

DECISION N° 493

WORK PROGRAMME OF THE PERMANENT SECRETARIAT FOR THE YEAR 2009

THE LATIN AMERICAN COUNCIL,

HAVING SEEN:

Article 15, paragraph 6, of the Panama Convention, and

The document "Draft Work Programme of the Permanent Secretariat for the year 2009" (SP/CL/XXXIV.O/DT N° 4-08).

CONSIDERING:

The contents and spirit of Decision N° 440, adopted by the Latin American Council at its XXVIII Regular Meeting, held in Caracas in April 2003.

DECIDES:

Article 1. To approve the Work Programme of the Permanent Secretariat of SELA for the year 2009.

Article 2. In executing its Work Programme, the Permanent Secretariat shall take into account the discussions, proposals and conclusions of this meeting on this subject.

Article 3. The Work Programme of the Permanent Secretariat for the year 2009 should be implemented in a flexible enough manner so as to enable the Permanent Secretary to adjust the contents and schedule for implementation, in consultation with the Member States, of those priority activities and initiatives aimed at strengthening SELA's activities within the region, as well as those initiatives that may emerge from the regional and international agenda, which are of interest for the Member States.

**AREA I. INTRA-REGIONAL RELATIONS: Integration and development policies
in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)****PROJECT I.1. Latin American and Caribbean integration challenges. Coordination
and convergence challenges and treatment of asymmetries**

The objectives of this project are:

1. To support efforts to accomplish the gradual coordination and convergence of the various integration processes existing in the region.
2. To continue with a systematic analysis of the dynamics of regional integration, particularly of the factors directly affecting the level and quality of intra-regional relations.
3. To promote cooperation for integration, by supporting actions that lead to their consolidation, deepening and social projection.
4. To promote an institutional architecture of regional integration that contributes to strengthening it, while ensuring its social projection, coordination and convergence.

These general objectives of the project will be accomplished by executing the three fundamental activities detailed below.

Activity I.1.1 Permanent follow-up of the regional integration process**A. Background and justification**

The Permanent Secretariat of SELA has been conducting systematic analyses of the integration process in the region, covering its main aspects and inter-relations, based on official reports, statistics and studies prepared by the various integration and cooperation bodies of the region, the direct contacts established with them, as well as the reports released by specialized agencies.

In this connection, it should be pointed out that, in 2005, SELA started to gather information and to analyze trade and investment flows among the countries of Central America, the Caribbean and South America. The creation of the Digital Information and Knowledge Centre (CEDIC-SELA) in 2006 – which is regularly updated – has helped to identify the main existing economic links among the countries of the region, which contributes to detecting critical factors for progressing in the convergence and coordination process among the various subregional integration groups.

Since the guidelines for the regional integration and cooperation processes are derived from consultation and coordination with the Heads of State and Government, it is convenient to conduct an analysis of the direction and the implementation of the mandates issued by the Presidential Summits in order to have an updated vision of the regional integration process, which will be provided by the Permanent Secretariat of SELA to its Member States.

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B. Objectives

1. To conduct a permanent analysis of the evolution of integration processes, with emphasis on the regional and subregional levels, while taking into account plurilateral and bilateral developments, in order to gain knowledge about their progress and the obstacles they face.
2. To provide Member States with a timely vision of the challenges faced by regional integration and an appraisal of the actual possibilities for coordination and convergence of the integration processes underway.
3. To keep updated the database on the trade and investment flows among the countries of the Caribbean, Central America and South America, within the framework of CEDIC-SELA.
4. To conduct a follow-up of the agreements and mandates stemming from the various Summits at the regional and subregional levels, by keeping updated information on the subject at CEDIC-SELA.

C. Expected results

1. Preparation of an annual report on the progress of the various integration processes and cooperation programmes that promote integration in all its expressions and scopes.
2. Publication of monthly bulletins on regional integration.
3. Systematization of relevant and timely statistical information by CEDIC-SELA, as well as permanent updating of the database on foreign trade.
4. Regular analysis of the main results of the regional summits that will be held during 2009, and an assessment of their impact on the regional economic integration process.

D. Activities and schedule

Activities	Dates
- Follow-up of the regional integration process	Permanent
- Submittal of final report on regional integration	October 2009
- Preparation of bulletins on the progress of the integration process	Monthly
- Preparation of analytical reports on the results of the regional summits	As convenient

Activity I.1.2 Inter-agency collaboration among Integration and Cooperation Secretariats of the region

A. Background and justification

The present situation and expectations of regional integration amid the new political and economic circumstances faced by the region, as well as the outstanding role assigned by the States Members to SELA as the institution that must prioritize the coordination activities among the various integration and cooperation efforts in the region, substantiate the need to reactivate this mechanism with concrete proposals to promote the necessary inter-agency collaboration.

From 2001 to 2006, inter-agency meetings convened by the General Secretariat of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) were held with the participation of representatives of the ACS, the Andean Community, SICA, SIECA, CARICOM, OECS, ECLAC and SELA. During that period, a series of cooperation programmes were adopted and carried out by those Secretariats.

B. Objective

The main objective of this activity is to strengthen this coordination mechanism in order to support the corresponding integration processes, as well as their coordination and convergence, through of mutual collaboration actions among the various integration and cooperation secretariats of the region.

C. Expected results

Holding of an inter-agency coordination meeting to exchange viewpoints on their corresponding work programmes, to identify possible areas for coordination and cooperation, and to make concrete proposals to the meetings that are convened.

D. Activities and schedule

Activities	Dates
- Preparation of the agenda and documents for the inter-agency coordination meeting	January – March
- Convening of the meeting	April 2009
- Holding of the meeting	July 2009

Activity I.1.3 Regional Meeting on the treatment of asymmetries in the regional integration processes

A. Background and justification

In compliance with the mandates of the Latin American Council, the Permanent Secretariat will continue with its activities aimed at contributing to deepen the convergence and coordination of regional integration and to create an institutional architecture that makes it possible to accomplish this objective.

