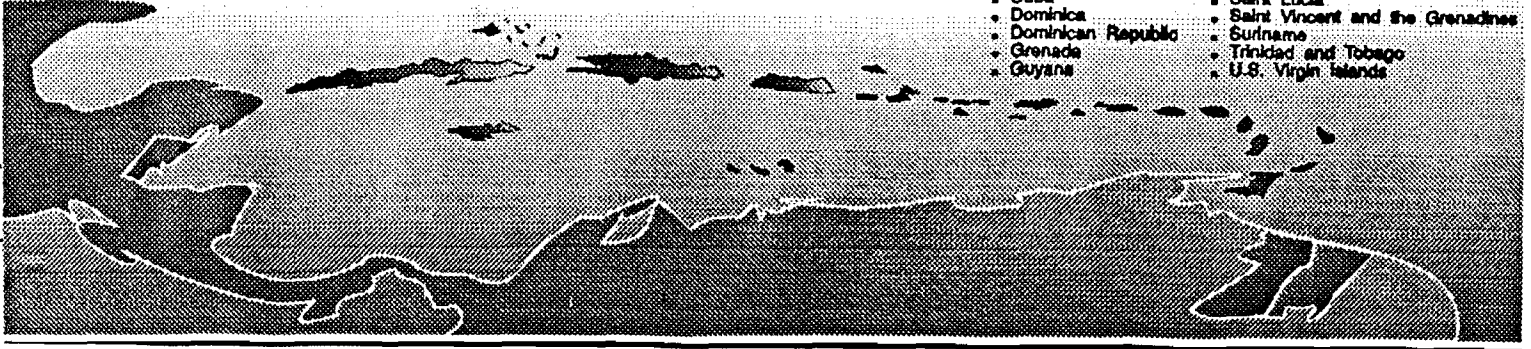




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- Antigua and Barbuda
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**REPORT OF THE INTER-AGENCY COLLABORATIVE GROUP MEETING
 PREPARATORY TO THE REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF THE
 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORLD SUMMIT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT/
 PROGRAMME OF ACTION (WSSD/POA) AND THE MEETING ON THE
 EXAMINATION OF AGEING AND THE OLDER PERSON IN THE CARIBBEAN
 Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, 22 March 1999**



UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN
 Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean
CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION COMMITTEE

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EXAMINATION OF AGEING AND THE OLDER PERSON IN THE CARIBBEAN**

The Inter-Agency Meeting was held on 22 March 1999 in Port of Spain to plan for the two-day meeting, **Towards future action for social development in the Caribbean subregion**, with the following sub-themes, each to be addressed on a separate day of the meeting:

- (a) The review and appraisal process of the implementation of the WSSD/POA; and
- (b) An examination of the situation of ageing and the older person in the Caribbean

The objectives of the Inter-Agency Meeting were to ascertain, confirm and obligate resources and support for the two-day subregional meeting.

Attendance

Fifteen representatives from subregional organizations and United Nations agencies attended the meeting. The list of participants is attached as Annex 1.

Opening remarks

The Director of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, secretariat of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC), Ms. Len Ishmael, welcomed participants and explained the objectives of the two-day meeting which were:

- (a) To assist countries to prepare for the review and appraisal process of the WSSD/POA mandated by General Assembly resolution 51-202 and scheduled to take place in the second quarter of the year 2000; and
- (b) To examine the issues of ageing and the older person in the Caribbean.

In this regard, the Director noted that the General Assembly had also declared 1999 as "The Year of Older Persons" and that ECLAC/CDCC member States were requesting assistance to deal with the WSSD review and issues surrounding older persons. Ms. Ishmael expressed confidence that the same level of success achieved in collaboratively hosting other meetings such as the Caribbean Ministerial Meeting on Poverty Eradication in Trinidad in 1996, the Post-Beijing Encounter in Guyana in 1997 and the SIDS Ministerial Meeting in Barbados in 1997, will again be realized.

Expressing the desire that the meeting be informal and be treated as a working meeting, Ms. Ishmael took the opportunity to thank the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) for their commitment to providing data and information for the reports on poverty eradication and employment and, in the case of the ILO, in undertaking preparation of the document itself.

