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**REPORT OF THE REGIONAL INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE OF THE COUNTRIES OF
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN ON THE PRIORITIES OF THE REGION,
WITH A VIEW TO THE SECOND HIGH-LEVEL UNITED NATIONS
CONFERENCE ON SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION**

New York, 29 November 2018

CONTENTS

		<i>Paragraph</i>	<i>Page</i>
A.	ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK	1-3	3
	Place and date of the meeting	1	3
	Attendance.....	2	3
	Chair	3	3
B.	PROCEEDINGS	4-20	3
Annex 1	List of participants	-	9

A. ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

Place and date of the meeting

1. The regional interactive dialogue of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on the priorities of the region, with a view to the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation, was held on 29 November 2018 at United Nations Headquarters in New York and was convened pursuant to agreement 6 of the eighth meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Committee on South-South Cooperation of ECLAC and to resolution 730(XXXVII) of the thirty-seventh session of ECLAC.

Attendance¹

2. The meeting was attended by representatives of the following member countries of the Commission: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Belize, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Saint Lucia, Suriname and Uruguay.

Chair

3. The meeting was chaired by Cuba, in its capacity as Chair of the Committee on South-South Cooperation.

B. PROCEEDINGS

4. At the opening session, statements were made by María Fernanda Espinosa, President of the seventy-third session of the General Assembly of the United Nations; Ambassador Anayansi Rodríguez Camejo, Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations, in her capacity as Chair of the Committee on South-South Cooperation of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC); and Raúl García-Buchaca, Deputy Executive Secretary for Management and Programme Analysis of ECLAC.

5. The President of the seventy-third session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, after welcoming the participants, said that South-South cooperation was a topic to which the region of Latin America and the Caribbean had contributed significantly, in particular by exchanging knowledge and good practices in areas such as health, education, gender equality and food security. South-South cooperation must adapt to the new challenges for development and those posed by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Those challenges must be met without losing sight of the essential elements of South-South cooperation, namely horizontality, the pursuit of mutual benefits, complementarity and solidarity. With regard to the priorities of the region, eradicating poverty and reducing inequalities were critical. Data from the region on poverty, hunger, and income and gender inequality were alarming. She pointed out that the United Nations facilitated the development of policies and structures that promoted and coordinated South-South cooperation activities. The Organization should also be a forum for dialogue and an appropriate place for raising awareness of South-South cooperation, as that modality had contributed significantly towards achieving the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Solidarity was what had

¹ See annex 1.

made South-South cooperation so important and effective, and defending the region's interests would require a concerted effort from governments at the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation that would be held in Buenos Aires in March 2019.

6. The Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nation, in her capacity as Chair of the Committee on South-South Cooperation of ECLAC, thanked the representatives of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean for attending and said that dialogue sought to identify common interests and to harmonize positions for the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation. There was an undeniable need to strengthen South-South cooperation and to improve its mechanisms to ensure compliance with the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. The second Conference would offer an opportunity to reaffirm the commitments and goals set at the international level for developed countries with regard to financing for development. The principles and values of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action were still valid, and priority should be given to preserving the gains made and to moving towards a new global architecture of cooperation.

7. The Deputy Executive Secretary for Management and Programme Analysis of ECLAC said that the dialogue was taking place at a time when some countries were distancing themselves from multilateralism and cooperation among nations as a means of solving growing global problems. South-South and triangular cooperation not only combated poverty, they also helped to overcome the traditional vertical relationship between donors and recipients and to target resources better. Achieving complementarity between South-South and North-South cooperation remained a great challenge for the region. In line with the 2030 Agenda, international cooperation must move from a traditional development vision towards a more universal vision. That new paradigm for international cooperation should take into account the multidimensional nature of development and go beyond traditional measurements of economies' levels of development, such as gross domestic product (GDP). Per capita GDP alone did not reflect the real capacity of a country to access or mobilize resources. Therefore, the region should stress that per capita income alone should not be the threshold for excluding middle-income countries from developed countries' international cooperation programmes. Structural, economic, social, environmental and infrastructure development gaps, among others, persisted in middle-income countries. The interactive dialogue could help to define regional cooperation guidelines that reflected the identity of Latin America and the Caribbean. The region should pursue its policy of supporting inclusive cooperation for the middle-income countries and the small island developing States of the Caribbean. Lastly, he noted that, as with the follow-up to the major conferences and summits of the United Nations in the past, the regional commissions should be responsible for the regional follow-up of the outcome of the second High-level Conference of the United Nations on South-South Cooperation, overseen, in the case of ECLAC, by the Committee for South-South Cooperation.

Panel "Prospects for the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation"

8. Next, a panel discussion was held on the topic "Prospects for the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation", at which statements were made by Ana Ciuti, Director-General of International Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship of Argentina; Jorge Chediek, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on South-South Cooperation and Director of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation; and Ambassador Hany Selim, Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs and Director of the Department for International Cooperation for Development of Egypt, in his capacity as Chair of the Group of 77 and China.

9. The Director-General of International Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship of Argentina referred to the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation, to be held in Buenos Aires in 2019. She said that her country did not want the Conference simply to mark the fortieth anniversary of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action; rather it would be a unique opportunity to give an account of how South-South cooperation was a tool for implementing the 2030 Agenda. The Conference would also be an appropriate platform for discussing the Plan of Action, which still underpinned the guiding principles of South-South cooperation. She congratulated ECLAC for organizing the regional dialogue that would serve to harmonize positions and integrate the region's vision into the draft outcome document of the second Conference.