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Particularly, States Members have urged the Permanent Secretariat to continue making analyses and proposals to foster economic relations among the countries of the region and, specifically, among the various integration schemes so as to attain their convergence. This entails supporting the creation of regulations to promote and allow for cooperation among the various government bodies related to foreign economic policy making in the Member States of SELA.

In this connection, the Permanent Secretariat will focus its activities on the compliance with the recommendations stemming from the "Regional Meeting on the challenges of the coordination and convergence, and the treatment of asymmetries in Latin American and Caribbean integration", held in the headquarters of SELA on 17 September 2008, where the States Members recommended to make analysis and proposals with a regional scope with respect to the treatment of asymmetries in the integration processes in LAC during 2009.

B. Objectives

1. To conduct the necessary analyses as well as consultation and dissemination activities as regards the issue of trade and regulatory convergence and coordination among the various subregional integration schemes, making particular emphasis on the issue of mechanisms for correcting asymmetries.
2. To make strides towards regional coordination of lines of action to design an institutional integration system to promote articulation and convergence and to incorporate mechanisms to correct asymmetries.
3. To hold a regional meeting with the participation of representatives of the Member States of SELA, as well as regional and subregional integration and cooperation organizations in order to conduct specific analysis of the mechanisms applied to deal with asymmetries and to make proposals with a regional scope on this matter.

C. Expected results

1. Preparation of an analytical study on the mechanisms applied by the various subregional integration schemes for the treatment of asymmetries and design of proposals for possible common regulations on this subject with a regional scope
2. Holding a regional consultation meeting with the participation of the Member States and representatives of regional and subregional integration and cooperation organizations on the treatment of asymmetries.
3. Identification of mechanisms and the structural factors that prevent participating countries from taking advantage of the benefits generated by the various existing integration schemes.

D. Activities and schedule

Activities	Dates
- Preparation of terms of reference for the study on the treatment of asymmetries in Latin American and Caribbean integration	February
- Hiring of consultant to conduct the study	March 2009
- Conclusion of the study	June 2009
- Convening of regional consultation meeting	July 2009
- Holding of the meeting	September 2009

PROJECT I.2. Social Dimension of integration in Latin America and the Caribbean

The objectives of this project are:

1. To continue with the update and dissemination of the analyses and the subregional and regional experiences on the social dimension of integration.
2. To identify the most relevant elements that can be incorporated into the various programmes being implemented with respect to the social dimension of integration in the different existing subregional processes.
3. To promote a joint and constructive dialogue on the problems of the social dimension of integration, with the active participation of social organizations as well as representatives of the various subregional integration Secretariats and government officials of Latin America and the Caribbean.
4. Transversalize the analysis and treatment of the social dimension of integration, including the issue of migrations.
5. To support training activities and efforts to strengthen the networks of social organizations and government officials who participate in public policy making for social development and integration.

Activity I.2.1 SELA's Regional Observatory of the Social Dimension of Integration**A. Background and justification**

One of the most debated issues in the Regional Seminar on the Social Dimension of integration in Latin America and the Caribbean – which was held by the Permanent Secretariat of SELA on 16 and 17 July 2008 and was attended by social actors – was the convenience for SELA to turn itself into an important regional observatory by gradually building a Network of Networks on this issue in the region.

With relevant information available, this Observatory will be able to conduct expeditious follow-up of the evolution of the social dimension within the integration processes, making emphasis on incorporating the views of various social actors in designing, implementing and following up integration policies – particularly those related to the area of social development.

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This Regional Observatory will include databases with analytical information and will be updated on a regular basis.

B. Objectives

1. To identify national networks that include governments and social organizations working for development and integration in the region, as well as subregional organizations, which would constitute a network of social actors with a Latin American and Caribbean scope.
2. To generate specific contents and analytical proposals for strengthening the social dimension of integration (targeting areas such as education, health, housing and employment), based on an exchange of information, analyses and views of social organizations and networks interested in the issues of integration and social development.
3. To monitor and to follow up the commitments taken on by the Member States in Summits and international events dealing with social issues.
4. To contribute to strengthening the institutional fabric related to the social dimension of integration in Latin America and the Caribbean.
5. To prepare an annual report – to be drafted by SELA – on the social dimension of integration in Latin America and the Caribbean.

C. Expected results

1. Creation of an Observatory with a regional scope on the social dimension of integration in Latin America and the Caribbean.

D. Activities and schedule

Activities	Dates
To reach agreements on support mechanisms and responsibilities with various regional bodies related to the social dimension of integration.	January - December 2009
To set up the coordinating team	January
To design the Observatory and define its contents	January - April
To review the achievements made in Latin America and the Caribbean	January – April Permanent updating
To start operations in the Observatory	First fortnight of May
To prepare the SELA report on the social dimension	October - November
To submit the report to the Member States and the Latin American Council	Simultaneously with the Latin American Council (November - December 2009)

Activity I.2.2 II Regional Seminar with representatives of social organizations on migrations, particularly the exodus of skilled workers and professionals

A. Background and justification

The successful experience of the Regional Seminar for Consultation held by SELA in July 2008 – in which social organizations exchanged views and defined criteria on the issue of the social dimension of integration – as well as the conclusions and recommendations for the Permanent Secretariat of SELA stemming from the seminar, justify the convenience of planning another event of this type, dealing on this occasion with the issue of migrations, particularly the exodus of skilled workers and professionals (brain drain) towards developed countries.

