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Final Report Regional Seminar on Economic Relations between Canada and Latin America and the Caribbean

*XXXVIII Regular Meeting of the Latin American Council
Caracas, Venezuela
17 to 19 October 2012
SP/CL/XXXVIII.O/Di N° 10-12*

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Final Report on the Regional Seminar on Economic Relations between Canada and Latin America and the Caribbean

Extra-Regional Relations

Regional Seminar on Economic Relations between Canada and Latin America and the Caribbean
Caracas, Venezuela
30 March 2012
SP/SRRECALC/IF-12-Rev. 1

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RAPPORTEUR'S REPORT

1. The "Regional Seminar on Economic Relations between Canada and Latin America and the Caribbean" was held at the headquarters of the Permanent Secretariat of SELA on 30 March 2012.

2. Participants included delegations of the following Member States: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guyana, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Salvador, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay and Venezuela; representatives of regional organizations: CAF-Development Bank of Latin America and the Latin American Centre for Development Administration (CLAD); the Honourable Pablo Gibbard, Ambassador of Canada in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and delegates of the Canadian Embassy; His Excellency Ambassador José Rivera Banuet, Permanent Secretary of SELA, and officials of the Permanent Secretariat. The List of Participants is enclosed herewith as Annex N° V.

3. Speakers in the opening session included His Excellency Jorge Alvarado Rivas, Ambassador of the Plurinational State of Bolivia and Chairman of the Latin American Council; His Excellency Pablo Gibbard, Ambassador of Canada in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, and His Excellency Ambassador José Rivera Banuet, Permanent Secretary of SELA. Their speeches are included in Annexes N° II, III and IV, respectively.

a) Ambassador Jorge Alvarado Rivas welcomed the attendants and referred to the economic, scientific and technology support given by Canada to the countries in the region. Forthwith, he revealed the opportunity and significance of this Seminar, as it would help make a diagnosis of economic relations between Canada and Latin America and the Caribbean and assess their outlook.

b) Ambassador Pablo Gibbard expressed satisfaction for the Seminar and congratulated SELA for hosting the event. He claimed that Canada seeks to expand its relations with Latin America and the Caribbean and noted that the region is increasingly important for Canada's foreign policy, particularly since Canada joined the OAS in 1990. He pointed out that such relations have been based on three approaches: prosperity, security and democracy. He added that in the context of such relations there is much to share and learn. Forthwith, he listed the major features of Canada in the global context and wished the Seminar to result in a better and larger exchange between Canada and Latin America and the Caribbean.

c) Ambassador José Rivera Banuet welcomed the participants and, on behalf of SELA, expressed satisfaction for the conduction of the Seminar. This, he upheld, was the first time in the history of the organization that relations between Canada and Latin America and the Caribbean were tackled. He appreciated the presence of the Ambassador of Canada, whose comments, he stated, would be of particular interest for the discussion of the items in the agenda. Next, he said that the purpose of SELA as regards this event is to harmonize different views; facilitate the exchange of experiences among countries and help devise regional initiatives to make some headway towards the active inclusion of the countries of the region in the global context and the consolidation of strategies for socially inclusive economic development. Later on, he specified the objectives of the Seminar and referred to the base document: "[Canada: International Development Cooperation policies and programmes. Opportunities for Latin America and the Caribbean,](#)" prepared by SELA. He summed up the relevance of the analysis of economic relations between Canada and Latin America and the Caribbean and listed a set of actions that could be pondered in order to pave the way for stronger cooperation relations.

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4. The Chairman presented the draft agenda for the Seminar, which was adopted without changes and enclosed herewith as Annex N° 1. The draft agenda, the base document and the presentations are available on SELA's Website at www.sela.org.

A. CONDUCTION OF THE SEMINAR

The Seminar was presided over by His Excellency Ambassador Jorge Alvarado. During the seminar, the following presentations were made:

5. The Permanent Secretariat of SELA presented the document "[Canada: International Development Cooperation policies and programmes. Opportunities for Latin America and the Caribbean.](#)" The presentation was made by Ana Mercedes Castellanos, Technical Coordinator of the Permanent Secretariat, who listed, among others, the following issues: trade relations and foreign direct investments (FDI) between Canada and Latin America and the Caribbean, revealing the position of some countries in the region as suppliers and markets for Canada in 2010; the FDI of Canada in Latin America and the Caribbean; Canada's international cooperation: principles, guidelines, and priority sectors and countries. Next, she summed up the single cooperation policy of Canada towards the countries in the region, the guidelines of such cooperation and its three mainstays: democratic governance, wealth and security. Shortly after, she commented the Official Development Assistance (ODA) of Canada with special reference to Latin America and the Caribbean. Lastly, she highlighted some steps to be taken in order to delve into cooperation between Canada and Latin American and Caribbean nations.

