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## *In memory of Pedro Vuskovic*

*For those of us who shared many years of friendship and professional collaboration with Pedro Vuskovic, the news of his recent death in Mexico has been the cause of great sorrow, not only because of the circumstances of his death, following a cruel disease that gradually sapped his physical –but not intellectual– strength, but also because it signifies the loss of a great Latin American, of a teacher who helped shape so many generations of young people in our region, and of a companion during so many days of intellectual strivings and political struggle.*

*Pedro joined the Commission in 1950, shortly after its birth as an institution. For nearly 20 years he served it brilliantly in a professional capacity, with his career in ECLAC culminating in the position of Director of the Development Division. He played a crucial role in structuring and disseminating the thinking of ECLAC during a time when the very air teemed with the ideas and concerns of a pleiad of gifted economists and social scientists. These were the post-war years, the 1950s and 1960s, when we all had to "construct" Latin America. Pedro Vuskovic laid many of the bricks in that collective theoretical and political edifice which has been of such importance to the countries of the region. Concurrently, he served as a professor in ECLAC and ILPES training programmes while at the same time teaching classes at the schools of economics and sociology at the University of Chile and the School of Economics at the University of Concepción.*

*When he left ECLAC, Pedro plunged wholeheartedly into the academic world, serving as the Director of the Institute of Economics of the University of Chile, and then went on to claim a position at the forefront of Chilean politics. In November 1970 he was named Minister of Economic Affairs by President Salvador Allende and, in June 1972, took over the cabinet-level position of Executive Vice President of the Production Development Corporation (CORFO), where he served until September 1973.*

*When political events carried him into exile in Mexico, which generously welcomed him as it did so many other Latin Americans who faced similar problems, Pedro carried on his valuable academic work, first at the Economic Research and Teaching Centre (CIDE), where he directed the Institute of Economic Studies of Latin America, and later at the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research in the Humanities at the National University of Mexico (UNAM), where he was named to the position of Coordinator for a programme on poverty and development options in various countries of Latin America.*

*Although he will be remembered for his important political role, Pedro's work as a scholar and as an economist deserve special mention.*

*He was a brilliant speaker, at the same time both methodical and incisive, who mastered his subjects with great wisdom and intellectual breadth, and he derived a special joy from being with young people, from providing them with intellectual stimulation and receiving it from them in turn. The many generations of Latin American students who were fortunate enough to have him as a teacher can attest to this.*

*Pedro Vuskovic brought to his work as a researcher and teacher a deep sense of political and social responsibility which moved him to espouse the cause of Latin America's poor and dispossessed, whose position he had come to understand very early on in his life through the many studies he carried out in this area while at ECLAC. He was tenacious in upholding his ideas and principles, he lived in accordance with them, and he championed them in all the forums open to him, in both the political and academic worlds, to the end of his days.*

*His friends and colleagues also remember his geniality, his sense of humour and great personal warmth –traits which were coupled with an unshakable loyalty to his principles and values. Our farewell is deeply felt; Pedro Vuskovic has left us a legacy of memories and lessons that we will always hold close to our hearts.*

*On behalf of his friends and colleagues,*

*Jacobo Schatan  
former Director of the Joint ECLAC/FAO  
Agriculture Division*