B. Objectives

The main objectives of the II Regional Seminar are:

1. To continue with the consultation process with social organizations on relevant aspects related to the social dimension of integration.
2. To strengthen the mechanisms for participation of social organizations in the analysis and design of policies and programmes on the social dimension of integration.
3. To identify the mechanisms and programmes applied by the regional integration organizations to support social development in their Member States and, to detect concrete necessities and possible measures in the social area, while dealing with the issue of migrations, particularly, the exodus of skilled workers and professionals (brain drain) to developed countries.
4. To identify innovative experiences and relevant social actors in the national and subregional contexts in order to consider them as part of a regional cooperation programme on the social dimension of integration, as far as migrations are concerned.

C. Expected results

1. Preparation of an analytical document on experiences in the area of migrations, making emphasis on the exodus of skilled workers and professionals from the countries of the region to developed nations.
2. Holding of the II Regional Seminar with representatives of social organizations on the social dimension of integration, this time to deal with the issue of migrations and the exodus of skilled workers and professionals.

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D. Activities and schedule

Activities	Dates
Design of the contents and preparation for the Seminar	February-March
Identification and convening of social organizations and networks (at the regional level) to participate in the seminar	March
Consultations with social organizations and networks (at the regional level) to identify the key topics of the seminar	March
Preparation of an analytical document as the base study for debates during the Seminar	March-May
Holding of the II Regional Seminar (2 days)	First fortnight of June
Preparation of report with the conclusions and recommendations for the Regional Meeting with representatives of the Member States and integration and cooperation organizations	After the Regional Seminar

Activity 1.2.3 III Regional Meeting with representatives of the Member States and organizations on migrations, particularly the exodus of skilled workers and professionals

A. Background and justification

The conclusions and recommendations adopted by the Member States in the II Regional Meeting on the Social Dimension of Integration underscored that SELA must turn itself into the forum for debates and rapprochement at the regional level, which is able to coordinate and to foster exchanges as regards the achievements and lessons learned on social development and the social dimension of integration in Latin America and the Caribbean.

In this connection, the representatives of the Member States decided that the Permanent Secretariat of SELA should continue to conduct analytical and coordination efforts and in order to keep a fluent exchange among governments, similar international organizations, agencies of the United Nations System and representatives of the social organizations of the region, so as to make strides in the area of the social dimension of development and integration in Latin America and the Caribbean, analyzing on this occasion the issue of migrations, particularly the exodus of skilled workers and professionals (brain drain) to developed countries.

This justifies the organization and conduction of the III Regional Meeting on this issue, with the participation of the Member States and the integration organizations.

B. Objectives

1. To analyze the different subregional visions on the main elements related to the issue of migrations.

2. To consider the analyses and proposals of the social organizations of the region on the issue of migrations in public policy making for dealing with the impacts of the exodus of skilled workers and professionals to industrialized countries on development and integration in the region.

C. Expected results

1. Holding of the III Regional Meeting.

D. Activities and schedule

Activities	Dates
Preparation and convening of the Regional Meeting.	April-May
Holding of the Regional Meeting (2 days)	Last week of June
Presentation of the base document and the Final Report.	During the Regional Meeting
Preparation of report with the conclusions and recommendations for the Latin American Council.	After the Regional Meeting

Activity I.2.4 Training workshop for public sector officials in LAC on the social dimension of integration

A. Background and justification

One of the most important challenges in designing coherent policies and programmes to promote the social dimension of integration – as stated during the conduction of the two activities on this issues which were organized by the Permanent Secretariat in July 2008 – is strengthening the institutional capacities and the professional level of the public sector officials in charge of designing, implementing and evaluating social development policies.

For this reason, participants in the Regional Seminar for Consultation with social organizations on the social dimension of integration and in the II Regional Meeting on the Social Dimension of Integration in LAC insisted on the need for SELA to help with the training and technical preparation of government officials on aspects of the social dimension of integration and development.

B. Objectives

1. To support training activities aimed at government officials to face the challenges of the social dimension of integration.
2. To help with the training process of government officials as regards aspects related to the management and implementation of regional initiatives on the social dimension.
3. To promote the design of the region's own methodologies and common indicators to measure the impact of the programmes and policies for social development being implemented, while taking into consideration the characteristics and specific features of the Latin American and Caribbean populations.

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C. Expected results

1. Conduction of a training workshop for strengthening the design, management and evaluation of programmes and policies related to the issue of the social dimension of integration and development in Latin America and the Caribbean.

D. Activities and schedule

Activities	Dates
To coordinate supports and complementarities with regional and subregional organizations	January
Design of contents, methodology, identification of trainers and preparation for the training workshop	February-March
Identification and convening of the officials who will participate in the workshop	March
Holding of the workshop (2 days)	First fortnight of June
Design of methodologies and common management indications for social programmes with a regional scope	During the workshop

Project I.3. Knowledge and ICTs for development and integration in Latin America and the Caribbean

A. Background and justification

Knowledge management, innovation and technology management are becoming increasingly important issues in development models in Latin America and the Caribbean. This emerging trend is based on two premises. On the one hand, knowledge is the basis for innovation, it is at the very core of creation of value, and it is built in a collective way; and on the other hand, technological innovations give a substantial boost to the global economy. Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) provide the material foundations for a new economy – which has an impact on the whole productive and organizational system – and for a new technological and economic paradigm.

Information, knowledge and ICTs are widely recognized as factors that contribute to poverty reduction and, definitely, to the economic and social development of nations and their integration processes. As far as the latter are concerned, the explicit objective would be designing tools for contents management which can provide an answer to problems that are common to all nations regarding sensitive issues such as natural disaster risk, food and water supply, health, education, employment, and fair trade exchanges, among others, and in general, which can contribute to create a basis of information about strategic issues that allows for consolidating a regional knowledge platform to support regional and subregional integration processes in Latin America and the Caribbean.

It is necessary to define a regional vision of development with a strategic orientation that is based on the creation and inclusion of knowledge and ICTs into the productive and social processes, so that Latin America and the Caribbean can satisfactorily face the new global challenges and achieve insertion into the global economy with an advantage. Creation and access to knowledge provide new bases for exercising citizenship and for participation in the economic life and social integration of individuals. This entails opportunities for sustaining growth, encouraging responsible competitiveness and ensuring social prosperity.

