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**REPORT OF THE FIFTH MEETING OF THE PRESIDING OFFICERS  
OF THE COMMITTEE ON SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION**

Santo Domingo, 11 January 2017

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## A. ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

### Place and date of the meeting

1. The fifth meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Committee on South-South Cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean was held in Santo Domingo on 11 January 2017.

### Attendance<sup>1</sup>

2. The meeting was attended by representatives of the following countries, which had been appointed to serve as Presiding Officers: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Jamaica and Mexico.

3. Also attending the meeting were representatives of the following member States of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC): El Salvador and Peru.

### Chair and Vice-Chairs

4. At the thirty-sixth session of ECLAC, the countries listed below had been elected to serve as the Presiding Officers of the Committee on South-South Cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean:

Chair: Mexico

Vice-Chairs: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Cuba, Dominican Republic and Jamaica

## B. AGENDA

5. The Presiding Officers adopted the following agenda:

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Follow-up on the South-South cooperation activities carried out since the thirty-sixth session of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).
3. Sharing experiences of implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
4. Promoting multi-stakeholder partnerships for South-South cooperation.
5. Sharing experiences of and best practices for South-South cooperation methodologies and metrics.

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<sup>1</sup> See annex.

6. Information on the sixth meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Committee on South-South Cooperation, to be held in the framework of the first meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development (Mexico City, 26-28 April 2017).
7. Other matters.
8. Consideration and adoption of agreements.

### C. SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

6. Noel González, Coordinator of Multilateral and Regional Forums and Mechanisms for International Development Cooperation of the Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation (AMEXCID), in his capacity as Chair of the Presiding Officers of the Committee on South-South Cooperation, welcomed the participants.

7. The Chair submitted the provisional agenda for consideration by the delegations, who adopted it without amendment.

8. Inocencio García Javier, Vice-Minister for International Cooperation of the Dominican Republic, welcomed the Presiding Officers and the fact that the meeting had been scheduled to take advantage of delegations' presence in Santo Domingo for the fourth meeting of the International Cooperation Working Group of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), on 12 and 13 January. He called for virtuous links to be forged between the CELAC Working Group and the Presiding Officers.

#### Follow-up on the South-South cooperation activities carried out since the thirty-sixth session of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) (agenda item 2)

9. The Political Affairs Officer of the Office of the Secretary of the Commission gave a brief summary of the activities carried out between May 2016 and January 2017.

10. The Chair of the Presiding Officers said that at the thirty-sixth session of ECLAC, held in Mexico City from 23 to 27 May 2016, Mexico had submitted to the delegations of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean the proposed action lines of the Committee on South-South Cooperation for the period 2016-2018, which had been adopted pursuant to resolution 709(XXXVI).

11. In the context of the new international cooperation architecture and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, South-South cooperation could make a significant contribution to countries' progress towards economic and social development, in harmony with the environment. The search for joint solutions to development challenges presented a great opportunity, given the shared vision and interests of the Latin American and Caribbean countries within the framework of the global agenda. The Committee on South-South Cooperation had proposed three action lines for the biennium, namely: (i) sharing experiences of implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; (ii) promoting multi-stakeholder partnerships for South-South cooperation; and (iii) sharing experiences of and best practices for South-South cooperation methodologies and metrics.

12. In accordance with the proposal adopted in Mexico City, activities to be undertaken to promote the three action lines should be agreed upon by the Committee and include initiatives such as a knowledge transfer platform, workshops and regional meetings.

13. The Chair said that a three-day technical meeting on drafting an international cooperation bill and developing the concept of the Mexican cooperation system had been held in Mexico City in October 2016. The meeting had been organized jointly by AMEXCID, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation and the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC), and had been supported by the Government of Japan and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), ECLAC and the Ibero-American Programme for the Strengthening of South-South Cooperation (PIFCSS). At that meeting, participants had examined Mexico's experience in the process of developing, analysing, adopting and implementing the International Cooperation for Development Act, and had shared information on designing similar laws and developing proposals or amendments to strengthen the legal frameworks in their countries. Moreover, the technical visit, undertaken with the support of ECLAC and PIFCSS, had provided participating countries, especially of Latin America and the Caribbean, with an opportunity to learn more about AMEXCID mandates and the scope of its activities as a national cooperation agency.