Canada's perspective on its economic and cooperation relations with Latin America and the Caribbean

6. Mr. Guy Edmond Salesse, Commerce and Economic Counsellor of the Canadian Embassy in Venezuela, made the presentation: "[Canada's perspective on its economic and cooperation relations with Latin America and the Caribbean.](#)" He gave a historical review of the economic relations of Canada with the countries in the region, particularly with the Caribbean. He explained the current trends of such relations; highlighted some socio-economic features shared with the countries in the region and wrapped up the prospects for Canada's commitment to the Latin American and Caribbean community based on strategies aimed at: strengthening democratic governance; increasing wealth, and furthering security.

7. The Chairman congratulated and thanked speakers for their presentations and invited the representatives of SELA Member States to give their opinions.

8. The delegation of Peru voiced concern, because after 15 years of mining investment by Canada in Peru, people were at odds with the performance of mining companies. He advised on the need to pay closer attention to such situations and asked Mr. Salesse for his opinion.

9. The delegation of Canada answered that the development of mining activities has not been easy due to several structural events and an adverse environment. Such circumstances are jointly studied by the Canadian party and Peruvian authorities to make the appropriate corrections.

10. The delegation of Peru attested to the existence of the aforementioned troubles and added that, in furtherance of a win-win situation, it is time to boost specific solutions based on the yield of cooperation.

11. The delegation of Ecuador expressed interest in the emphasis made by the document submitted by the Permanent Secretariat on the need to align the interests of Latin America and the Caribbean with the interests of Canada. They informed that UNASUR was dealing with the issue of losing territorial production capacity as a result of freer financial markets and the subsequent risk of losing jobs by wide segments of the population in the countries of the region. They added that, according to statistics, free trade has not contributed to the economic growth of Latin America and the Caribbean. On the contrary, it has reduced the GDP growth rate in the region as a whole. They averred that trade relations should help develop the production capacity of the countries, and the big challenge is turning foreign trade into a tool for economic, social and cultural development of Latin American and Caribbean nations. Finally, they queried the representatives of Canada about their view of potential talks to ensure the transfer of territorial production capacity to Latin American and Caribbean countries and trade relations which go beyond trade in final goods and encourage self-regulated trade of technical cooperation, services and intermediate products without harming the countries in the region.

12. The delegation of Canada declared that their country had signed Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with Peru, Mexico and Colombia, and all of them have brought substantial benefits to the parties. They stressed the importance of developing scale economies to facilitate integration.

13. The delegation of Mexico recalled that before the current North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), Mexico-Canada relations were distant, that such treaties do not bear fruit all of a sudden and that, in the case of Mexico, the fruits were ripe 15 years after the implementation of the NAFTA. They avowed that Mexican exports to Canada have been taking root and it is a matter of identifying niches, such as the air-space industry. They underscored that such relations cannot be reversed, that there is the need to keep on moving and transcend trade in goods and services with cooperation as the ultimate goal. Lastly, they reiterated that the NAFTA helped multiply and diversify economic, trade and business bilateral relations that used to be very distant and restricted.

14. The delegation of Canada commented that on thanks to the FTAs there is overall free trade and that such treaties include other items in addition to trade issues. For instance, the Canada-Colombia agreement contemplates investment protection, double taxation, labour protection and environmental protection, among others.

15. The delegation of Cuba conceded that Canada had taken a most favourable stance in support of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) with a good outcome and strongly recommended further support to the countries of the region in the fight against poverty. Lastly, they wondered if Canada had thought about triangular cooperation in health and education.

16. The delegation of Canada replied that human development is Canada's goal. Therefore, health and education are in line with the Canadian policy of international cooperation. They called upon the Permanent Secretariat of SELA to elaborate on this matter.

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17. The Permanent Secretariat granted that the outlook is positive. Notwithstanding, this relies on the behaviour of the global economy, because if donor countries are to have fewer resources available, allocations for cooperation will lessen as well. It cited the case of Spain. The fourth world donor will likely curtail its aid like other European countries that have been stricken by the economic crisis. As for Canada, since it has not undergone the crisis suffered by Europe, it will have resources available to invest in such cooperation. Furthermore, Canada's potential pull-out from Afghanistan would release additional resources for such purpose. The Permanent Secretariat advised on the need to spur triangular cooperation and stated that one of the recommendations made in the base document of the Seminar is precisely bolstering partnership between regional donors and Canada to power the growth of Latin American and Caribbean nations.

18. The delegate of Guyana praised the organization of the Seminar. He remarked that Latin American and Caribbean countries should learn a lot from Canada and that Canada could assist them in their foreign debt and ranking as middle-income countries. As regards foreign debt, he exemplified the willingness and capacity of Canada to lend a hand. He recounted how Canada helped restructure Guyana's foreign debt as a middleman before the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).