The Permanent Secretariat of SELA has continued with a work agenda of an operative nature in the organizational area, and of a strategic nature in the political and social area. The agenda for the organizational area is materialized in the inter-institutional technical cooperation activities to support the development of information and knowledge strategies related to the ICTs, in accordance with strategic decisions and social participation in the Member States. This has been materialized through agreements with other international organizations and inter-institutional agreements with various national agencies. In this organizational area, the Permanent Secretariat has continued to develop an integral platform with relevant information on issues related to technical cooperation, regional integration, poverty reduction, social equity, economic and social development, international trade, as well as intra-regional and extra-regional relations, among others, to serve its States Members.

The agenda in the political and social area – which is closely related to the former agenda – is based on the build-up of inter-institutional synergies on a regional and national scale. In the area of regional integration and cooperation, the Permanent Secretariat will make progress with the initiatives referred to below, which are related to digital integration as a fundamental element to support the cooperation and integration processes in Latin America and the Caribbean.

B. Objectives

1. To analyze critical emerging issues related to access, regulation, privacy, and security of information and the assets of knowledge; thus promoting inter-institutional synergies among the Member States.
2. To outline a work programme to support digital integration in Latin America and the Caribbean in order to promote agreements as regards highly relevant issues such as the production of digital contents based on different technological platforms, while encouraging the use of interactivity, interoperability and standards, and promoting the optimization of processes of generation, retrieval and transfer of relevant information to the integration and regional cooperation efforts.
3. To contribute with the effective accomplishment of the goals defined in the current Regional Action Plan for Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean **eLAC 2010**, related to knowledge management and ICTs, so as to comply with the goals contained in Chapter IV – Industries of Contents – and Chapter V – Productive Sector – making special emphasis on the industries of cross-border paperless software industry and trade exchanges (electronic government and electronic trade).

C. Expected results

1. Holding of a Regional Seminar to debate and conduct a regional dialogue on critical emerging issues related to the preservation and access to information, privacy, security and intellectual property, in order to refresh knowledge about the dynamics of the region, its social actors, local practices, the capacities that should be developed in order to promote international transfer of data and the access to knowledge assets in accordance with the new technological reality.
2. Participation and planning, along with other international integration and cooperation organizations, in the effective creation of a Technical Committee for Digital Integration whose guidelines should contribute to the regional integration processes and

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the accomplishment of the current regional goals of the Regional Action Plan for Information Society **eLAC 2010**.

3. Creation of a knowledge database of best practices, experiences and information products, related to the programmes and processes for digital inclusion underway in the region. This will promote new communication channels among the interested institutions as well as inter-organizational synergies and complementariness for the benefit of the Member States and the region and based on the social participation within a context of reciprocity and complementariness.

4. A study on the digitalization of foreign trade procedures that allows for gaining knowledge about the digital scenario and serves as the basis for the definition of standards for cross-border, "paperless" trade in the region, in accordance with the international standards on this subject.

5. Operation of up-to-date databases in CEDIC-SELA, including the Regional Observatory of Summits which will be added two new contents: a) systematized information on the Summit of Heads of State and Government of Latin America and the Caribbean that will take place in the city of San Salvador de Bahia, Brazil, in mid-December 2008, and b) the Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Americas scheduled to be held by the end of the first quarter of 2009 in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.

D. Activities and schedule

The activities foreseen in this project are:

- 1.3.1. To hold a Regional Meeting on "Regulations, privacy, intellectual property and access to information and knowledge in Latin America and the Caribbean".
- 1.3.2. To hold a meeting of the Technical Committee on Digital Integration once it is created, and to define a work programme that contains lines of action related to the issues of information management and ICTs management in the region.
- 1.3.3. To conduct a Seminar-Workshop on knowledge management, creative industries and digital contents, with emphasis on the exchange of views about best practices and the promotion of inter-institutional networks and synergies among the Member States of SELA.
- 1.3.4. To conduct a comprehensive study on digitalization of foreign trade procedures within the framework of cross-border, "paperless" trade.

Activities	Dates
Technical advisory activities on knowledge management and ICTs management with emphasis on the digital inclusion processes, at the request of the Member States	January-December 2009
Workshop on Creative Industries and Interactive Digital Contents in Latin America and the Caribbean	April 2009
Study on the Digitalization of Foreign Trade Procedures in Latin America and the Caribbean	January-June 2009
Technical Meeting Digital Integration	May 2009
Preparation for the Regional Meeting	May-September e 2009
Regional Meeting	October 2009
Submittal of Report with conclusions and recommendations of the Regional Meeting to the Member States participating in eLAC2010 and to the Latin American Council	November 2009

AREA II. TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Project II.1. Strengthening technical and economic cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean

Upon a mandate issued by its Member States, the Permanent Secretariat of SELA has carried out various activities in the area of cooperation at the regional and international levels since 1975. In this area, SELA develops its actions at the horizontal level, in its capacity as a regional focal point for the promotion of international cooperation among the countries of the region.

The fundamental objectives of this project are:

- To encourage reflection among Member States with a view to identifying common interests in the area of international cooperation for sustainable development.
- To promote joint initiatives and activities in the area of international cooperation among Latin American and Caribbean countries;
- To foster a permanent dialogue among the various national officials in charge of international cooperation in the Member States of SELA and their extra-regional counterparts;
- To promote possible actions for South-South cooperation between Latin America and the Caribbean and other regions, such as Africa and Asia;
- To support technical update and specialized training in the area of international cooperation for regional integration and sustainable development;

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- To support Member States in the implementation and follow-up of the commitments entered into at the various regional forums and summits, related to the main issues on the Latin American and Caribbean agenda in the field of competition in international cooperation.