Adoption of agenda and organization of work

The following agenda was adopted as proposed:

1. Opening remarks
2. Adoption of agenda and organization of work
3. Specific activities related to the review and appraisal of the implementation of the WSSD-POA
4. Specific activities relevant to the examination of ageing and the older person in the Caribbean
5. Resource requirements
6. Scheduling activities and targeting deadlines
7. Closing remarks

TOWARDS FUTURE ACTION FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE CARIBBEAN SUBREGION

Day One: A review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development (WSSD-POA)

Specific activities related to the review and appraisal of the implementation of the WSSD/POA

Ms. Sonia Cuales, Social Affairs Officer, ECLAC/CDCC secretariat, outlined the activities for Day One of the meeting using the discussion notes, draft provisional programme and an informational document outlining the 10 commitments and four core issues coming out of the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen in 1995.

The ECLAC Officer explained that the process of review and appraisal would take place through:

(a) A background document outlining the progress of selected countries in implementing the commitments arising from the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development;

(b) Discussions surrounding the presentation of special reports from four countries – Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Cuba and Belize;

(c) Special studies that focused on the core issues of employment, poverty eradication and social integration; and

(d) A special study by the Netherlands Antilles was also to be presented for discussion.

Ms. Ishmael took the opportunity to focus on the substantive presentations that were planned for Day One of the meeting, pointing out the various modalities that were to be used in obtaining data and information for the documents to be presented. In that regard, she informed participants that the three core issues would be prepared for presentation using consultants and in-kind assistance from agencies. These were:

- Poverty – CDB;
- Employment – ILO; and
- Social integration – Dr. Neville Duncan

The Director further explained that it was ECLAC's intention to employ the services of a number of consultants to work with the focal points in selected ECLAC/CDCC member States to facilitate the gathering of data on the progress made by countries in implementing the WSSD/POA. The four exceptions to this process would be Cuba, Haiti, the Dominican Republic and Belize, whose focal points would do the research and present special national reports at the meeting. The national reports would be expected to highlight the special themes of poverty, employment and social integration.

The Social Affairs Officer indicated that at the end of Day One, delegates would have:

(a) Gained an understanding of the extent of implementation of the WSSD-POA in the Caribbean;

(b) Identified obstacles to implementation and, therefore, the resources needed to overcome these;

(c) Agreed on a modality for evaluating and reporting on the progress for the future achievement of implementation of the WSSD-POA; and

(d) Approved a subregional report on the implementation of the WSSD-POA: Progress, obstacles and opportunities.

This subregional document will be submitted for inclusion in the report for the General Assembly.

Discussion relating to modalities and objectives of Day One

A number of points were raised regarding the modalities and objectives of Day One of the meeting. These included:

- (a) Clarification on the nature of the presentation to be made by the Netherlands Antilles;
- (b) A suggestion to add the issue of globalization, in the context of the creation of an enabling environment to the three thematic areas;
- (c) Concern that access to basic social services and the 20/20 initiative which were key issues coming out of the WSSD, might not receive the kind of focus that they deserved at the meeting;
- (d) Clarification to whether the meeting was targeted at the technical level or for the purpose of policy formulation.

ECLAC's response

In response to the concerns of the participants, ECLAC made the following observations:

- (a) The decision to have the Netherlands Antilles present a special paper at the meeting was based on the enormous amount of work in the areas of social policy and research that had been done in this country. It was felt that member States could benefit greatly from the experiences of this country.
- (b) With regard to the issue of resources, the modalities employed to deal with selected issues, and the issues that were selected for presentation, depended to a great extent on the resources that were available. Agencies were assured, however, that while these issues might not have been itemized, the intention was that they would receive consideration in the documents that were being prepared. Agencies were also invited to pledge resources to fund additional issues that they felt were of importance to the process, while remembering that resources were still required for areas on which consensus already existed.
- (c) Apart from the review which was meant to be a background document and represent the assessment of governments on their progress in implementing the WSSD/POA, all other presentations were meant to assist in the formulation of policy and the way forward. Participants

were reminded that the thematic areas chosen for review were consistent with the WSSD/POA and, therefore, lent continuity to the review process. That methodology, she explained, was used for other major reviews like the ICPD+5, for which ECLAC had responsibility.

Discussion of other substantive issues relating to Day One

The CDB raised the issue of collecting data from countries not covered by the reports of consultants, in order to fill the gaps in presentations that did not cover these countries. In that regard, Mr. Philippe Rouzier, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Haiti, expressed his willingness to provide country data from Haiti, in order to ensure that the situation of Haiti was represented in these presentations.