Next, he referred to document entitled: ["Perspectives of Regional Organizations on the Trade Relations between Latin America and the Caribbean and Canada: Current and Future Status."](#) Study prepared by the Secretariat of CARICOM, Office of Trade Negotiations (SP/SRREECALC/DI N° 9-12). He retorted that the classification of Caribbean nations as middle-income hindered borrowing because of high interest rates. In his view, Canada could act as middleman to help them overcome this trouble. Lastly, he reported on the negotiation of a Canada-CARICOM FTA and cautioned that such treaty under no circumstances whatsoever should rely fully and strictly on the principle of reciprocity, because Caribbean nations are less economically developed countries. Therefore, preferential treatment should be afforded to them. He added that his Government was confident that Canada would find the path towards the necessary consensus for a settlement based on the mutual benefit of the parties but with a non-reciprocal treatment in specific areas. Finally, he stressed that the Canada-CARICOM Treaty must be based, primarily, on development and not on the principle of reciprocity.

19. The delegation of Mexico referred to the remarks made by the Cuban representative about triangular cooperation. In this regard, they notified that in 2011, Mexico had established the Mexican Agency for International Cooperation and urged several counterparts, including the Canadian agency, to bring forward their policies and cooperation strategies. Talks included triangular cooperation to assist Central America and the Caribbean in the technical-scientific field.

20. The delegation of Ecuador referred to what they called the arbitrary classification of countries according to their income by the World Bank; they stressed the mismatches of such classification and pointed to the need of taking into account regional unbalances. They reckoned that, rather than market access, the point at issue is inequity. To find a solution, they emphasized, it is necessary to meet needs instead of interests. In this regard, they suggested that the protection of the territorial production capacity of Latin American and Caribbean countries should be the cornerstone of internal integration and Latin American and Caribbean links with northern and Asian countries.

21. The delegate of Bolivia queried the Canadian speaker about the balance of the Canada-Latin America and Caribbean relationship with an emphasis on Mexico. He mentioned some negative issues that, according to some comments, were present early

in the NAFTA. Next, he wondered about the nature of Canada's aid to Afghanistan and delved on data disclosed by the speaker as regards Canada-Venezuela trade. In his view, all the listed items seemed to show unfavourable balance for Venezuela. Finally, he asked the speaker about the meaning of governance for Canada.

22. The Canadian Ambassador answered that the FTAs have been aimed at a fairer relationship and have brought along mutual benefits. He advocated the outcome of the FTAs and noted that they are not limited to trade. He stressed the non-commercial aspects of such treaties, making special emphasis on related investments. As regards Canada-Venezuela trade, it is a mutually beneficial relationship and includes added-value goods, such as the petrochemical products exported by Venezuela to Canada. With regard to Afghanistan, Canada's assistance is actually aid for development, including training programmes. On human rights and governance, he clarified that both subjects could be expressed in several ways and should be tackled with humbleness. He admitted that Canada faces troubles related to human rights with indigenous peoples and vowed his country is working on it. Lastly, he referred to Canada-Cuba joint endeavours on governance.

23. The delegation of Mexico informed that, at the outset, the NAFTA resulted in a loss-making balance of trade for Mexico. However, this was not an issue to reformulate the relationship. Today, the balance is tipped in favour of Mexico. They underscored that the FTA is not responsible for poverty or agricultural problems in Mexico

24. With regard to Venezuela-Canada bilateral relations, the delegation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela stressed the need not to limit them to trade, but embrace a wider, more complex context encompassing some other elements, namely, Venezuela's foreign policy, the Economic and Social Development Country Plan or Plan Simon Bolívar 2007-2012 and the political positions of individual countries on the items in the global agenda.

They noted that discussions bore witness to the existence of two different cooperation schemes in the region. They stressed the importance of the new South-South Cooperation scheme, which proposes a critical approach of neoliberal globalization and avows to the need of breaking with the traditional trade scheme based on a fictional free market. They remembered that South-South Cooperation is premised on the principles of solidarity, complementarity and equality. In order to make structural changes and build a system of relations necessary to attain the regional comprehensive development, this scheme is horizontal and bears in mind the strengths and assets of individual countries. They proclaimed that the most important and successful expressions of such cooperation are the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America-Peoples' Trade Agreement (ALBA-TCP), the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), Petrocaribe and, most recently, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC). Lastly, they upheld that Venezuela is at odds with FTAs because they fail to meet the needs of the region and are just neoliberal recipes, the implementation of which caused a big gap among Latin American and Caribbean peoples.

25. The Chairman thanked the participants for their remarks and gave the floor to the speakers of the following subject.

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Review of economic and cooperation relations between Canada and Latin America and the Caribbean

26. Mr. Félix González Sáenz, Director of International Economic Analysis and Economic Relations with North America, Secretariat of Foreign Affairs of Mexico, made a presentation entitled "[Cooperación y relaciones económicas de México con Canadá](#)" ([Cooperation and economic relations between Mexico and Canada](#))

27. Ms. Ariel Bowen, representative of the Bilateral Relations Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Jamaica, made the presentation entitled "[La situación actual y las perspectivas de las relaciones económicas entre Jamaica y Canadá](#)" ([Current status and prospects of economic relations between Jamaica and Canada](#)).