Activity II.1.1 XX Meeting of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean (XX RDCI)

A. Background and justification

In 1987, the Member States of SELA agreed on the need to create a space for rapprochement to deal with the issue of international cooperation and South-South cooperation, and gave specific mandates to the Permanent Secretariat to develop and consolidate this initiative at the regional level.

The XIX Meeting of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean – which will deal with the issue of “International Cooperation for Trade Facilitation in Latin America and the Caribbean” – is to be held in Mexico City on 9 and 10 December 2008, thanks to the sponsorship of the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs of Mexico. Within the framework of this regional meeting, the International Cooperation Directors of Latin America and the Caribbean could recommend subjects to be dealt with in the forthcoming meeting of cooperation directors.

Since this forum for rapprochement of the International Cooperation Directors of Latin America and the Caribbean marks 20 years of existence in 2009, it is a propitious moment to evaluate its validity and prospects, and to define new directions to guide the actions to be undertaken by the Permanent Secretariat of SELA with a view to strengthening and promoting regional cooperation.

For this reason, the Permanent Secretariat has considered it convenient to convene a meeting of experts in regional cooperation to identify the new orientation and priorities to guide the action of this event for rapprochement of International Cooperation Directors, so as to ensure greater coordination with other institutions and organizations complying with mandates in the area of regional and international cooperation.

In this connection, the conclusions and recommendations stemming from this regional meeting, without a doubt, will be a significant contribution for strengthening regional cooperation and the role of SELA as the regional focal point for international cooperation.

B. Objectives

1. To analyze the trends and prospects of regional and international cooperation as well as the role of SELA within this context.
2. To identify the new orientations, guidelines and priorities that should guide actions during the meetings of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean.
3. To develop a mechanism for dialogue and coordination with Latin American, Caribbean, inter-American and Ibero-American institutions with a mandate in the area of international cooperation in order to coordinate a work programme that allows for convergence and prevents duplication of efforts.

4. To promote consultation, concertation and coordination of common positions in the region on the main issues of the regional and international cooperation agenda.

C. Expected results

1. To prepare a study on the main trends and prospects of international cooperation and South-South cooperation, as well as the new role that the Permanent Secretariat of SELA and other regional and international institutions could play in order to strengthen cooperation within a context of greater efficiency and coordination.
2. To prepare a series of proposals and recommendations on the new orientations, criteria and issues that should guide the meetings of Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean.
3. To outline a work programme and a mechanism for coordination among the main regional institutions with a mandate in the area of international cooperation (SELA, ACS, SEGIB, OAS, the Andean Community, MERCOSUR, SICA, CARICOM, among others) to coordinate the regional cooperation actions and efforts, based on the economic and social development of the countries of the region.
4. To establish a work agenda that allows for strengthening consultation, coordination and cooperation at various international forums in the area of cooperation.

D. Activities and schedule

The XX Meeting of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean will last two days and, tentatively, would be held during the second half of 2009, with the participation of officials in charge of international cooperation in the Member States of SELA, regional and international, bilateral and multilateral organizations, as well as experts and academicians.

The Permanent Secretariat has made arrangements with the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation for Development (AECID) in order to hold this regional meeting in the headquarters of the Spanish Cooperation Training Centre in the city of Antigua, Guatemala, or in Centre located in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia.

Activities	Dates
Consultation with AECID on the venue for the meeting	December
Selection and hiring of consultant for base study	May-July
Preparation and submittal of base study	September
Preparation and logistics for the XX Meeting of Directors	September-November
Convening of Member States	September
Holding of XX Meeting of Directors	December
Preparation of report with the conclusions and recommendations for the Latin American Council	December

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Activity II.1.2 Regional Seminar on financial cooperation to promote integration in Latin America and the Caribbean

A. Background and justification

Since the beginning of the integration process in Latin America and the Caribbean, there has been recognition that it has to be accompanied by cooperation mechanisms and institutions related to the monetary and financial areas. As a matter of fact, a series of institutional mechanisms have been developed – at the subregional level – with the objective to support integration efforts. Nevertheless, a general evaluation of said mechanisms reveals the serious limitations and the reduced scope that such initiatives have had.

In view of the new challenges that currently faced by regional integration and development in LAC, various initiatives have been undertaken to foster financial cooperation among the countries of the region, going beyond the traditional geographic spaces of traditional integration schemes.

Additionally, the current crisis in international financial markets and its probable impact on the Latin American and Caribbean economies make it necessary to promote a process to conduct an evaluation and make proposals for financial cooperation among Latin American and Caribbean nations, in such a way that their implementation contributes to meet the need for integration in the monetary and financial areas and in the very regional development process.

B. Objectives

1. To evaluate the main elements characterizing external financing flows and to assess the main prevailing trends in international capital markets.
2. To analyze the fundamental limitations imposed by the current international monetary and financial system for development in Latin America and the Caribbean.
3. To analyze the fundamental cooperation proposals in the monetary and financial areas which have been undertaken in Latin America and the Caribbean in the last few years and to assess the convenience of promoting their regionalization.

C. Expected results

1. Preparation of an analytical document on the prevailing trends in external financing flows and the proposals for monetary and financial cooperation underway in Latin America and the Caribbean.
2. Preparation and conduction of a Regional Seminar on Financial Cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean.
3. Dissemination of the conclusions and recommendations from the regional seminar as well as proposals for strengthening financial cooperation among the countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.

D. Activities and schedule

This seminar will last one day. Participants will include government officials responsible for the area of integration and/or financial cooperation, as well as representatives of international and regional organizations related to monetary and financial issues.