10. The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on South-South Cooperation and the Director of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation expressed his appreciation for the fact that the dialogue had been held in conjunction with the Global South-South Development Expo, which was taking place concurrently at United Nations Headquarters and gave an account of how South-South cooperation was changing the world. He said that many of the global cooperation initiatives had originated in Latin America and the Caribbean. The second Conference would be an opportunity to reflect on the effects of South-South cooperation in quantitative and qualitative terms. He also stressed that the guiding principles of South-South cooperation must be upheld, and that the region could play an important role in enriching the draft of what would be the outcome document of the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation, adding that the clock was ticking, as the cofacilitators would present a first draft the following week.

11. The Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs and Director of the Department for International Cooperation for Development of Egypt, in his capacity as Chair of the G77 and China, said that South-South cooperation had expanded greatly in recent decades and had been crucial to countries' development. An open and flexible framework should be established during the drafting the outcome document of the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation so that countries could adapt to new realities without rewriting the history of South-South cooperation. South-South cooperation should be a collective effort, an expression of solidarity that used the best practices to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. He recalled that South-South cooperation complemented North-South cooperation and, under no circumstances, would replace it. South-South cooperation must be carried out in accordance with the established principles of non-interference, solidarity and horizontality.

12. The floor was then given to the delegations. The representatives of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay and Uruguay made statements.

13. The representatives agreed that South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation were essential for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. They also said that South-South cooperation was no substitute for North-South cooperation, rather it complemented it. The region's priorities with a view to the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation included upholding and endorsing the guiding principles of South-South cooperation, such as those established in the Buenos Aires Plan of Action and the outcome document of the High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation held in Nairobi in 2009, namely that South-South cooperation was a common endeavour of peoples and countries of the South, born out of shared experiences and sympathies, based on their common objectives and solidarity, and guided by, inter alia, the principles of respect for national sovereignty and ownership, free from any conditionalities.

14. Several representatives said that the region should ensure that the guiding principle of shared but differentiated responsibilities took precedence over other concerns. Moreover, developed countries should honour their commitment to allocate 0.7% of their total gross national product (GNP) for official development assistance (ODA), otherwise it would be impossible for the region to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

15. The representatives of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean stressed that South-South cooperation, as well as triangular (or trilateral) cooperation, which should be governed by the same principles as South-South cooperation, was fundamental to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Achieving the 2030 Agenda would also require the participation of multiple stakeholders, including non-governmental organizations, multilateral bodies, the private sector, civil society, academic institutions, parliamentarians, local governments and other actors, while the construction of new, inclusive alliances would have to be fostered in order to mobilize resources for the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals.

16. A number of representatives said that international cooperation should take into account the region's particularities and support inclusive cooperation for middle-income countries and small island developing States in the Caribbean. The Caribbean was a highly indebted subregion, which was particularly affected by climate change and was very vulnerable to natural disasters. The multidimensional nature of development should also be borne in mind and other measures of economies' development should be used besides traditional ones such as GDP. The region must stress that middle-income countries should not be excluded from developed countries' international cooperation programmes solely on the basis of the criterion of per capita income. Middle-income countries still had structural, economic, social, environmental and infrastructure development gaps, among others, which GDP per capita did not reflected. Several representatives said that the role of cooperation in middle-income countries must be re-examined, and that the challenges of sustainable development and countries' capacities could not be conveyed by GDP alone.

17. Some representatives said that it was important to have mechanisms to systematize and measure the impact of South-South and triangular cooperation, and that a discussion was needed on the methodologies for measuring and preparing voluntary reviews on cooperation activities and initiatives. As South-South cooperation was carried out with public financial and human resources, it should be systematized, planned, evaluated and monitored in the best possible manner, in order to maximize its impact and comply with the principles of transparency and accountability. Strengthening information and data generation systems and measurement parameters for South-South cooperation and development was imperative. Some countries requested technical support from ECLAC to measure and evaluate South-South cooperation, referring to the use of satellite accounts and impact assessments, among other mechanisms, in that regard.

18. The representatives of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean thanked ECLAC for providing a forum for dialogue that included regional, extraregional and multilateral stakeholders, and which gave coherence to the global agendas in the region at a time when multilateralism was experiencing difficulties. In that context, several representatives said that ECLAC, through its Committee on South-South Cooperation, should be responsible for following up the results of the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation at the regional level, while using its technical capacity to support the countries of the region.

19. At the closing session, the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations, in her capacity as Chair of the Committee on South-South Cooperation, thanked the representatives of the countries present for the fruitful dialogue and summarized the main points that had been raised, drawing particular attention

to the following: (i) the reaffirmation of the guiding principles of South-South cooperation; (ii) the promotion of regional dialogue and the role of ECLAC as a follow-up mechanism for the results of the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation; (iii) the need to support all countries, taking into account the particularities of the small island developing States of the Caribbean, middle-income countries and landlocked developing countries; (iv) the need to find mechanisms to measure, evaluate and systematize the impact of South-South cooperation; and (v) the importance of new, inclusive alliances with multiple stakeholders.

20. The Deputy Executive Secretary for Management and Programme Analysis of ECLAC recalled that the work carried out by the subsidiary bodies of ECLAC covered the three dimensions of sustainable development in coordination with the agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations. He also reiterated the Caribbean First commitment undertaken by the Commission, to prioritize the Caribbean countries in the region's agenda, as they faced exclusion on two counts, firstly, for being considered middle-income countries and, secondly, for being located in one of the subregions most vulnerable to the effects of extreme natural phenomena, made worse by climate change. Lastly, he said that ECLAC stood ready to collaborate with the countries wherever necessary.

Annex 1

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