28. The ECLAC Executive Secretariat gave a teleconference, the major items of which were as follows:

The Executive Secretariat elaborated on the relations between Canada and Latin America and the Caribbean. It highlighted that such relations are not limited to trade, investments and economic cooperation, but also mean a significant contribution of Canada to the institutions of the inter-American system, such as the Organization of American States, the Pan-American Health Organisation and the Inter-American Development Bank, as well as summits and peace talks.

As regards trade, it recalled that relations date back to many years ago and have yielded preferential access of the Caribbean to Canada. Furthermore, it listed as milestones in such relations the FTA among Mexico, the United States and Canada in 1994, the Canada-Chile FTA, the Costa Rica-Canada FTA, other treaties bolstered by Canada over the past few years with Colombia, Peru and Panama, and on-going talks with Central American nations.

29. The Chairman thanked the speakers for their presentations and forthwith gave the floor to the delegates.

30. The delegation of Ecuador asked Ms. Ariel Bowen to explain the difference between the agreements on cooperation for development and the FTAs that CARICOM is discussing with Canada. They also requested Mr. Félix González Sáenz to list the areas of interest in the region shared by Mexico and Canada.

31. Ms. Bowen informed that she was not an expert on trade relations with Canada, in particular, and that she actually requested the representative of Ecuador to repeat his question. She added that she would be happy to answer other questions relating to the presentation.

32. Mr. Félix González Sáenz, in reply to the question of the representative of Ecuador, informed that the focus of Mexico-Canada cooperation is the technical-scientific area, and could be extended by means of triangular cooperation to some countries in the region.

33. The delegation of Mexico made some reflections and asked several questions to Mr. Félix González Sáenz and the Canadian Ambassador on the following subjects: Labour mobility; they asked how could the experience of Mexico and Jamaica in this regard help other Latin American and Caribbean countries? Could the Agreement of Agricultural

Workers be a model for some countries in the region? Triangular cooperation, specifically Canada-Mexico cooperation: Is there any sector where the countries of the region can cooperate by these means? FTAs, bearing in mind short-term conflicts and potential long-term benefits: Are FTAs advisable? Or, rather, are regional models such as CELAC more appropriate? What is the alternative, FTAs or direct cooperation, such as the existing one in South America?

With regard to diversification versus trade concentration, attention was drawn to the issue of mustard, 100% focused in Canada, with no benefit for the buying country. Lastly, which sectors of industrialized countries could invest properly upon the acceptance and consensus of recipient countries?

34. The Canadian Ambassador replied that, as regards labour mobility, there is a programme under way which allows foreign workers to be admitted in specific seasons of the year, in selected sectors. The programme has run smoothly. However, he did not know about any plans to extend it to foreign countries. This, to his mind, would be worthwhile to consider.

He related that triangular cooperation is being discussed with Central American nations and there is willingness to ponder other choices. Concerning FTAs, he commented that related studies have been conducted on issues such as benefited sectors, non-benefited sectors and domestic policies to help workers cope with the after-effects. In terms of trade concentration, he admitted that the case of mustard should be revised. Finally, he underlined that Venezuela exports more to Canada. This cannot be regarded as negative per se, because the aim, he noted, is tightening ties among countries beyond a mere trade exchange.

35. The delegate of Guyana asserted that Canada is an example of a country developing in parallel with its trade relations, which go beyond the extent of trade. He recalled that the representative of Jamaica had talked about the diaspora of Jamaicans, other Caribbean peoples and even Latin Americans, to Canada. He added that Jamaica has exported labour and skills to Canada, a country that needs at least 300,000 people a year in order not to arrest the country development. For this reason, the benefit of such labour for Canada should be underlined. He claimed that, at the end of the day, Guyana is contributing more to Canada than Canada to Guyana. It is not a problem per se and not a subject of discussion, but should be duly valued. Finally, he reiterated his view of Canada as a wonderful country from which Latin America and the Caribbean can learn a lot. Therefore, there is the need to foster closer relations between Latin American and Caribbean nations and Canada. Lastly, he stressed that fully reciprocal trade relations are not possible.

36. The delegation of Venezuela referred to the remarks on triangular cooperation and requested information on its implementation in the region. Also, they reported on the establishment of the Economy and International Cooperation Department at the Venezuelan Foreign Ministry. They notified that the new agency is ready to explore the experiences recorded in the field of triangular cooperation in Latin American and Caribbean nations.

37. The Chairman expressed gratitude for the remarks made during the debate and requested the Permanent Secretariat to submit the draft conclusions and recommendations.