Deadlines: Tentative schedule for the project

Activities	Tentative dates
Hiring of consultant for base study	February 2009
Convening of Regional Seminar	March 2009
Holding of Regional Seminar	May 2009
Preparation of report with conclusions and recommendations and proposals for strengthening financial cooperation	Late May 2009

Activity II.1.3 Seminar-workshop on regional cooperation in the area of food security in Latin America and the Caribbean

A. Background and justification

The trend to increase in food prices started in 2006 but it intensified during the first half of 2008, turning itself into a substantial factor for inflation in all the regions of the world. The impact of this "silent Tsunami" – as it is called in the United Nations – has brought about famine, misery and malnutrition, and in several countries it has even led to civil unrest and upheavals.

In Latin American and the Caribbean (LAC), the rise in food prices has hit both net importing and exporting countries. Inflation rates for food were greater than general inflation rates in most of the region's countries, and in seven of them, it reached two digits in 2007. According to estimates, the increase in food prices will lead to more poverty and misery for over 10 million people in the region.

The key factors that have contributed to the increase in food prices, according to the impact they have had on food demand (consumption) or supply, can be classified into two groups depending on whether they are of a structural nature or due to a specific situation.

Latin America and the Caribbean has taken swift measures in responding to this crisis, with several nations setting up agencies for coordination and design of solutions with the participation of governmental and private sector institutions. At the bilateral, plurilateral, subregional and regional levels, strides have also been made in the use and activation of existing coordination mechanisms within integration groups. In addition, plurilateral and bilateral cooperation actions have been promoted.

The initiatives undertaken in the region in the area of food security have been particularly important: the XXX FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean, which took place in Brasilia from 14 to 18 April 2008, and the FAO High-Level Conference on World Food Security: the challenges of Climate Change and Bioenergy, held from 3 to 5 June 2008 in Rome.

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Within this context, the Permanent Secretariat convened the Regional High-Level Meeting on Food Security in Latin America and the Caribbean, which was held on 30 May 2008, and resulted in a series of conclusions and recommendations that are included in the Rapporteur's Report of the meeting.

The most relevant recommendations stemming from the Regional High-Level Meeting on Food Security in Latin America and the Caribbean include the following:

- To keep a permanent analysis in the region on the various effects related to the food crisis and, in this regard, SELA should conduct consultation and coordination actions on this subject in collaboration with other regional and multilateral organizations such as FAO, WFP, IICA, PAHO, IDB and OCHA;
- To conduct detailed analyses of the weight that the various factors – both factors due to specific situations and structural factors – have on food production, from the economic, social and environmental standpoints.
- To help to establish a Regional Cooperation Programme on Food Security in Latin America and the Caribbean, and lend support to existing subregional cooperation programmes on food security;
- To convene a meeting to follow up the High-Level Conference on World Food Security and Challenges posed by Climate Change and Bioenergy, held by the FAO in Rome (from 3 to 5 June 2008), in order to analyze its results and make strides with the regional strategy on this issue; and
- Convene a Regional Meeting to analyze the progress and results of the agricultural negotiations within the framework of the WTO Doha Round.

It must be noted that the meeting to analyze the results of the FAO High-Level Conference on World Food Security was held on 30 October 2008 in the headquarters of SELA, and it was agreed that the Permanent Secretariat should continue to prioritize cooperation actions with a regional scope on the issue of food security.

B. Objectives

The objectives of this seminar-workshop are as follows:

1. Analyze and propose cooperation actions with a regional scope in the area of food security.
2. To follow up the activities that are conducted at the regional and subregional level in the area of food cooperation and define the guidelines for a cooperation programme in the area of food security within the framework of SELA.

C. Expected results

1. Identification of the actions for cooperation, coordination and regional consultation that are being conducted at the regional and subregional levels, which could serve to strengthen and promote cooperation and food security among the countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.

2. Proposal of basic contents for a cooperation programme in the area of regional food security within the framework of SELA.

D. Activities and schedule

The Seminar-Workshop would last two days and would count on the participation of government officials responsible for agricultural cooperation and food security, representatives of regional and international organizations and experts on this subject.

Deadlines: Tentative schedule for the project

Activities	Tentative dates
Hiring of consultant for base study	February 2009
Convening of Seminar-Workshop	March 2009
Holding of Seminar-Workshop	June 2009
Preparation of report with conclusions and recommendations and the proposal for a Regional Cooperation Programme	July 2009
Consideration of the conclusions and recommendations by the Latin American Council	November – December 2009

Activity II.1.4 Seminar-workshop on cooperation in the area of transport to strengthen regional integration and facilitate trade

A. Background and justification

The issue of transport is crucially important for development and integration in Latin America and the Caribbean. There various aspects involved in the analysis of the issue of transport, particularly the impact of this sector on the economic and social dynamics and on trade facilitation.

For this reason, it is necessary to make strides in the design of cooperation formulas in this field, particularly to create suitable regulatory frameworks, as well as mechanisms to encourage public and private investment in this sector.

Within the framework of the different subregional integration schemes, several cooperation initiatives in this area have been undertaken, including the IIRSA Initiative and the Meso-America Project, which are currently underway. Nevertheless, regional integration requires deepening cooperation in the various modalities of transport, in order to further develop and consolidate them, both at the subregional and regional level, in order to materialize convergence and articulation among the different integration processes.

B. Objectives

1. To conduct an evaluation of the main aspects of transport in its different modalities, within the framework of regional integration, making emphasis on the current difficulties and the various cooperation initiatives in this area that have been undertaken at the subregional and regional levels.

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2. To evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of existing cooperation mechanisms in the area of transport and to identify the mechanisms to take advantage of the potentials of the countries in the region in this area.

C. Expected results

1. An updated diagnosis of the situation and prospects of transport, in its various modalities, in order to strengthen regional integration and its convergence.
2. Recommendations to strengthen regional cooperation in the area of transport.

D. Activities and schedule

This Seminar-Workshop will last two days and would be held, tentatively, in May 2009. Participants will include government specialists in the area of transport, as well as representatives of regional and international organizations.