14. Lastly, the Chair presented for discussion a six-point proposal of activities to be undertaken to promote the three action lines starting in January 2017. The delegations commended Mexico's efforts and welcomed the proposal.

#### Sharing experiences of implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (agenda item 3)

15. The Chair recalled ECLAC resolution 700(XXXVI) on the establishment of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development, which had been subsequently endorsed by the United Nations Economic and Social Council with the adoption of its resolution 2016/12.

16. He recalled that the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development was the regional mechanism that would follow up and review the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the Sustainable Development Goals and targets, its means of implementation, and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, and that the subsidiary bodies of ECLAC, among other entities and stakeholders, would submit reports to the Forum. The first opportunity to do so would be at the first meeting of the Forum to be held in Mexico City, from 26 to 28 April 2017.

17. In the ensuing discussion, representatives said that the implementation and follow-up of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development would require considerable human and material resources from countries. The representative of Jamaica drew attention to her own country's experience in that process and said that nationwide procedures were already in place to align the national planning system with the 2030 Agenda. The particular institutional arrangements and working methodologies could be shared in the framework of South-South cooperation.

#### Promoting multi-stakeholder partnerships for South-South cooperation (agenda item 4)

18. The Chair suggested that the Committee on South-South Cooperation of ECLAC could provide a space for centralizing the various regional discussions about the relevance of South-South cooperation in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals, given its mandate as a subsidiary body of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean

on Sustainable Development, which in turn informed the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, the central platform for global follow-up of the 2030 Agenda.

19. In the ensuing discussion, representatives stressed the need to distinguish between the objectives and tasks of the Committee on South-South Cooperation of ECLAC and those of the CELAC International Cooperation Working Group in order to avoid confusion and duplication of efforts and to create synergies.

20. The representatives—in line with the position expressed by the representative of Brazil—agreed that, as an intergovernmental mechanism for dialogue and political consensus-building, CELAC had a clear role to play in defining the scope of South-South cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean, and in the political coordination of governments' regional action. The representatives also acknowledged the important position that ECLAC held in Latin America and the Caribbean, given its contribution to economic and social development in the region, and said that it should support the work of CELAC on South-South cooperation by coordinating actions that sought to promote development and strengthen the relations of the countries of the region with each other and with other nations around the world.

21. The Chair, speaking in his capacity as the representative of Mexico, said that the Committee on South-South Cooperation must open its meetings to the broad and inclusive participation of multiple stakeholders from the private sector, civil society, foundations and academia, among others, as well as representatives of parliaments and local governments, and proposed that the same approach should be adopted at the next meeting of the Presiding Officers to be held in the days leading up to the first meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development. The representatives concurred with his proposal, but pointed out that, among other things, the purpose and nature of such participation, in addition to who would be invited to do so and how, must be decided in advance. Representatives also agreed that the participation of such stakeholders should not, under any circumstances, be considered an invitation to evaluate countries' foreign policies or to interfere in other sovereign decisions.

22. The representative of Argentina said that an event would be held to celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action at the end of 2018 or in the first quarter of 2019. That event and the preparations leading up to it would provide good opportunities to strengthen the position of Latin America and the Caribbean in South-South cooperation. The representatives welcomed the initiative and underscored the importance of working with the fortieth anniversary of the Plan of Action in mind, as it was at the United Nations Conference on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, held in Buenos Aires in 1978, that the concept of “cooperation among developing countries” had been formally integrated into the multilateral framework of the United Nations.

#### Sharing experiences of and best practices for South-South cooperation on methodologies and metrics (agenda item 5)

23. The representative of Argentina called on the countries to take specific action in the region to achieve Goal 17 of the 2030 Agenda, namely to strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development. She said that a solution must be found to the problem posed by classifying middle-income countries on the basis of their GDP, and that the value of cooperation must be determined by developing regional indicators.

24. The representatives agreed on the need to emphasize the strengths of South-South cooperation while preserving its fundamental nature. The representative of Brazil expressed concern that attempts to place value (understood as monetization) on cooperation risked being driven by the developed countries' agenda and thus artificially eliminating the valuable aspects of South-South cooperation. His country had been applying a

methodology to determine the value of its cooperation since 2015. The experience of Mexico and the progress made in Chile and Argentina in establishing a valuation process were also highlighted.

