

UNITED NATIONS

ECONOMIC  
AND  
SOCIAL COUNCIL



GENERAL

E/CEPAL/G.1142  
22 December 1980

ENGLISH  
ORIGINAL: SPANISH

CEPAL

Economic Commission for Latin America

REPORT OF THE FOURTEENTH EXTRAORDINARY SESSION  
OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

(New York, 20 November 1980)

419 (PLEN. 14) RATIONALIZATION OF THE INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE AND  
THE PATTERN OF MEETINGS OF THE CEPAL SYSTEM

The Committee of the Whole of the Economic Commission for Latin America,

Recalling the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, including resolutions 2626 (XXV) of 24 October 1970 on the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade, 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI) of 1 May 1974, containing the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, and 3281 (XXIX) of 12 December 1974 containing the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States,

Also recalling resolution 3362 (S-VII) of 16 September 1975 on development and international economic co-operation, by which the General Assembly established the Ad Hoc Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System, basically so as to bring it into line with the new and expanded requirements emanating from the above-mentioned resolutions, and resolution 32/197 of 20 December 1977, in which the General Assembly adopted a group of measures and provisions of an institutional nature recommended by the Ad Hoc Committee which since then constitute the most recent basic mandate for all the organs and machinery of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system, including the regional economic commissions, to which Section IV of the annex to that resolution, entitled "Structures for Regional and Interregional Co-operation", particularly applies, and resolutions 33/202 of 29 January 1979 (particularly Section IV) and 34/206 of 19 December 1979, requesting the decentralization and the strengthening of the regional economic commissions,

Taking into account the resolutions on technical co-operation among developing countries adopted by the General Assembly, such as 32/182 and 32/183 of 19 December 1977 and 33/134 of 19 December 1978, and resolutions 3177 (XXVIII) of 17 December 1973, 3241 (XXIX) of 29 November 1974, 3442 (XXX) of 9 December 1975, 31/119 of 16 December 1976, 32/180 of 19 December 1977, and 33/195 of 29 January 1979 on economic co-operation among developing countries,

/Also taking

Also taking into account the new International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade, especially section IV on the review and appraisal of the implementation of the new international development strategy and the role to be played by the regional commissions in that review and appraisal, in co-operation with development banks and regional and subregional groups and organizations, and in the preparation of regional action programmes,

Recalling resolution 386 (XVIII) on preparations and contributions by CEPAL in connexion with the new strategy, which provides for the preparation of a regional action programme,

Reaffirming in particular paragraph 20 of resolution 32/197, "Structures for regional and interregional co-operation", which states that the regional commissions "should exercise team leadership and responsibility for co-ordination and co-operation at the regional level",

Taking into account resolution 2688 (XXV) of 11 December 1970 on the capacity of the United Nations development system (especially its provisions relating to the establishment of priorities), Economic and Social Council resolutions 1978/74 of 4 August 1978, 1979/64 of 3 August 1979 on regional co-operation and development, and CEPAL resolutions 316 (XV) of 29 March 1973, 354 (XVI) of 13 May 1975, 363 (XVII) of 5 May 1977 and 387 (XVIII) of 26 April 1979 on co-operation among developing countries and regions, as well as the corresponding criteria adopted by the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme at its meeting in June 1980,<sup>1/</sup> particularly as regards determining the priorities of the multinational programmes for the five-year period 1982-1986, to be discussed at special intergovernmental meetings convened by the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in collaboration with the executive secretaries of the respective regional economic commissions,

Also recalling other relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council on the control and limitation of documentation and the calendar of meetings, particularly General Assembly resolutions 31/140, 33/55, 33/56, 33/417, 34/50 and 34/405, Economic and Social Council resolutions 1768 (LIV), 1913 (LVII), 1979/41, 1979/69 and 1979/1, and ECOSOC decisions 52 (LVII), 281 (LXIII), 1978/1 and 1979/81,

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<sup>1/</sup> Document DP/435.

Recognizing that the present structure of the CEPAL system generally corresponds to the basic requirements stemming from the original terms of reference and subsequent mandates given to the Commission,

Also recognizing that the sessions of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies and the regional conferences, expert meetings, technical seminars, working groups and other meetings constitute valuable contributions to achieving the objectives and accomplishing to the full the responsibilities entrusted to the CEPAL system and its secretariat,

Conscious, however, that the increasing scope and variety of tasks entrusted to the CEPAL system make it necessary to rationalize still further its institutional machinery and procedures, including its pattern of meetings, taking particular account of the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolution 32/197 and of the resolutions and decisions of the Commission itself and of its subsidiary bodies,

Decides to maintain the existing fundamental institutional structure of the CEPAL system, while further rationalizing its machinery, procedures and meetings and introducing the following adjustments:

- (a) The biennial sessions of the Commission and the sessions of the Committee of the Whole in the years when the Commission does not meet should constitute the focal points around which the other meetings of the CEPAL system in the forthcoming bienniums should be organized, in conformity with the decisions and priorities adopted by member governments and with the mandates of the General Assembly and of the Economic and Social Council;
- (b) The CEPAL system, beginning with the Commission itself, should bring its pattern of conferences and meetings into line with the two-year budget programming cycle introduced by the General Assembly. To that end, at its nineteenth session the Commission should decide on the new calendar of conferences and meetings of the entire CEPAL system with a view to implementing it, duly synchronized with the General Assembly's budget programming cycle, as from 1982 and taking into account the objectives and priorities established in the various work programmes and regional action programmes approved by member governments;
- (c) The regular sessions of the Commission should continue normally to be preceded by a meeting of the Committee of High-Level Government Experts

