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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA
CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT AND CO-OPERATION
COMMITTEE

First Session
Havana, Cuba, 31 October to 4 November 1975

CONSTITUENT DECLARATION OF THE CARIBBEAN
DEVELOPMENT AND CO-OPERATION COMMITTEE

IN INAUGURATING THE CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT AND CO-OPERATION COMMITTEE AS A SUBSIDIARY BODY OF ECLA, THE MINISTERS OF THE COUNTRIES WITHIN THE SPHERE OF ACTION OF THE ECLA OFFICE IN PORT OF SPAIN AND THOSE OF CUBA, HAITI AND DOMINICAN REPUBLIC MEETING IN THE CITY OF HAVANA FROM OCTOBER 31 THROUGH NOVEMBER 4, 1975:

Recognizing that the Caribbean countries share a geographic, cultural and historic proximity that must be taken into account when establishing the forms and mechanisms for cooperation among them and that they have also inherited similar economic structures and have similarities in the majority of social and economic problems they face;

Reaffirming that it is necessary to strengthen the unity and cooperation among the countries in order to carry out joint activities that will benefit the sub-region's economic and social development and increase its bargaining power as regards third countries or groupings of countries;

Reiterating that such cooperation constitutes a manifestly useful mechanism for bringing into play the potentialities of the countries of the sub-region with the intention of complementing their economies and to achieve joint policies in such important spheres as trade, obtaining financial resources, agriculture, tourism, food, transportation, industry, energy, the transfer of technology and technical knowledge, health, education and others;

Recognizing the importance and relevance of the sea and all its resources for the development, cooperation and self-determination of the Caribbean peoples;

Conscious of the pioneering role played by the Caribbean Free Trade Association (CARIFTA) and continued by Caribbean Community (CARICOM) in promoting economic integration within the sub-region;

/Confident

Confident that economic, political and cultural cooperation among the countries of the Caribbean will contribute to the necessary unity of Latin America;

Convinced that the Latin-American Economic System (SELA) offers a broad framework for implementing concrete projects and initiatives and for coordinating common actions and positions in all fields, thereby facilitating a greater identification of interests between the countries of the Caribbean and the rest of Latin America;

Emphasizing that it is indispensable to pay special attention to the relatively less developed, and in most cases very small countries of the sub-region;

Affirming that the countries of the Caribbean are essentially raw material producers and should, therefore, maintain solidarity with the adoption of measures for obtaining equitable and remunerative prices, including solidarity with the measures taken by producer associations of developing countries in that regard;

Stressing that all mechanisms of cooperation must be guided by the principles of equality, sovereignty, independence of States, solidarity and mutual benefit, without discrimination that might arise as a result of differences in political, economic and social systems;

Reaffirming, within the spirit of various United Nations resolutions, that the countries of the sub-region have the inalienable right to exercise permanent sovereignty over their natural resources and economic activities, including nationalization, and that the countries of the Caribbean are united as one in mutual support and solidarity against any form of economic action, pressure or coercion that might be used against any one of them for having exercised its legitimate rights;

Emphasizing that the activities of the transnational corporations in those countries that accept their operations, must be subject to

/the aims

the aims of development and the national interests of the countries of the sub-region and that it is necessary to exchange information on their activities in the territories of the countries of the Caribbean;

Emphasizing that the execution of joint projects in areas of common interest may be the best way to implement a policy of economic cooperation and complementation among the Caribbean countries;

Recognizing that the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA) has vast experience in the field of economic and social cooperation that can be of effective assistance to the Caribbean countries in their integration efforts and in the promotion of mutual cooperation beneficial to their economic and social development;

Determined to satisfy the legitimate aspirations of their peoples for development and progress;