25. The Chair said that the Committee on South-South Cooperation could provide the countries of the region with an opportunity to share information on the different methodologies used to measure indicators of South-South cooperation in the region, and on the institutional channels for follow-up of the 2030 Agenda, specifically those adopted by countries to achieve Goal 17.

Information on the sixth meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Committee on South-South Cooperation, to be held in the framework of the first meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development (Mexico City, 26-28 April 2017) (agenda item 6)

26. The Chair recalled that, at the thirty-sixth session of ECLAC, member States had adopted resolution 700(XXXVI) on the establishment of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development. He said that the first meeting of the Forum would be held in Mexico City in April 2017 and urged the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean to participate actively. He noted that resolution 709(XXXVI) requested the Committee on South-South Cooperation, in its capacity as a subsidiary body of ECLAC, to inform the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development on its contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

27. He proposed that the report that the Committee would present to the Forum should be considered at the sixth meeting of the Presiding Officers, which should be held in the framework of the first meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development.

28. He also asked ECLAC to prepare the first report of the Committee on South-South Cooperation to the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development, based on the inputs from the countries of the region.

29. In the ensuing discussion, representatives expressed their agreement with the Chair's proposal, which stressed that the report must include the regional definition of South-South cooperation and analyse the latest developments in that field (sectors, trends and other aspects). The representatives also recommended that ECLAC should come up with a proposal for the type of report and timetable of work to ensure that the document would be available, in Spanish and in English, at the first meeting of the Forum.

30. The representative of Chile said that the official development assistance graduation criteria of the Development Assistance Committee should be adjusted to address the new multidimensional challenges and commitments of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Similarly, the perspective of middle-income countries and those countries that were affected by the graduation system must be taken into account, by including multidimensional criteria and alternative thresholds for graduation linked to official development assistance. Lastly, he said that in order to achieve sustainable development and the United Nations' 2030 Agenda, it was important to avoid exclusion.

31. The representative of Cuba expressed his support for the proposal made by Chile and said that the concept of graduation should be opposed because it had emerged from the developed countries' cooperation agenda. He also said that the Committee's report for the first meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development must frame South-South and triangular cooperation in the context of North-South cooperation.

32. In the ensuing discussion, representatives expressed their agreement with Chile and said that the report to the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development should indicate their opposition to the concept of graduation based solely on the per capita income indicator. Several representatives also agreed on the need to ensure consistency between the targets and indicators of Goal 17 of the 2030 Agenda and the regional position on cooperation and development.

Other matters (agenda item 7)

33. The representative of El Salvador commended the work of the Chair and said that his country stood ready to serve as a Presiding Officer of the Committee on South-South Cooperation. The Chair announced that Honduras had also expressed an interest in serving as a Presiding Officer.

34. The representatives unanimously agreed that El Salvador and Honduras should serve as Presiding Officers of the Committee on South-South Cooperation.

Consideration and adoption of agreements (agenda item 8)

35. At their meeting in Santo Domingo on 11 January 2017, the Presiding Officers of the Committee on South-South Cooperation agreed as follows:

1. *To accept* El Salvador and Honduras as Presiding Officers of the Committee on South-South Cooperation of ECLAC;

2. *To request* that, based on the inputs received from the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, ECLAC prepare a report of the Committee on South-South Cooperation to submit to the first meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development;

3. *To consider*, at the sixth meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Committee on South-South Cooperation—to be held in the framework of the first meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development—the report to be submitted by the Committee on South-South Cooperation to the Forum;

4. *To open up* participation in the meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Committee on South-South Cooperation to multiple stakeholders from the private sector, civil society, foundations and academia, as well representatives of parliaments and local governments, among others, with a view to maintaining a dialogue that would contribute to regional decision-making focused on improving South-South cooperation;

5. *To incorporate* the outcome of the discussions of the Presiding Officers of the Committee on South-South Cooperation with other stakeholders into the report that that Committee will submit to the first meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development.



## Annex

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS****A. Estados miembros de la Comisión  
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**EL SALVADOR**Representante/Representative

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### Representante/Representative

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