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B. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The delegations participating in the Regional Seminar on the Economic Relations between Latin America and the Caribbean and Canada, held at the headquarters of SELA on 30 March 2012, adopted the following conclusions and recommendations:

1. In the last few years, the economic relations between Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) and Canada have experienced a positive trend. Thanks to their economic and social policies, both parties have been able to successfully overcome the effects of the global financial crisis and the resulting economic downturn, and have been able to maintain mutual exchanges at positive levels.
2. Within this context, the Seminar endorsed the concept that in view of its prospects for growth, Latin America and the Caribbean is a trading partner "with greater purchasing power, resistant to external shocks, with more solid and less uncertain expectations for growth", as reflected by its growing share in Canadian exports and foreign direct investment (FDI).
3. Similarly, participants noted that the margin for expanding the participation of Latin America and the Caribbean in the Canadian market is significant, and that it is advisable to continue and strengthen efforts to increase such participation in order to make it reach its full potential.
4. Since its launch in 2007, Canada has maintained its commitment to democracy, prosperity and security in Latin America and the Caribbean, despite difficulties. Its "Long-Range Economic Strategy" is aimed at expanding economic links with the region through trade and investment. Standing out in this context are the Free Trade Agreements already signed with Mexico (NAFTA), Chile, Peru, Colombia, Costa Rica and Panama, as well as those being negotiated, or under review, with the countries of Central America and the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR), in addition to the Agreement on Trade and Development under negotiation with the Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).
5. There was an important exchange of views as regards Free Trade Agreements, emphasizing, on the one hand, that their impact should be assessed in a long term perspective and on whether or not they serve to diversify the economies and imprint dynamism to them. On the other hand, it was noted that such agreements do not substitute national economic and social development policies or international development cooperation efforts. While recognizing the special attention that Canada has lent to achieving this objective in the agreements that it has signed with the countries of the region, it was deemed necessary for both parties to maintain a comprehensive perspective of mutual benefit.
6. In this connection, some countries recalled the negative experiences with the liberalization of their economies, proving that not all countries considered the formula of FTAs to be the most appropriate or the most beneficial one to boost economic exchanges. This contrasts with a more desirable development-centred approach in promoting economic exchanges in mutual relations schemes.
7. Particularly, in reviewing the experiences of the Member States of CARICOM, as pointed out in the study prepared by the Office of Trade Negotiations of the

CARICOM Secretariat,¹ it was clear that it is advisable to overcome constraints to the scope of the *Trade and Economic Development Assistance Programme* adopted in 1986 by Canada, in order to include a dimension for economic and technical cooperation to foster development and establish a sound and predictable basis for liberalization of trade in goods and services and for a sustainable increase in reciprocal direct investments. In this regard, participants took note of the progress made in the negotiations between CARICOM and Canada to replace such Programme in line with these parameters and to ensure its compatibility with the parties' multilateral obligations within the World Trade Organization (WTO) before December 2013, when the waiver to the application of the Most Favoured Nation clause, which temporarily protects such programme, will expire.

8. In view of Canada's policy precedents and current status, participants recognized that the country is ideally positioned to further strengthen its links with the region through its international cooperation policy, taking into account, in particular, its commitment to earmark 0.7% of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for Official Development Assistance (ODA).

Member States were invited to analyze the potential of Canada's cooperation for development beyond ODA and the federal government, recalling the role of provinces and the civil society in assistance and cooperation flows and in enhancing and strengthening the relationship.

9. However, despite the upward trend of ODA and the significant levels of trade and investment relations of Canada with Latin America and the Caribbean, such assistance aimed at the region accounts for only 20% of the total ODA reported by Canada, being significantly surpassed by Asia and Africa.
10. As a result of the changes in legislation and agreements within the context of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Canada's international development cooperation has focused its efforts on providing assistance to a small number of countries in the region, making emphasis on those countries in greatest need for poverty and inequality reduction (Bolivia, Colombia, Haiti, Honduras, Peru and the Caribbean subregion).
11. In addition, it was noted that, although priority issues of the Canadian International Development Cooperation largely meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), they are focused on a smaller number of areas. Among them, the following priorities stand out: democratic governance, economic growth, childhood and youth, local projects, humanitarian assistance and natural and man-made disasters.
12. In the general context of economic and cooperation relations between Latin America and the Caribbean and Canada, participants stressed the advisability of establishing a thematic agenda between the parties that enables them to reach a consensus on the development needs of the region and to strengthen economic and cooperation relations between the Member States of SELA and Canada through dialogue and consultation. Among the topics mentioned in this

¹ [Perspectives of Regional Organizations on the Trade Relations between Latin America and the Caribbean and Canada: Current and Future Status. Study prepared by the Secretariat of CARICOM, Office of Trade Negotiations \(SP/SRREECALC/DI N° 9-12\).](#)

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regard are human development, vulnerability to natural disasters, the debt-overhang, special and differential treatment and non-reciprocity, access to preferential financing, capacity building, mobility of human resources and triangular cooperation.

13. Participants took note of the activities suggested by the Permanent Secretariat of SELA in the base document "*Canada: international development cooperation policies and programmes. Opportunities for Latin America and the Caribbean*" (SP/SRREECALC/DT No. 2-12), Section 5, Recommendations to deepen cooperation.
14. In particular, taking into account the various experiences and views analyzed during the Seminar, participants agreed to request the Permanent Secretariat to identify, in consultation with its Member States, regional and subregional proposals for cooperation with Canada in specific areas, and to keep them informed of the evolution of economic and cooperation relations between the countries of the region and Canada.
15. In this connection, participants considered that an area that should be explored is how triangular cooperation with partner countries in LAC could complement cooperation with Canada, both with those countries identified as priority countries as well as others that have not been so classified. The establishment of cooperation partnerships with LAC countries may be ideal for exploring ways to further enhance capacity-building and attention to vulnerable sectors of the population, particularly women, youth and children. LAC countries can develop a richer agenda through new forms of joint collaboration. This might be a good manner to pursue the accomplishment of the Millennium Development Goals by the year 2015.
16. Participants agreed to submit these Conclusions and Recommendations to the Latin American Council.

