

ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT BY THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR  
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN IN THE AREA OF INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION,  
HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEVELOPMENT

*Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)*

Based on extensive experience conducting research, providing assistance and engaging in capacity-building, the Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE) — Population Division of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)— has drawn up a workplan on international migration, human rights and development in line with the following objectives:

1. Following up resolution 615 (XXXI)<sup>1</sup> adopted at the meeting of the ECLAC Ad Hoc Committee on Population and Development in Uruguay in 2006;
2. Following up the mandates established at the high-level Ibero-American meetings;
3. Leading the development account project on migration and development in collaboration with other regional commissions and the Population Division of the United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs (UN/DESA).

A. FOLLOW-UP TO RESOLUTION 615 (XXXI)

**B. FOLLOW-UP TO THE HIGH-LEVEL IBERO-AMERICAN MEETINGS**

society. Senior officials of the Government of Ecuador, the Director General of the IOM, the Secretary-General of the Ibero-American Secretariat (SEGIB), the Director of CELADE and the Director of the Ibero-American Social Security Organization spoke at the opening ceremony, which also included recorded greetings from the Presidents of Honduras and Spain. A tripartite agreement among SEGIB, ECLAC and IOM to follow up on the Forum was signed.

In October 2008, ECLAC, together with SEGIB and IOM, presented the book *I Foro Iberoamericano sobre Migración y Desarrollo: Unidos por las migraciones* which brought together and summarized the work and results of the FIBEMYD meeting. The launch was held in Madrid, Spain, and attended by Ms. Alicia Bárcena, the Executive Secretary of ECLAC. Her speech on that occasion is included in the annex to this document. The book was also presented at the eighteenth Ibero-American Summit held in San Salvador, El Salvador, from 29 to 31 October 2008, at which the Heads of State and Government reaffirmed their commitment to the Cuenca Plan.

As part of the tripartite agreement between ECLAC, IOM and SEGIB, the Commission is taking part in the activities for the preparation of the second Ibero-American Forum on Migration and Development to be held in San Salvador, El Salvador, in 2010. Within the framework of the tripartite agreement, CELADE developed a project on “The impact of the Ibero-American multilateral agreement on social security.” Furthe

D. THE PROJECT GENDER EQUALITY, REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS, AND RESPECT  
FOR CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN:  
PROMOTION OF SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH, INCLUDING GENDER-BASED  
VIOLENCE (GBV) AND HIV/AIDS OF MOBILE POPULATIONS, PARTICULARLY YOUTH  
AND WOMEN, IN FIVE VULNERABLE BORDER AREAS

On December 31 2008, the first phase of the project on gender quality was concluded and at the present time the second phase is being executed. Under the coordination and supervision of CELADE, five reports were prepared on the situation of migrant populations along the border between Argentina-Bolivia (Plurinational State of) Ecuador-Colombia, Costa Rica-Nicaragua, Guatemala-Mexico, and the Dominican Republic-Haiti.

The first stage of the project focused on four activities, starting with a literature review of existing research and information on the topic of sexual and reproductive health, including HIV/AIDS and gender violence directed at migrant women. Next, a profile of the





## G. THE STATUS OF MIGRATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Many countries of the region have ratified the Palermo protocols while there is a specific programme for the protection of migrants within the framework of the OAS and the Summit of the Americas process. There is also a general follow-up process for the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and their Families, but the delay in the ratification of the Convention suggests that it has yet to be recognized as a core instrument of migrant protection.

As of July 2009, the Convention had been ratified by Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay. The Convention still has not been ratified by all countries in the region and civil society organizations have played a leading role in defending the human rights of migrants and in providing assistance to immigrants. Steps need to be taken to raise awareness of the Convention to demonstrate its validity as part of the history of international rights, and to eradicate the prejudices that tend to create opposition to its adoption. Fulfilling this task is imperative for laying the groundwork for the construction of a realistic and effective platform for the protection of migrants in the region.

TABLE 1  
STATUS OF THE RATIFICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON THE PROTECTION  
OF THE RIGHTS OF ALL MIGRANT WORKERS AND MEMBERS OF THEIR



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REFERENCES

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (2006). *International migration, human rights and development in Latin America and the Caribbean: summary and conclusions*. LC/G.2303(SES.31/11). Santiago de Chile, CELADE-CEPAL.