/DECLARE

DECLARE THEIR POLITICAL WILL AND THEIR RESOLUTION TO

1. Carry out a policy for the optimum utilization of the available resources of the sub-region thus promoting its economic and social development and advancing progressively towards superior forms of coordination of their economies in the future. Based on the recognition of the advantages of economic complementation, this policy will give impetus to cooperation among member countries, particularly in the form of implementation of joint projects, the exchange of experience and mutual aid, and also through mechanisms - including trade - which will contribute to this end.
2. Carry out trade analysis, with emphasis on tariffs and customs procedures and other related aspects, with a view to harmonizing and simplifying the mechanisms to promote trade between the countries of the sub-region.
3. Utilize the experience accumulated by CARICOM and other bodies which is beneficial for the achievement of the aims of cooperation among the Caribbean countries.
4. Analyze the possibility of establishing multinational enterprises within the sub-region which shall be owned and controlled by the Caribbean States and nationals of such states in fields of mutual interest of the Caribbean countries.
5. Implement joint complementation projects in order to facilitate the development and optimum use of the Caribbean countries' human, natural, industrial, technological and financial resources.
6. Cooperate in the field of agriculture, in order to accelerate the development and the use of appropriate and efficient techniques in this sector in the Caribbean countries and formulate joint policies promoting the agricultural complementation of the countries of the sub-region.
7. Carry out

7. Carry out joint activities for increasing and improving national facilities for transportation within the sub-region and with other countries.
8. Facilitate the development of fishing activities in the sub-region to make them a fundamental factor in the substitution of imports as well as in the increase of employment.
9. Examine, in collaboration with those countries within the sphere of action of the ECLA office in Mexico and the ECLA office in Bogota that have a coastline on the Caribbean sea, the question of a common Caribbean position on the Law of the Sea aimed specifically at securing international recognition for a special regime for the Caribbean multi-state archipelago within the framework of the new international convention on the Law of the Sea.
10. Implement joint programs in the field of education and public health and in other areas to which priority is assigned for action in the social sectors, at every level, with the aim of promoting the optimum use of the scientific knowledge of the sub-region's countries in these fields as well as of their material and human resources.
11. Cooperate in the training and development of the human resources of the sub-region.
12. Cooperate in the field of tourism in order to promote research and other areas of common interest.
13. Cooperate in the strengthening of relations among our countries and peoples by establishing programs of cultural exchange, including sports.
14. Develop adequate telephone, telegraph, postal and other means of communications within the sub-region.

/15. Carry out

15. Carry out actions aimed at obtaining financial resources from the International Community, the governments of the countries of the area and from other sources, to be used in common projects for the benefit of the sub-region's economic and social development.

16. Cooperate in the mutual transfer of technology and of technological and scientific knowledge to facilitate the adaptation of imported technology and the development of domestic technologies, and increase the bargaining power of the sub-region's countries in operations between the latter and countries outside the area on these matters.

17. Collaborate on the identification and utilization of a complex base of raw materials within the sub-region, especially energy sources including research on solar energy.

18. Carry out joint programs and projects aimed at better use and protection of the environment, including the preservation of the flora and fauna of the countries of the Caribbean, as well as their historical monuments and documents.

19. Offer effective economic assistance in cases of emergencies and situations resulting from natural disasters and cooperate in the field of meteorology aimed at reducing the harmful effects of hurricanes and tropical storms to a minimum.

20. Promote the development of activities and projects beyond the scope of this Committee within SELA to facilitate a more complete identification of the positions and interests of the countries of the Caribbean with the rest of Latin America, recognizing SELA as the proper framework at the level of the Region as a whole for cooperation, consultation and coordination among the member countries.

/21. Observe

21. Observe the principles of sovereignty, self-determination, national independence, mutual benefit, solidarity and non discrimination, due to differing social, political and economic systems, in all activities of cooperation that are undertaken among countries of the Caribbean.

22. Exercise solidarity in the face of any type of economic action, pressure of coercion directed against any of the countries of the sub-region that exercise their legitimate right to permanent sovereignty over their natural resources and economic activity; in the face of the actions of the transnational corporations which do not observe the aims of economic and social development and do not take into account the interests of those countries; and in favor of the decisions adopted by producer associations of developing countries or groupings of nations, working to achieve equitable and remunerative prices for the products they produce.

23. Cooperate in the adoption of concrete measures aimed at the development of the member countries of the Committee, and promote initiatives to strengthen cooperation among them, leading to the implementation of the provisions of the present declaration.