CLOSING SESSION

a) The Chairman thanked the delegates for their participation and expressed his conviction that the recommendations of the Seminar would guide SELA and its Member States in their decisions with regard to trade relations with Canada. He highlighted the contribution of the speakers, whose presentations and remarks enhanced the discussions.

b) His Excellency Ambassador of Canada reiterated its appreciation and gratitude to SELA for organizing the Seminar and thanked the delegates for their participation. He said that strong historical ties link Canada and some countries of Latin America and the Caribbean and that a process of rapprochement between his country and Latin American and Caribbean nations is currently under way. He recognized that there are different ideas with regard to how such ties should be channelled and developed, but the most important thing is the willingness of both Latin America and the Caribbean and Canada to take advantage of trade exchanges and develop mechanisms that go beyond the purely commercial matter.

Finally, he noted that Canadian cooperation is always referred to as related to the federal agency for development or other Canadian institutions that are funding cooperation projects; however, it should be noted that the way Canada can cooperate

with Latin American and Caribbean countries goes beyond trade and may be defined as aid for development.

c) Ambassador José Rivera Banuet thanked the Ambassador of Canada and his delegation for their presence and active participation. He considered the Ambassador's remarks and guidelines of great value for future work, which is expected to improve and promote economic, trade and cooperation relations between Canada and Latin America and the Caribbean. He underlined the exchange of experiences during presentations and discussions, and expressed his gratitude and appreciation to the representatives of SELA Member States and the speakers for their participation in the Seminar. Finally, he asserted that the Permanent Secretariat will continue to analyze the issue and keep track of economic, trade and cooperation relations between Latin America and the Caribbean and Canada, in compliance with the mandates of the Latin American Council.

A N N E X I

Agenda

**Regional Seminar on Economic Relations between Canada
and Latin America and the Caribbean**
SELA, Caracas, 30 March 2012

I. INTRODUCTION

The XXXVII Regular Meeting of the Latin American Council, carried out in the headquarters of the Permanent Secretariat of SELA from 19 to 21 October 2011, approved the Work Programme for the year 2012. Area III of said programme, "Extra-Regional Relations", foresees Activity III.1.2, "Analysis and preparation of policy proposals to promote economic relations between Latin America and the Caribbean and Canada."

According to this mandate, SELA is convening the *Regional Seminar on Economic Relations between Canada and Latin America and the Caribbean*, to be held on 30 March 2012 in Caracas, Venezuela.

II. OBJECTIVES

1. Identify key trends characterizing the economic relations between Canada and Latin America and the Caribbean at present and the main areas or sectors of interest to the region as regards its external relations with Canada.
2. Analyze and prepare policy proposals in order to give a boost to the economic relations between Canada and Latin America and the Caribbean, with special emphasis on the need for stronger commercial, financial and cooperation links, as well as the modalities for the adoption of said policies.
3. Contribute to the exchange of information and ideas on the prospects for the economic relations between Canada and Latin America and the Caribbean and their future consolidation.

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III. AGENDA

Morning

8:30 am. – 9: 00 am Registration

9:00 am. – 9: 30 am **Opening session**

- Speech by His Excellency Jorge Alvarado Rivas, Ambassador of the Plurinational State of Bolivia and Chairman of the Latin American Council
- Speech by His Excellency Pablo Gibbard, Ambassador of Canada in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela
- Speech by Ambassador José Rivera Banuet, Permanent Secretary of SELA

PRESENTATIONS

Presiding: His Excellency Jorge Alvarado Rivas, Ambassador of the Plurinational State of Bolivia and Chairman of the Latin American Council

9:30 am – 10:00 am Presentation of the document prepared by the Permanent Secretariat **"Canada: International Development Cooperation policies and programmes. Opportunities for Latin America and the Caribbean "**

- Permanent Secretariat

10:00 am – 10:50 am **Canada's perspective on its economic and cooperation relations with Latin America and the Caribbean**

- Guy Edmond Salesse, Commerce and Economic Counsellor of the Canadian Embassy in Venezuela

10:50 am –11:15 am Questions and Answers

11:15 am –11:30 am Coffee break

11:30 am –12:30 pm **Review on the economic and cooperation relations between Canada and Latin America and the Caribbean**

- Félix González Sáenz, Director, International Economic Analysis and Economic Relations with North America. Secretariat of Foreign Affairs, Mexico.
- Ariel Bowen, Assistant Director, Bilateral Relations Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade. Jamaica
- Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)
- Caribbean Community (CARICOM)