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, Spanish International Cooperation Agency for Development (AECID) and Ibero-American Secretariat (SEGIB) (2007). *Estimación del número de trabajadores migrantes en Iberoamérica*,

ANNEX

SPEECH GIVEN BY MS. ALICIA BÁRCENA, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF ECLAC,  
AT THE PRESENTATION OF THE BOOK  
I FORO IBEROAMERICANO SOBRE MIGRATION Y DESARROLLO:  
UNIDOS POR LAS MIGRACIONES

[The First Ibero-American Forum on Migration and Development: united by migration]

Madrid, 10 October 2008

Enrique Iglesias, Secretary-General of the Ibero-American Secretariat;  
William Lacy Swing, Director General of International Organization for Migration;  
Trinidad Jiménez, Secretary of State for Ibero-America;

On behalf of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, I would like you to know what a tremendous source of satisfaction it is for us to present this book here today along with you. This study synthesizes the valuable efforts and contributions made by the first Ibero-American Forum on Migration and Development, held in Cuenca, Ecuador, on 10 and 11 April last year.

Given the Commission's ongoing commitment to researching and addressing the issues involved in international migration, human rights and development in Latin America and the Caribbean, participating in the Ibero-American Forum has been a top priority for us. This commitment also forms part of the heritage of critical and innovative work on social and economic development that has shaped the history of ECLAC.

We know today that migration, like many other social phenomena, has several different faces. As ECLAC has consistently pointed out in different discussion forums, while it is true that migration brings with it opportunities for development for the nations involved, it also entails risks for migrants themselves and losses of human and social capital for the countries of origin. The great potential embodied in this multifaceted phenomenon poses major challenges for the countries of Ibero-America. It also commits us to addressing the subject through dialogue and cooperation, however, and action in this area will have to look beyond the crisis currently affecting the world economy and the international financial system.

Allow me to share some thoughts with you from our regional viewpoint. In the 1990s, as the result of a careful analysis of the situation, ECLAC drew attention to a historic paradox that had emerged and which became particularly apparent in the early 2000s: at a time when the world is more interconnected than ever and when financial and trade flows are being liberalized, formidable barriers to the free movement of persons persist. These are especially notable in our region. This observation has led us to highlight that

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and restrictions on it place many migrants in positions of vulnerability. Migration therefore needs to be viewed as a human rights issue and to be incorporated as much as possible into the agendas for cooperation within the region and elsewhere.

I should point out that this task, which has yet to be fully completed, has met with mixed success. The *idée-force* underpinning ECLAC thinking on migration and development has paved the way for many of the initiatives flourishing today: agreements need to be reached to establish a framework of governance for migration.

Progress along this path has been slow. The first decade of the twenty-first century is already drawing to a close, yet we have not seen (nor do we foresee) even a basic step towards liberalization in the area of mobility, and, indisputably, many Latin American migrants still find themselves in vulnerable positions whether prior to emigrating, during their journey, when trying to integrate in the host country or, increasingly, during repatriation.

Worryingly, even though migration has begin to receive more attention in cooperation agendas, action is not being translated into real progress. There has been a tangible shift in how the tensions and inconsistencies surrounding the role of migration in globalization are being viewed. Now, however, we seem to be confronted with a new paradox, one that the Ibero-American Summit seems to be addressing in a timely manner and that ECLAC will continue to examine in close detail: the higher up migration is on international agendas, the more migration-related issues seem to arise. Migration thus runs the risk of becoming stigmatized, and the positive facets that have always been associated with the free movement of people are in danger of being overlooked.

In what way do the discussions on globalization and international migration today differ then from those of a few years ago?

ECLAC has indicated at several intergovernmental forums that migration is an increasingly complex phenomenon and that various aspects of international migration are becoming key issues on development agendas at both the regional and the national level. Hence the flurry of interest in performing detailed studies, reaching agreements and designing policies on the subject and the emergence of migration as a recurring topic of discussion in countries around the world. Now is the time to seize the historic opportunity that has arisen to address the issue. The initiative taken by the Cuenca Forum has been exemplary in this respect.

Commendable efforts are being made by the countries of Ibero-America to provide institutional responses to international migration within a framework of rational action and respect for human rights. Although the specifics of each case have differed, the progress made has been both notable and tangible. Governments now need to intensify these efforts and invite civil society and international agencies to participate in the preservation and defence of those rights.

Over the years, the strategic role that migration plays in economic and social development, which is clearly exemplified in our Ibero-American community, has been explicitly acknowledged.

The overlap between migration and development received special attention at the previous three Ibero-American Summits of Heads of State and Government. It is also reflected in the Commitment of Montevideo on Migration and Development that was adopted at the sixteenth

Ibero-American Summit held in Uruguay. This instrument constituted a landmark agreement in the treatment of migration issues (and their links