Deadlines: Tentative schedule for the project

Activities	Tentative dates
Hiring of consultant for base study of the seminar-workshop	January 2009
Convening of seminar-workshop	March 2009
Holding of seminar-workshop	May 2009
Preparation and dissemination of Rapporteur's Report of the seminar-workshop	June 2009
Consideration of the conclusions and recommendations by the Latin American Council	November-December 2009

Activity II.1.5 Regional Meeting on cooperation for disaster risk reduction

A. Background and justification

In 2008, Latin American and Caribbean governments and the regional institutions for disaster risk reduction undertook a series of very significant actions to design regional cooperation and coordination mechanisms with a view to supporting those countries badly hit by natural disasters.

The main activities conducted included the "First Regional Meeting on International Humanitarian Aid Mechanisms", which took place in Mexico City, on 10 and 11 September 2008, organized by the governments of Mexico and Canada, and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). The objective of this meeting was to take the first steps towards the creation of a simplified regional mechanism for coordinating international cooperation and humanitarian aid in case of natural disasters in Latin America and the Caribbean. A Working Group on Natural Disasters, coordinated by Mexico, has already begun to organize this initiative – proposed by the government of Mexico and considered within the framework of the Rio Group.

Later on, a meeting on “Mechanisms to respond to emergencies resulting from natural disasters” – organized by the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs of Mexico and the Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB) – was held in Mexico City on 24 and 25 September 2008. This initiative was undertaken in compliance with a mandate stemming from the XVII Ibero-American Summit held in Santiago, Chile, in November 2007.

The Permanent Secretariat of SELA – which participated actively in these two meetings – recognizes the efforts that have been undertaken in the region to achieve greater coordination and cooperation in the area of disaster risk reduction – particularly the leading role that the United Nations System has played through its Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR).

B. Objectives

1. To support the actions for coordination and cooperation undertaken by the ISDR and OCHA, as well as other organizations and agencies specialized in disaster reduction, as well as the agreements reached within the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters.
2. To contribute to reflection, update of contents and dissemination of methodologies, criteria, indicators and procedures being undertaken by regional and international institutions, in order to generate better models for quantification and evaluation of the economic and social costs of disasters.
3. To help with training activities to allow officials in charge of cooperation, government agencies and various social actors in the region to incorporate the variable of disaster risk reduction in the projects and programmes financed with resources stemming from international cooperation.

C. Expected results

1. Holding of a Regional Meeting on Coordination for Exchange of demand and supply as regards cooperation for Disaster Risk Reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean.
2. Contribution to improve the approach of the United Nations and its specialized agencies to disaster risk reduction.

D. Activities and schedule

Activities	Dates
Preparation and logistics for the Meeting of Experts	February-May
Letters to convene CDERA, CAPRADE, CEPREDENAC, ALBA, UNASUR, MERCOSUR, ISDR and ECLAC to the Meeting of Experts	March
Holding of the Meeting of Experts (2 days)	Second week of May
Preparation of report with the conclusions and recommendations for the Latin American Council	After the Meeting of Experts

Activity II.1.6 Conduction of the Regional Programme for Trade Promotion and Facilitation in Latin America and the Caribbean

A. Background and justification

Promoting trade relations among the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean is crucial in order to foster regional integration and to achieve a more efficient and dynamic international economic insertion.

Nevertheless, many developing countries, particularly those in Latin America and the Caribbean, are facing obstacles that limit and restrict their potentials for trade. Many of these obstacles – such as the lack of technical knowledge, excessive bureaucracy, inadequate financing, and inefficient infrastructure, among others – can be corrected through aid for trade, and through the commitments that are reached within the framework of the multilateral negotiations and with the cooperation and regional integration agreements to promote and facilitate trade.

In this connection, it must be borne in mind that aid for trade is only part of assistance for development, but it is specifically intended to assist developing countries, particularly the less developed ones, so as to enable them to play a more active role in the multilateral trade system and to use trade promotion as an instrument for growth and poverty reduction.

Aid for trade has four fundamental components:

- i) technical assistance to build capacity to formulate trade policies, in order to participate in negotiations and implement agreements;
- ii) economic infrastructure, so that the products can reach national and international markets (roads, ports, telecommunications, energy, among others);
- iii) creation of productive capacity, which implies investment in industries and economic sectors so that countries can increase their competitiveness, diversify their exports and effectively use their comparative advantages; and
- iv) assistance for readjustment, aimed at mitigating possible transition costs derived from the trade liberalization processes, such as tariff reductions, weakening of trade preferences or deterioration of trade exchange relations.

On the other hand, trade facilitation is one of the issues under negotiation within the framework of the WTO, with the purpose of boosting technical assistance and building capacity for trade, while improving effective cooperation among customs authorities and other competent instances with respect to issues related to trade facilitation and compliance with customs procedures. Trade facilitation has two main objectives: i) to reduce excessive bureaucratic proceedings as regards merchandise entering the country; and ii) to provide technical knowledge and easier access to that type of trade-related information.

Due to the impact of trade aid and facilitation of trade potentials of any given country, and their positive implications as regards poverty reduction, since 2005 efforts have been made to build consensus and to strengthen commitments among bilateral donors, multilateral organizations and recipient countries, the private sector and civil society, with the fundamental purpose of promoting trade aid and facilitation at the global level.

This has led industrialized countries to agree to progressively increase the Official Development Assistance (ODA), and to destine a substantial part of such assistance to support developing countries in their actions to strengthen their commercial capacity and facilitate the adjustment of their economies, so that they can benefit from the potentials offered by the multilateral trade system and the opening-up of markets.

Against this background, it is necessary for the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean to agree on positions and design cooperation and coordination mechanisms that allow them to obtain the greatest possible benefits from development assistance, and particularly from trade aid and facilitation programmes.