- 12:30 am – 1:00 pm Debate among the representatives of the Member States of SELA
- 1:00 pm – 1:30 pm **Conclusions and recommendations**
- Permanent Secretariat of SELA
- 1:30 pm – 2:00 pm **Closing session**
- Speech by His Excellency Jorge Alvarado Rivas, Ambassador of the Plurinational Republic of Bolivia and Chairman of the Latin American Council
 - Speech by His Excellency Pablo Gibbard, Ambassador of Canada in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela
 - Speech by Ambassador José Rivera Banuet, Permanent Secretary of SELA

A N N E X I I

**Speech by His Excellency Jorge Alvarado Rivas, Ambassador of the Plurinational
State of Bolivia and Chairman of the Latin American Council**

His Excellency Paul Gibbard, Ambassador of Canada in Venezuela;

His Excellency Ambassador José Rivera Banuet, Permanent Secretary of SELA;

Distinguished Ambassadors and delegates of SELA Member States;

Representatives of international and regional organizations accredited to Venezuela

Ladies and gentlemen:

On behalf of the Latin American Council, I warmly welcome you to this Seminar on economic relations between Canada and Latin America and the Caribbean. Canada has been supporting the region not only in the economic area but also in the scientific and technological fields. This Seminar is a very good opportunity to make a diagnosis and analyze the prospects for economic relations between Canada and Latin American and Caribbean countries based on different experiences and points of view.

We may have confidence that the debates and conclusions of the Seminar would be particularly useful to boost economic relations between Canada and Latin America and the Caribbean in their path to mutual benefit and growth.

Thank you very much

A N N E X I I I

**Speech by His Excellency Pablo Gibbard,
Ambassador of Canada in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela**

His Excellency Jorge Alvarado Rivas, Ambassador of the Plurinational State of Bolivia and Chairman of the Latin American Council of SELA;

Ambassadors and other representatives of SELA Member States,

Senior officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela;

His Excellency Ambassador José Rivera Banuet, Permanent Secretary of SELA,

Special guests, ladies and gentlemen:

I am pleased that you have decided to focus this session on the issue of trade and cooperation with Canada.

Canada seeks to strengthen comprehensive relations with Latin America and the Caribbean. Since the colonial era, the Caribbean has been of great importance to Canada. We are united by family, commercial and language ties, as well as forms of government, such as the parliamentary democracy.

Since the middle of the last century, particularly since 1990 when we joined the OAS, Latin America has been of increasing significance to Canada. The region of Latin America and the Caribbean has been designated by our Government as a priority of our foreign policy.

Canada has three major approaches in its foreign policy toward the region: prosperity, security and democracy. We have much to learn and hopefully to share.

Our commerce and economic counsellor, Guy Salesse, will enter into further detail in his presentation, but I would like to emphasize some elements of the Canadian model and experience.

We are a parliamentary democracy. We have an economy open to the world with a very strong social commitment, such as universal access to health services and high-quality education. A strong economy allows us to finance these social programmes.

We have negotiated free trade agreements with several countries of the continent. From our point of view, these agreements have been essential to ensure an equitable and fair exchange, including in particular with our largest partners.

The high degree of participation of Canadians in the political and economic life is also an essential part of our model and experience. To give an example, one of every four Canadians is a member of a cooperative. We see the Government's role, including in our foreign policy, as creating the framework to enable individuals, businesses and organizations to develop strong ties for mutual benefit.

I hope that our presentation will help promote a positive exchange not only today, but also in the future.

**Speech by Ambassador José Rivera Banuet,
Permanent Secretary of SELA**

His Excellency Jorge Alvarado Rivas, Ambassador of the Plurinational State of Bolivia and Chairman of the Latin American Council of SELA;

His Excellency Pablo Gibbard, Ambassador of Canada in Venezuela;

Distinguished Ambassadors and delegates from SELA Member States;

Honourable representatives of international and regional organizations accredited to Venezuela;

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am very pleased to warmly welcome you to the headquarters of our institution on the occasion of this Regional Seminar on the Economic Relations between Canada and Latin America and the Caribbean, which is certainly a unique event for our organization as it marks the first time that SELA will be discussing this topic in its 36 years of existence.

The participation of Mr. Paul Gibbard, Ambassador of Canada, in this opening session is highly appreciated, and I hold no doubts that his remarks will be of particular interest for the deliberations that our Member States will be conducting.

This event was included in the Work Programme of SELA in accordance with a Decision adopted by our Member States at the latest Regular Meeting of the Latin American Council, held in October 2011.

By conducting this activity, SELA intends to provide an adequate space for the discussion of the different perspectives and facilitate the exchange of experiences among countries, while also contributing to the development of regional initiatives to promote an effective insertion of our countries in the international scene and the consolidation of strategies designed to achieve economic development with social inclusion.

Our Member States have acknowledged the need for SELA to analyze the economic relations between Canada and our region, particularly in light of the global economic crisis, to be consistent with the expressed intention to expand and strengthen their relationship in the future.