Ms. Jacquelyn Joseph, Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat, also raised the question of the use that will be made of past reviews and meetings, as an evaluative framework for fulfilling the objectives of this planned meeting. In this regard, she also expressed the desire to see, in the review and appraisal of the implementation process, studies on the use of resources and investment in selected social areas, assessments of the impact of training programmes on social development and the creation of social indicators to monitor and measure social conditions. Ms. Joseph intimated that CARICOM might be in the position to fund research in these areas if finances became available, perhaps through the use of UNDP regional funds.

The need to look at the Directional Plan of Action for Poverty Eradication, produced at the Caribbean Ministerial Meeting on Poverty in 1996 was discussed. The Plan of Action arising out of that meeting had received endorsement at the highest level and it was agreed that there was a need to ascertain the extent to which commitments to the Plan were being implemented.

Ms. Denise De Bique of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), informed the meeting that at the Poverty Meeting in 1996, ECLAC had committed to conducting research on female-headed households, gender planning and the development of gender indicators. In light of CIDA's interest in these areas, she explained, CIDA might be in the position to give support for the development of reports in these areas. The meeting agreed that there was a need to address the issue of women and gender in the review of the WSSD/POA.

Note was made that Ms. Faith Innerarity, who will be presenting the overview of the process of follow-up to the WSSD-POA at the meeting, in addition to being Vice-Chair on the United Nations Commission on Social Development and Representative on the Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, is also Chair of the Task Force on Review of the WSSD which will be meeting in the last week of March. It was thought to be useful, therefore, to learn of the attending agencies' decision at this meeting. Participants also learned of another regional review on Job Opportunities For All, the results of which could provide important information for this process and which should also be taken into account.

Ms. Joyce Yu, UNDP, Jamaica informed the meeting that Dr. Denis Benn had written a recent paper on globalization and that the organization would be happy to sponsor him to deliver this paper on Day One of the meeting. She suggested, however, that the focus of the paper was mainly economic and might, therefore, not be appropriate for the meeting.

Ms. Ishmael expressed appreciation for the information and the offer of UNDP, Jamaica, and suggested that the paper be sent to ECLAC for evaluation. She said that even if not completely relevant to the thematic area for which it was being considered, the study might prove to be useful as a resource document.

Other questions were raised concerning the methodology to be used in ensuring that important areas for review and appraisal were not overlooked or given insufficient attention during the meeting. Ms. Asha Kambon, Social Affairs Officer, ECLAC/CDCC secretariat, reminded the meeting of document 3.3 which outlined the Core Issues. She suggested that any preparation of guidelines and reports would use the information outlined in that document as a framework.

The meeting agreed that the document on Core Issues should be followed in the preparation of the guidelines and the terms of reference. There was also consensus that the specific concerns of gender, female-headed households, access to basic services and labour migration that were raised in the meeting, could then be logically and specifically addressed within the framework set out by the WSSD in Copenhagen.

In that context the Director explained that all terms of reference will need to include the following three considerations:

- (a) Where are we now in terms of the implementation process;
- (b) What have been the obstacles and opportunities; and
- (c) What is the way forward for the process.

It was further agreed that Day One should include presentations on four thematic areas (impact of globalization, poverty, employment and social integration) and that these areas would be reflected in the working groups.

Day Two: Ageing and older persons in the Caribbean subregion

Ms. Asha Kambon, took the participants through the discussion notes and the draft provisional programme for Day Two. She noted that the objectives of this meeting included:

- (a) Strengthening of the information bases of member States and the identification of information gaps for the purpose of development of policies on older persons in the Caribbean subregion;

- (b) Providing an opportunity for the consideration, delineation and prioritization of strategies and programmes to address the condition and status of this group; and
- (c) Arriving at a consensus on a Caribbean Policy Statement on this group.

In doing this, she directed attention to the section under “Expected Outcomes”, which spoke of approving a Caribbean Policy Statement on ageing and older persons, which could be used as a guide to policy and programmes in the subregion. Ms. Kambon noted that this was the key outcome around which all of the other activities revolved.

