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Committee of High-level Government Experts (CEGAN)  
Nineteenth session

Santiago, Chile, 1-4 March 1994

**ANNOTATED PROVISIONAL AGENDA**

### **1. Election of officers**

Pursuant to the provisions of article 16 of the rules of procedure of the Commission, and in accordance with established practice, the Commission shall elect a group of officers consisting of a Chairman, two Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur.

### **2. Adoption of the provisional agenda**

The provisional agenda prepared by the secretariat for this meeting and contained in document LC/L.799(CEG.19/1) will be submitted for the consideration of the representatives. Delegations may take this opportunity to make such observations and suggest such amendments as they consider appropriate, under the rules of procedure and in keeping with the amount of time available.

Following the usual procedure at CEGAN meetings prior to an ECLAC session, the substantive topics to be considered at the session will be reviewed from the standpoint of the developing countries of the region before discussing them among all the members of the Commission.

In addition, CEGAN has received a specific mandate on this occasion from the ministers and representatives of those countries members of ECLAC which participated in the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Conference on Population and Development, held in Mexico City from 1 to 4 May 1993. A resolution adopted at that Conference requested the secretariat of the Commission to prepare a preliminary draft regional plan of action on population and development and, to this end, to solicit the collaboration of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and of the member and associate member countries. The ECLAC secretariat was to submit this preliminary draft to the present meeting of CEGAN and, subsequently, to the twenty-fifth session of the Commission.

To carry out the usual tasks of CEGAN and, at the same time, comply with the above-mentioned mandate, it is proposed that two parallel meetings be held at the present session. One of them would consider agenda items 3, 4 and 5 (Economic integration in Latin America and the Caribbean, The region's linkages with the global economy and changing production patterns with social equity, and World Summit for Social Development), while the other would concentrate on agenda item 6 (Latin American and Caribbean Regional Plan of Action on Population and Development).

### 3. Economic integration in Latin America and the Caribbean

In recent years, all the Governments of the region have made great efforts to improve their linkages with the international economy, in response to the growing globalization of markets. Against this backdrop, government action has been geared towards promoting the international competitiveness of the goods and services each country has to offer. Among others, trade liberalization and deregulation policies have been adopted.

Meanwhile, many preferential trade agreements have been signed, generally under the Partial Scope Agreements provided for in the 1980 Montevideo Treaty, for the purpose of creating reciprocal free trade areas (which do not necessarily preclude the adoption of a common tariff), customs unions (free trade area plus a common tariff) or common markets (customs union plus the commitment to coordinate some macroeconomic policies, especially with regard to exchange rates, taxes and interest rates). In addition, a new free trade area was established between a developing country and two developed countries, with the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement by Canada, the United States of America and Mexico.

Although formal integration agreements may sometimes clash with policies to promote growing levels of international competitiveness, it is desirable and also feasible for the two elements to complement each other. To that end, the secretariat is proposing what it calls "open regionalism" in Latin America and the Caribbean, i.e., the promotion, together with other common actions, of an intra-Latin American —or, eventually, intra-hemispheric— system of preferences compatible with the above-mentioned policies to improve international competitiveness.

This will allow the countries of the region to strengthen their reciprocal economic ties, improve their linkages with the international economy and expand their range of options, because within such a system, integration can contribute to international competitiveness; at the same time, if the international scenario worsens, it offers a "worst case" option for dealing with an unfavourable external environment.

Whether or not this works will depend, in essence, on the characteristics of the agreements that are signed. The proposed debate, then, would not only deal with how to promote integration but would also focus on the kinds of requirements these agreements should be asked to fulfil. Ultimately, what is sought is to reinforce existing commitments, so that they will lead to tangible results; to identify the stumbling-blocks and incompatibilities that might arise from the multiplicity of existing agreements, so as to overcome them in time; and, most especially, to propose guidelines to provide these commitments with continuity and coherence, in order to make the best use of their potential contribution to changing production patterns with social equity.

