in Section 4 below.

2. Composition

The Bureau will consist of a Chairperson and five other members. Its members will be elected from member states of ECLAC. Special care will be taken to ensure that all subregional groups of countries are represented in the Bureau. Countries will be represented by the heads of the National Statistical Offices or by their appointed representatives.

3. Election of the Bureau and Duration of Mandates

The Chairperson of the Bureau, in consultation with member of the Conference, will prepare a proposal for the election of the new Bureau.

The new Bureau will assume office after the conclusion of the Regular Session of the Conference that elected it, and will remain in office until the end of the next Regular Session.

Members of the Bureau, including its Chairperson, will be elected for a two-year term by the Regular Session of the Conference.

Bureau members may be re-elected for three additional terms. The Chairperson may not be re-elected as such for a consecutive second term, but may be re-elected as a member of the Bureau. Any previous Bureau member may be re-elected to the Bureau after two years have elapsed.

4. Functions

The Bureau has the following functions:

- a) To carry out the tasks given to it by the Conference.
- b) To prepare a proposal of a work program every two years, and submit it for discussion and approval by the Regular Session of the Conference.
- c) To monitor the implementation of decisions made, and the work program approved by the Conference.

5. Sessions

The Bureau will meet at least twice during the period between Regular Sessions of the Conferences. At the meeting immediately preceding a Regular Session of the Conference, the Bureau will approve a proposal for the program of work for the Conference covering the next biennium, and will submit it to the Regular Session.

The Bureau may invite to its meetings countries or individual experts who can contribute to its work.

6. Secretariat

The Division of Statistics and Economic Projections of ECLAC will act as Secretariat of the Bureau.

The Bureau will decide on the documentation required for its meetings. As a general rule, no substantive discussion should take place in the absence of appropriate documentation. The Secretariat is responsible for implementing this rule.