/(CEGAN), in

(CEGAN), in conformity with resolution 310 (XIV) and other pertinent resolutions of the Commission, in particular those relating to the implementation and appraisal of the International Development Strategy and to the Declaration and Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order;

(d) The Committee of High-Level Government Experts (CEGAN) should also meet when necessary prior to the ordinary session of the Committee of the Whole in the years in which the Commission does not hold a session, in order to carry out the additional responsibilities entrusted to it under CEPAL resolution 357 (XVI) with respect to population, industrialization and science and technology;

(e) The statutory rationalization of the meetings of the Commission, the Committee of the Whole and the Committee of High-Level Government Experts as described above shall be without prejudice to any extraordinary sessions which it may be decided to convene in accordance with the relevant rules of procedure in order to deal with emergencies such as those caused by natural disasters and other problems considered urgent by member governments;

(f) With respect to the statutory meetings of the CEPAL system, it is necessary to indicate as clearly and early as possible the priority issues which member governments wish to consider in some depth, correlating them with the issues to which the Economic and Social Council and/or the General Assembly attach priority, thus facilitating co-ordinated and convergent action with the other relevant international bodies both within and outside the United Nations system;

(g) The Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America, which was established as a permanent subsidiary organ of the Commission in 1977, will continue to be convened periodically at intervals of not more than three years in conformity with the resolution adopted on the subject at the eleventh extraordinary session of the Committee of the Whole of CEPAL;<sup>2/</sup>

(h) Without prejudice to the specialized conferences or technical meetings which it may be decided to hold from time to time at the regional level, at each of the Commission's biennial sessions the subjects of (i) co-operation

between developing countries and regions, (ii) human settlements, and (iii) water must be discussed in sessional committees, in accordance with CEPAL resolutions 387 (XVIII), 407 (XVIII) and 411 (XVIII). In order to ensure that these committees function efficiently during the Commission's regular sessions, government delegations should include experts in the specific matters to be covered;

(i) It is recommended that, at their next session, the permanent subregional subordinate bodies of the Commission, that is to say, the Central American Economic Co-operation Committee and the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee, should consider the best means of adapting their general institutional functioning - including the adjustment of their annual subregional meetings - to the biennial pattern established for the United Nations by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council;

(j) The Technical Committee of ILPES will continue to serve as the governmental organization guiding the activities of the Latin American Institute for Economic and Social Planning (ILPES), which is part of the CEPAL system, and will meet for this purpose when necessary in the manner provided for in resolution 340 (AC.66) of the Committee of the Whole and resolutions 371 (XVII) and 397 (XVIII) of the Commission;

(k) The Committee of High-Level Government Experts (CEGAN) will continue to review and approve the reports of activities and programmes of work of the Latin American Demographic Centre (CELADE), which is also part of the CEPAL system, and will meet at least every two years in order to establish guidelines for the Latin American Regional Population Programme and to deal with other matters relating to this field, in conformity with the provisions of CEPAL resolutions 357 (XVI) and 400 (XVIII);

(l) As a general rule, no more than five substantive regional conferences or meetings should be held each year, including the above-mentioned statutory sessions of the Commission, the statutory meetings of the Committee of the Whole and of CEGAN, and extraordinary preparatory meetings for world conferences or international years, the costs of which, like the costs of the statutory sessions of the Central American Co-operation Committee and the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee, must be provided for in CEPAL's regular budget and approved by the General Assembly;

/(m) At

(m) At each of the Commission's regular sessions, the complete calendar of conferences and meetings of the entire CEPAL system planned up to the next ordinary session must be considered, stipulating, where possible, the date, duration, and location of each meeting;

(n) The regional meetings which must be organized within the geographical area of the CEPAL system in preparation for world conferences or international years of the United Nations to be carried out under mandates of the General Assembly must be provided with the necessary financing duly authorized by the General Assembly itself. The CEPAL secretariat is encouraged to intensify its efforts to inform promptly the United Nations Budget Division of those additional resources that CEPAL believes may be required by General Assembly proposals calling for regional activities in preparation for world conferences or international years of the United Nations additional to those already funded under the United Nations regular programme budget. This should enable the Budget Division to better reflect such requirements in statements of financial implications on proposals before the United Nations General Assembly.

420 (PLEN. 14) ACTIVITIES OF THE CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT  
AND CO-OPERATION COMMITTEE

The Committee of the Whole of the Economic Commission for Latin America,

Recalling resolution 399 (XVIII) of the Commission, in which the CEPAL Office for the Caribbean is requested, in its functions as the CDCC secretariat, among other things, to give particular attention to the priorities identified by that Committee,

Recalling also Economic and Social Council resolution 1980/56, in which the Secretary-General is requested to make appropriate provision for the implementation of priority projects within the framework of the work programme adopted by CDCC and for the strengthening of the secretariat of that Committee,

Bearing in mind the report of the fifth session of CDCC (E/CEPAL/G.1133, of 30 September 1980), particularly as regards the implementation of the work programme of the Committee since its fourth session and the review of the role and functioning of CDCC,

/Taking note