Included in the methodology for arriving at the outcomes, was the tabling of a background document with information on various aspects of ageing and the older person in the Caribbean, as well as the presentation of five studies by experts who had already done work on the themes to be presented.

Discussion of substantive issues concerning presentations to be made on Day Two

Ms. Jacquelyn Joseph, CARICOM, cautioned that efforts were needed to prevent the duplication of effort since her organization, in collaboration with Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO), was in the process of developing a Charter on the Older Person to be launched in April. A question was raised regarding whether or not this charter was specific to only CARICOM countries or the wider Caribbean. Ms. Kambon promised to communicate with PAHO in an effort to avoid duplication and move the process forward.

CDB inquired whether issues concerning the sociological aspects of ageing would be taken into consideration in any of the presentations being made. Ms. Kambon responded that while there would be no separate thematic focus in this area, the work of the presenters focused on the sociological aspects of ageing in many ways. In addition, care would be taken to ensure that the terms of reference made specific reference to areas of concern that the meeting felt should be included in the presentations.

Ms. Ishmael added that items for presentation on Day Two of the meeting were selected for purposes of policy review, and were based on available resources. She reiterated her invitation to agencies to undertake consultancies in areas of specific interest.

MATTERS RELATING TO BOTH DAYS OF THE MEETING

Discussion relating to the dates set for the review and appraisal

A number of participants indicated that the time set for the June meeting was short, but more importantly, it fell before the deadlines set by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) for the submission of national reports.

UNDP, Trinidad and Tobago pointed out that a regional report entailed the collation of national reports and that UNDP had been mandated by DESA to support the national reporting process of countries for which they have responsibility. In this regard, the UNDP's Resident Coordinator, Mr. Hans Geiser inquired whether the date of 9-10 June 1999 that was set for the meeting could be changed to allow more time for the handing in of national reports by countries in the subregion.

Ms. Paula Mohammed, UNDP, Barbados, concurred, pointing to the fact that her organization was in the process of developing a mechanism for helping the countries for which UNDP, Barbados had responsibility to prepare national reports. Since this process was only now beginning, she expressed doubts about the ability of these countries to deliver the required information in time for the meeting in June.

Ms. Jacquelyn Joseph, CARICOM, added that the element of timing would also impact on her organization's ability to contribute resources for this process, since CARICOM was waiting on UNDP, New York, to approve its proposal for funds in order to fulfil its mandate for follow-up to the WSSD.

Based on that and other statements of assent from UNDP, Jamaica, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Barbados and other participants at the meeting, there was an agreement to reschedule the meeting. In arriving at a new date, the United Nations Commission for Social Development in New York was contacted in order to gain information as to their deadline for receiving regional reports for inclusion in their report of progress made in the implementation process. The Commission welcomed the Caribbean's input into the process and informed that the end of September was the Commission's absolute deadline for receiving regional reports. The final date that was agreed upon by the meeting was, therefore, 2-3 September 1999.

In arriving at the new date, it was agreed by the meeting, that UNDP would try to ensure that national reports were completed by June and given to ECLAC by 1 July 1999. Countries needing help in completing their national reports would be identified for visit by a consultant to assist in the completion of such reports, prior to this date.

In accepting the utility of shifting the date of the meeting from June to September, Ms. Ishmael expressed her appreciation for the process which would ensure that resources that would have been used for travel to a number of countries to ensure the collection of data for the preparation of the review, could now be shifted to other areas.

Discussions relating to the budget

In presenting the budget, Ms. Ishmael referred to the preceding discussion and informed the meeting that in light of new modalities for the collection of data and preparation of reports, the budget would have to undergo some modification. In this regard, she suggested that the budget that was allocated for travel for the collection of data be reduced to reflect the fact that a consultant

would now only travel to assist those countries that required assistance to meet the deadline of the end of June.

UNDP countries have also been requested to sponsor, wherever they could, participants from countries for which they have responsibility. In addition, agencies were asked to identify and sponsor where possible, participants from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to attend the meeting.

ECLAC has undertaken to revise the budget and circulate to participants for their comments shortly.

Documentation

It was agreed that the following documents would be prepared for the meeting:

Day One:

(a) A background document that reviews and appraises the implementation of the WSSD/POA in selected countries of ECLAC/CDCC member States.

(b) Four special reports on the implementation process in Belize, Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Haiti.