### 4. The region's linkages with the global economy and changing production patterns with social equity

The relationship between many Latin American and Caribbean countries and global markets has undergone manifest and significant changes in recent years. These include, in particular, the intensification of the export drive and the reactivation of external financing. The secretariat has prepared a document that examines these two interrelated phenomena and how they affect efforts to improve international competitiveness.

On this occasion, the secretariat has decided to consider certain aspects of the region's linkages with the global economy, taking into account that enhancing international competitiveness and furthering the participation of the Latin American and Caribbean countries in global trade and financial flows are key concerns of the ECLAC proposal.

Not only the experiences of other regions, but a variety of experiences in Latin America itself for some time now, are available to help carry out this analytical exercise and draw some lessons, both positive and negative. Many of these lessons tend to confirm, within and outside Latin America and the Caribbean, some of the ideas contained in the ECLAC proposal put forward in 1990. At the present time, the aim is to deepen the debate on how to coordinate macroeconomic and microeconomic short- and medium-term policies, in order to improve international competitiveness. In particular, it discusses three interrelated types of policies, namely, trade policy, micro- and meso-economic policy in support of productive activities, and macroeconomic policy, with special emphasis on financial flows.

### 5. World Summit for Social Development

The United Nations General Assembly, in its resolution 47/92 of 16 December 1992, decided to convene a World Summit for Social Development at the level of heads of State or Government, to be held early in 1995.

The resolution set forth the objectives for the Summit and decided that the core issues to be addressed would be: a) the enhancement of social integration, particularly of the more disadvantaged and marginalized groups; b) alleviation and reduction of poverty; and c) expansion of productive employment.

In addition, the resolution established the procedures for the preparation of the Summit, including the forming of a Preparatory Committee, and requests the regional commissions "to include in their programme of work for 1993 the World Summit for Social Development, with particular emphasis on the social situation in their respective regions, including proposals, and to prepare an integrated report to be submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session".

Pursuant to this mandate, the secretariat has prepared, in collaboration with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the United Nations Children's Fund, the note which is presented as a working document under item 5 of the provisional agenda.

Its purpose is to guide the ongoing preparatory activities for the Summit in member countries, taking into account, in particular, regional aspirations with respect to the results of the Summit.

The note includes a review of the global and regional context of the Summit, a proposal on the conceptual framework which, in the secretariat's view, should include the above-mentioned core issues, a detailed examination of each of these issues and, lastly, some thoughts on international cooperation in the field of social development.

## **6. Latin American and Caribbean Regional Plan of Action on Population and Development**

In response to a request made by the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Conference on Population and Development, held in Mexico City from 29 April to 4 May 1993, the secretariat has prepared a preliminary draft regional plan of action on population and development, in collaboration with UNFPA and in consultation with the members and associate members, and under the guidance of the officers of CEGAN. On this occasion, the preliminary draft regional plan is being submitted for the consideration of the plenary of CEGAN. Its first two chapters are based on the document Population, Social Equity and Changing Production Patterns;<sup>1</sup> they also include the Latin American and Caribbean Consensus on Population and Development and statements made by participants at the Conference. The following chapter introduces specific proposals for regional actions, with due recognition that these actions can only be complementary to, and supportive of, the effectiveness of steps taken by each country at the national level. Finally, follow-up, coordination and review mechanisms are proposed, including financial implications.

It is suggested that the chapters be dealt with in the above-mentioned order and, in view of the extensive debate held at the Regional Conference on the topics discussed in the first two chapters, it would be helpful to concentrate more on the proposed regional actions and their implementation.

## **7. Consideration and adoption of the report**

The final report of the meeting will be submitted by the Rapporteur for consideration and adoption by the representatives of the member Governments present.

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<sup>1</sup> LC/G.1758/Rev.1-P; LC/DEM/G.131/Rev.1-Series E, No. 37.