The objectives on which this seminar's deliberations will focus are:

1. Determine the current status of economic relations between Canada and Latin America and the Caribbean and the main areas of interest.
2. Consider proposals to boost biregional economic relations and modalities for their adoption.
3. Exchange views on the prospects for these relations and their consolidation.

As a contribution to the discussions among participants in this event, the Permanent Secretariat prepared the document "Canada: International Development Cooperation policies and programmes. Opportunities for Latin America and the Caribbean."

It is important that Latin American and Caribbean countries go deep into the analysis of their economic and cooperation relations with Canada, taking into consideration that this country is part of our hemisphere; has taken various actions for cooperation; has signed

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various free trade agreements with some of our countries and is expected to signed some others under development; has increased foreign direct investments; and, above all, has expressed the desire to deepen this partnership.

Expectations of economic growth for our region are favourable at the start of this year. In order to take advantage of the situation, the countries should adopt monetary and fiscal policies to stimulate the economic activity, while alleviating poverty and lags in spending on welfare through the intensification of social programmes and projects.

These expectations will be strengthened through actions aimed at stimulating growth in trade and investment in our region.

In this connection, we, in Latin America and the Caribbean, are striving to achieve an increasingly dynamic, equitable and egalitarian trade among us, as a way of strengthening our position vis-à-vis extra-regional nations.

We believe that there are important spaces to promote relations between our region and Canada, particularly if we consider that resources allocated to Latin America and the Caribbean represent just 20% of the total official assistance for development reported by Canada.

As regards exports from Canada to Latin America and the Caribbean, they accounted for 3% of total Canadian exports for 2010. As for imports, our region is now more relevant, representing 9.5%.

As for Canadian Foreign Direct Investments in Latin America and the Caribbean, they totalled US\$ 150 billion in accumulated stock of Canadian FDI worldwide in 2010, representing 24% of the nation's investment.

Among actions that could be considered in order to create better conditions for cooperation relations with Canada are:

1. Arrange seminars between cooperation agencies in Latin America and the Caribbean and the Canadian International Development Agency.
2. Identify and promote access to new sources of financing for the development of cooperation programmes by Canada; and
3. Further promote economic opportunities, trade facilitation and investments.

It is of the utmost importance to further analyze future bilateral relations, while assessing the possible implications of Canada's cooperation and foreign policy decisions on Latin American and Caribbean nations.

While asserting the usefulness of the discussions to take place in this Seminar, I wish you all success in the activities scheduled for the event.

Thank you very much.

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A N N E X V I

List of Documents

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| SP/SRREECALC/DT N° 1-12/Rev.1 | Agenda |
| SP/SRREECALC/DT/ N° 2-12 | Base document: <i>Canada: International Development Cooperation policies and programmes. Opportunities for Latin America and the el Caribbean</i> |
| SP/SRREECALC/Di N° 1-12 | Speech by Ambassador José Rivera Banuet, Permanent Secretary of the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA) |
| SP/SRREECALC/Di N° 2-12 | Speech by His Excellency Jorge Alvarado Rivas, Ambassador of the Plurinational State of Bolivia and Chairman of the Latin American Council |
| SP/ SRREECALC/Di N° 3-12 | Speech by His Excellency Pablo Gibbard, Ambassador of Canada in Venezuela |
| SP/SRREECALC/Di N° 4-12 | Presentation of the document entitled <i>Canada: International Development Cooperation policies and programmes. Opportunities for Latin America and the el Caribbean</i> Ana Mercedes Castellanos, SELA |
| SP/SRREECALC/Di N° 5-12 | Presentation entitled <i>La perspectiva canadiense con respecto a sus relaciones económicas y de cooperación con ALC (Canada's perspective on its economic and cooperation relations with Latin America and the Caribbean)</i> Guy Edmon Salesse, Commerce and Economic Counsellor of the Canadian Embassy in Venezuela |
| SP/ SRREECALC/Di N° 6-12 | Presentation entitled <i>Examen de las relaciones económicas y de cooperación entre Canadá y América Latina (Review on the economic and cooperation relations between Canada and Latin America and the Caribbean)</i> Félix González Sáenz, Director of International Economic Analysis and Economic Relations with North America. Secretariat of Foreign Affairs, Mexico |

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| SP/SRREECALC/Di N° 7-12 | Presentation entitled <i>Current status and prospects of economic relations between Jamaica and Canada</i> Ariel Bowen, Assistant Director, Bilateral Relations Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Jamaica |
| SP/SRREECALC/Di N° 8-12 | Presentation by Ms. Inés Bustillo, Director of the ECLAC Office in Washington |
| SP/SRREECALC/Di N° 9-12 | Document prepared by the CARICOM Secretariat Office of Trade Negotiations: <i>Perspectives of Regional Organizations on the Trade Relations between Latin America and the Caribbean and Canada: Current and Future Status</i> |
| SP/SRREECALC/Di N°10-12 | List of Documents |
| SP/SRREECALC/CR-12 | Conclusions and Recommendations |
| SP/SRREECALC/IF-12-Rev. 1 | Final Report |