(c) Four studies by experts in the areas of:

- (i) An enabling environment for social development (with special emphasis on the impact of globalization);
- (ii) Poverty eradication;
- (iii) Expansion of productive employment and reduction of unemployment; and
- (iv) Social integration

Day Two

(a) A background document that examines ageing and the older person in the Caribbean.

(b) Five presentations by experts on the following topics:

- (i) Changing profile of the aged in the subregion;
- (ii) The economic impact on the society of older persons (including returning migrants);
- (iii) Costs of pension and health care;
- (iv) The well-being of older persons – what is the necessary policy response?
- (v) Infrastructure in the Caribbean – are we ready for an ageing population?

- (c) A special report by the Netherlands Antilles.

Commitments and deadlines

Deadlines

- (a) ECLAC to send out Terms of Reference for special studies and reports by Friday 26 March 1999 for perusal by participants of the Inter-Agency Meeting, who will reply with any modifications within five days.
- (b) Terms of reference should be sent to consultants by the end of March.
- (c) All consultant reports should be in by 1 June.
- (d) All UNDP National Reports should be sent to ECLAC by 1 July.
- (e) Completed documents need to leave ECLAC by the first week in August.

Commitments

- (a) UNICEF will look into the possibility of accessing funds for some aspects of the process and will communicate with ECLAC within one week.

(b) The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) will share documentation on women and poverty and any other relevant resource documents, and possibly support a consultant to present a paper on women and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The organization also indicated its willingness to explore the possibility of funding the participation of a representative from a women's non-governmental organization.

(c) UNDP, Trinidad and Tobago, has undertaken to cover the cost of participants – technical and non-governmental – from countries under its jurisdiction, and to prepare national reports for Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.

(d) UNDP, Barbados, will have to make a decision on its ability to fund participants from member countries as delegates to the meeting, as well as the ability to prepare national reports for the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). Ms. Paula Mohamed, the representative of UNDP, Barbados, promised to communicate the organization's decision to ECLAC as soon as possible.

- (e) UNDP, Jamaica, has undertaken to:

- (i) Fund the participation of Dr. Denis Benn, if this becomes necessary; and

- (ii) Contribute to the process, wherever necessary, once it has been ascertained that Jamaica does not need this organization to fund the participation of its delegates.

(f) CDB has committed to providing all of the necessary reports and data for the preparation of a document on poverty eradication. The representative of this organization also promised to look into the possibility of having CDB fund a consultant for putting together the paper on poverty.

(g) The Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) promised to consult with its headquarters in Barbados and Santiago concerning support for Day One.

(h) The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) has indicated its inability to fund any aspect of the process without help from the other United Nations organizations to which it belongs.

(i) UNDP, Haiti, is willing to support the collection and integration of data from Haiti into the documents that are being prepared for presentation. In this regard, Mr. Rouzier has promised to obtain and transmit country data from Haiti for this purpose. In addition, UNDP, Haiti, will explore the possibility of support for the preparation of the national report and the participation of Haiti's delegates to the meeting. UNDP, Haiti, also advised that the organization will explore the feasibility of funding consultant requirements for Day One.

(j) The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) has promised to confirm support for Day Two on the aged within the week.

(k) The ILO has committed to providing a study on employment.

(l) ECLAC has indicated its ability to fund the consultancy on social integration. The organization will also take responsibility for all logistical and travel arrangements and conference services. The organization also has to reformulate the budget, forward a list of focal points to UNDP and make direct contact with countries which may not have the support of agencies to fund the participation of delegates to the meeting.

Participants were informed that the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) usually undertook the funding of youth delegates to meetings. In this regard, the representative of UNDP, Jamaica, promised to suggest this to the Head of UNFPA on her return to Jamaica.

Closing

The meeting ended at approximately 1.45 p.m, with a promise by participants to communicate their commitments to UN-ECLAC by the end of the week, and with the usual exchange of courtesies.

Annex**List of Participants**

Canada/CARICOM Gender Equity Fund	Ms. Denise Noel-De Bique Regional Adviser Canadian High Commission 3-A Sweet Briar Road St. Clair PORT OF SPAIN
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ECLAC System

Ms. Len Ishmael, Director
Ms. Sonia M. Cuales, Social Affairs Officer
Ms. Asha Kambon, Social Affairs Officer
Mr. Radcliffe Dookie, Associate Programme Officer

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