

**UNITED NATIONS**

**ECONOMIC COMMISSION  
FOR LATIN AMERICA AND  
THE CARIBBEAN - ECLAC**



Distr.  
GENERAL

LC/G.2092(CONF.87/2)  
19 April 2000

ENGLISH  
ORIGINAL: SPANISH

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Second Regional Conference in Follow-up to the  
World Summit for Social Development

Santiago, Chile, 15-17 May 2000

**ANNOTATED PROVISIONAL AGENDA**

- A. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF THE CONFERENCE
- B. ANNOTATIONS TO THE AGENDA

## **A. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF THE CONFERENCE**

The second Regional Conference in Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development is convened in accordance with the Programme of Action of the Summit, paragraph 95 (h) of which states: “To promote implementation of the outcomes at the regional and subregional levels, the regional commissions, in cooperation with the regional intergovernmental organizations and banks, could convene, on a biennial basis, a meeting at a high political level to review progress made towards implementing the outcome of the Summit, exchange views on their respective experiences and adopt the appropriate measures. The regional commissions should report to the Council on the outcome of such meetings through the appropriate mechanisms.”

Hence, the purpose of the Conference is to review progress in fulfilling the commitments undertaken at the Summit, consider the activities carried out in the various countries, give impetus to regional and subregional cooperation in implementing the commitments, formulate recommendations to the Governments of the region on putting those commitments into practice, and provide a forum for an exchange of information in order to facilitate coordination and mutual support in achieving the region’s economic and social development goals. The Conference will also serve as the regional preparatory meeting for the Special Session of the General Assembly on the Implementation of the Outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and Further Initiatives, which will be held at the United Nations Office at Geneva from 26 to 30 June 2000.

## **B. ANNOTATIONS TO THE AGENDA**

### 1. Election of officers

The second Regional Conference will elect officers, consisting of a Chairperson, two or more Vice-Chairpersons, and a Rapporteur, to preside over the debates. It is suggested that the officers should be chosen during the meeting of Heads of Delegations on 15 May 2000.

### 2. Adoption of the agenda

The second Regional Conference will have before it the following provisional agenda for adoption or amendment:

1. Election of officers
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. The equity gap: A second assessment
4. Presentation of reports on implementation in the participating countries of the commitments undertaken at the World Summit for Social Development
5. Round table on macroeconomic management and its impact on poverty

6. Panels on the three core issues of the World Summit for Social Development:
  - Alleviation and reduction of poverty
  - Productive employment
  - Social integration
7. Other matters
8. Consideration and adoption of the decisions of the Conference

### 3. The equity gap: A second assessment

#### Working document

- The equity gap: A second assessment

#### Reference documents

- Equity, Development and Citizenship (LC/G.2071(SES.28/3))
- The Nineties: An overview
- Report of the World Summit for Social Development (A/CONF.166/9)
- Report of the First Regional Conference in Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development (LC/G.1972(CONF.86/4))
- The Equity Gap: Latin America, the Caribbean and the Social Summit (LC/G.1954/Rev.1-P).
- Preliminary Overview of the Economy of Latin America and the Caribbean, 1999 (LC/G.2088-P)
- Social Panorama of Latin America. 1998 edition (LC/G.2050-P)
- Social Panorama of Latin America. 1997 edition (LC/G.1982-P)
- The Social Summit. A view from Latin America and the Caribbean

As a contribution to the discussions at the second Regional Conference, the ECLAC secretariat has prepared a document which includes, on the one hand, an overview of the status of Latin America and the Caribbean with respect to the three core issues of the Summit —alleviation and reduction of poverty, productive employment, and social integration— in the broader context of economic change and the social policy reforms that have recently been implemented. The document also includes proposals for action in fulfilment of the commitments undertaken by the Governments of the region at the World Summit for Social Development.

The main point made in the document is that the many changes that have been implemented by the countries of the region, including progress in democratic pluralism and governance and far-reaching economic reforms, have still not produced satisfactory results in terms of the central issues of the Summit. The region has made significant progress towards macroeconomic stability, formation of international linkages, and social integration, and thus has succeeded in gaining access to higher levels of external financing which, if properly managed, could open up opportunities for strengthening growth in coming years. Nevertheless, the region's efforts in the economic sphere have brought to light some serious problems. Levels of growth still fall short of meeting the needs of the region, saving and investment are inadequate, macroeconomic stability is only tentative, structural heterogeneity is more pronounced, and despite the efforts made by many countries on the social front, including poverty reduction, the achievement of greater equity remains a distant goal.

With this situation in mind, the document includes an analysis of and proposals on the qualitative aspects of growth, including the linkage between growth and poverty, and trends in employment, wages

and productivity; social policy reform, especially as regards its impact and results; sectoral activities in the fields of education, health, pensions, housing, and labour policy, and the status of social integration in the societies of Latin America and the Caribbean.

4. Presentation of reports on implementation in the participating countries of the commitments undertaken at the World Summit for Social Development

One of the main objectives of the Conference is to review progress in fulfilling the commitments undertaken at the Summit and to encourage an exchange of experiences. It is hoped that, in addition to participating in the general debate on the secretariat document, all the countries will report on what they have accomplished since the first Regional Conference in Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development.

5. Round table on macroeconomic management and its impact on poverty

Bearing in mind the criteria of the World Summit for Social Development, according to which economic growth and equity should be analysed jointly, a round table on macroeconomic management and its impact on poverty will be held. Several finance ministers of Latin American and Caribbean countries have made a commitment to participate in this activity.

6. Panels on the three core issues of the World Summit for Social Development

In order to contribute to intergovernmental discussion, three panels will be held, one each on the following topics: alleviation and reduction of poverty, productive employment, and social integration. Participants will include high-level experts and representatives of specialized international and regional organizations.

7. Other matters

Under this item, the Conference will consider other topics that the delegations may wish to consider.

8. Consideration and adoption of the decisions of the Conference

At the conclusion of the Conference, a brief document will be adopted containing the agreements reached by the Governments of the region as a result of their review of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development, including proposals for activities to be carried out over the next few years.