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REPORT OF THE NINETEENTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
(United Nations Headquarters, New York, 13-14 August 1987)

C. RESOLUTION

489 (PLEN.19). INTERGOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS OF THE
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICAN AND THE
CARIBBEAN (ECLAC)

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

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 40/237 and 41/213 on the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations,

Bearing in mind decision 1987/112 of the Economic and Social Council to establish a Special Commission to carry out an in-depth study of the United Nations intergovernmental structure and functions in the economic and social fields, and in particular paragraph i) of that decision, which requests all subsidiary bodies in the economic and social sectors to submit their views and proposals on achieving the objectives envisaged in recommendation 8 of the Group of High-Level Intergovernmental Experts to Review the Efficiency of the Administrative and Financial Functioning of the United Nations,*/

Noting the view of the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly **/ to the effect that the suitability of the activities of the regional commissions is a matter to be determined primarily by the Member States concerned and that the regional commissions should be consulted on any action to be taken in this regard,

Bearing in mind the importance of General Assembly resolution 32/197, which was adopted after an in-depth evaluation of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations and contains the most comprehensive statement of the General Assembly on the regional commissions,

Reaffirming the provisions of ECLAC resolution 431(XIX) on the implementation of the mandates embodied in resolution 32/197 and the guidelines on co-ordination between organizations and agencies of the United Nations system,

Recalling also resolution 419 (PLEN.14), on the rationalization of the institutional structure and the pattern of meetings of the ECLAC system, by which the Committee of the Whole, following a careful study, decided to "maintain the existing fundamental institutional structure of the ECLAC system", with certain adjustments,

Convinced of the effectiveness of the multidisciplinary and multisectoral regional approach which has characterized the work of the United Nations regional commissions and that in this connection, the activities and programme

*/ A/41/49, para. 24.

**/ A/41/795, para. 43.

of work of ECLAC approved by the Commission are fully consistent with the priorities of its member countries in their efforts to achieve the economic and social development of the region,

Also bearing in mind that the basic function of ECLAC is to serve as principal general economic and social development centre within the United Nations system in Latin America and the Caribbean, for which purpose it is necessary to strengthen its operation as a source of concepts and guidelines which the governments of the region can use in the light of their specific situations,

Convinced that in order to raise the level of economic activity it is necessary that these concepts and guidelines be aimed at the search for alternative development strategies which permit the region to reinforce its economic and social development in the context of a changing international environment and to reaffirm its autonomy,

1. Affirms the need that the restructuring of the economic and social sectors resulting from the process initiated in response to the provisions of General Assembly resolution 41/213 should:

a) Intensify the regional and multidisciplinary approach within the Secretariat;

b) Strengthen the role of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean as the principal centre within the United Nations system for the general economic and social development of the region;

c) Reinforce the Commission's activities aimed at promoting effective co-ordination of the work of the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system in Latin America and the Caribbean; and

d) Strengthen also its capacity to contribute to the analysis of the region's development problems and the consideration of economic and social development strategies and policy options to serve as a guide for the countries;

2. Emphasizes the important role that ECLAC is called upon to play in the search for alternative development strategies which help the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean to secure a more beneficial form of participation by the region in the international economic system;

3. Recommends that the current institutional structure of ECLAC and its system (which includes ILPES and CELADE) be maintained, but decides to abolish the sessional committees on water and on human settlements --topics which will henceforth be dealt with in the same way as other aspects of the Commission's work programme at each session-- with a view to rationalizing still further its mechanisms, procedures and meetings;

4. Emphasizes the high priority which should be assigned in the Commission's activities to work in support of regional and interregional co-operation efforts, and to this end requests the Executive Secretary to intensify the co-operation the Secretariat has been extending to regional integration and

co-operation agencies, and to continue to accord a high level of attention to collaboration with other regional economic commissions of the United Nations system in support of technical and economic co-operation between the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean and those of other developing regions;

5. Emphasizes also the importance of the work performed by the Commission's divisions and units and by its joint programmes with the global organizations and agencies of the system: an approach which constitutes an appropriate way of avoiding duplication and permits effective co-ordination of the activities of the Organization's various bodies;

6. Stresses the importance of maintaining close co-operation between ECLAC and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and further promoting the participation of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean in the regional activities carried out by the two organizations;

7. Decides to transmit this resolution, together with the relevant section of the report of the nineteenth session of the Committee of the Whole of ECLAC and, as a background paper, the document entitled "Intergovernmental structure and functions of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean" */ to the Special Commission of the Economic and Social Council on the In-depth Study of the United Nations Intergovernmental Structure and Functions in the Economic and Social Fields, and requests the Executive Secretary of ECLAC to report to the Commission at its next session on the application of the guidelines contained in this resolution;

8. Requests the Special Commission, aside from taking appropriate measures to put the provisions of the preceding paragraphs into effect, and bearing in mind the new responsibilities of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination laid down in General Assembly resolution 41/213, to examine ways of strengthening the intergovernmental relations between the regional commissions and the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination in order to ensure that the Committee considers the regional commissions' decisions and priorities in the economic and social sector transmitted by the Secretariat through its biennial work programme and medium-term plan and also permits the regional commissions to provide inputs for the global policy-making processes of the competent United Nations organs and to participate fully in the implementation of the relevant policy and programme decisions taken by those organs.

*/ LC/L.421(PLEN.19/2).