To this end, it would be recommendable to establish a Regional Cooperation Programme for trade promotion and facilitation in Latin America and the Caribbean (2009 - 2011), which should take into consideration the results of the XIX Meeting of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean scheduled to take place in Mexico City, in early December 2008, which will deal with the treatment of this important issue.

An initial action proposed as part of this Regional Cooperation Programme for trade promotion and facilitation in Latin America and the Caribbean is holding a seminar or forum with the participation of regional and international organizations and representatives of the Member States of SELA, in order to analyze the current situation and propose cooperation initiatives in this area. Similarly, SELA will create a new section called "Trade aid and facilitation" on its Web page, as a space for specialized regional rapprochement as regards this issue. These two initial actions would allow for progressively deepening and fostering measures to promote and facilitate trade in LAC, as well as a growing coordination and complementation of the various regional actors and instances dealing with this issue in the region.

B. Objectives

This project to establish a Regional Programme for trade promotion and facilitation in Latin America and the Caribbean would have the following objectives:

1. To conduct an analysis of the current situation of aid for trade and the multilateral negotiations on trade facilitation from the perspective of the interests of Latin America and the Caribbean. To this end, due consideration must be taken of the particular features of each subregion (Andean countries, Central America, South America and the Caribbean);
2. To identify international cooperation programmes, projects and initiatives being carried out by bilateral donors, multilateral organizations, regional development banks, secretariats of integration and the private sector in the area of trade aid and facilitation in the region.
3. To identify programmes, projects and initiatives implemented by the Member States of SELA, as donors and/or recipients of cooperation to promote trade aid and facilitation.
4. To disseminate information about successful experiences in Latin America and the Caribbean as regards mechanisms implemented for trade promotion and facilitation among the countries of the region.

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5. To propose ideas and fundamental contents for mechanisms with a possible regional scope for trade promotion and facilitation in Latin America and the Caribbean.

C. Expected results

The expected results of this project for the year 2009 include:

1. Conduction of a study on the current situation of international cooperation for trade aid and the multilateral negotiations on trade facilitation.
2. To identify concrete actions for cooperation, complementation and agreement at the subregional and regional levels, in the area of trade aid and facilitation.
3. Holding of a seminar to discuss the study and to define the action lines and contents of mechanisms with a regional scope for trade promotion and facilitation in Latin America and the Caribbean.
4. Design and publish a section titled "Trade aid and facilitation" on SELA's Web page.

D. Activities and schedule

The main actions to be undertaken within the framework of this project include the following:

1. Identification of the main regional and subregional actors in the area of trade aid and facilitation in Latin America and the Caribbean.
2. Preparation of a study that will serve as the basis for the annual seminar, with the fundamental objective of making proposals and recommendations for the promotion of trade aid and facilitation in Latin America and the Caribbean.
3. Organization and holding of a regional seminar with the participation of the main actors involved in the area of trade aid and facilitation; as well as representatives of the Member States of SELA.
4. Design and publication of the section of "Trade aid and facilitation" on SELA's Web page.

Deadlines: Tentative schedule for the project

Activities	Tentative dates
Identification of the main regional and subregional actors (in the public and private sectors) involved with trade aid and facilitation in Latin America and the Caribbean	October-December 2008
Creation of the Section "Trade aid and facilitation" on SELA's Web page	January-February 2009
Hiring of consultant for the base study of the regional seminar	January 2009
Holding of the seminar	April 2009
Publication of the results of the seminar and definition of the Regional Cooperation Programme for trade promotion and facilitation	June 2009

Activity II.1.7 Regional seminar for developing a Regional Cooperation Programme for protection of traditional knowledge in Latin America and the Caribbean

A. Background and justification

The protection of the access to genetic resources, traditional knowledge and folklore is a particularly sensitive subject for the countries and governments of Latin America and the Caribbean. It is a relatively new topic and is also related to trade and environmental interests, human rights and national sovereignty.

At the WTO, developing countries have noted that: "One of the main current concerns of the world community is related to the concession of patents for new biotechnological inventions based on biological resources and their corresponding traditional knowledge, with which communities that preserved such resources and perfected such knowledge do not take advantage of the benefits derived from their commercial use".

Traditional knowledge is transmitted orally from older to younger generations in ethnic groups and traditional local communities. Each group uses specific knowledge in accordance with the beliefs and characteristics of the community.

On the other hand, biodiversity is essential for survival of indigenous people and many local communities, but access to the applications of indigenous and local knowledge has allowed the world to have a new and rich variety of essential oils, natural pesticides, textile fibers, foods, pharmaceutical and veterinary products, ornamental plants and exotic fruits, which are very healthy and environmental-friendly. In addition, ecological tourism has become an important alternative source of income, providing major opportunities to the local communities and countries.

Protection of traditional knowledge must be aimed at protecting in an effective way the collective rights on traditional knowledge of the local communities and indigenous people, with respect to knowledge about genetic resources and folklore.

According to estimates, genetic resources and the associated traditional knowledge are currently generating an annual amount of US\$ 800 billion in new drugs, foods and biotechnological applications for the industry, the agricultural and health sectors, the cosmetics industry and others.

Additionally, it must be borne in mind that this issue is directly related to the commitments to be assumed or already assumed within the framework of the multilateral trade negotiations and the conditions in which the issue of traditional knowledge has been dealt with in the Free Trade Agreements signed by several countries or blocs of countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. Over the past few years, different versions of FTAs have emerged, which have incorporated specific provisions related to traditional knowledge, including it within the general concept of intellectual property. Such approach can distort the concept of traditional knowledge, making it difficult to ensure its protection and preventing a thorough analysis of such a complex issue, which is also a particularly sensitive one for indigenous communities in Latin America and the Caribbean.

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B. Objectives

This Regional Seminar would have the following objectives:

1. To analyze how the issues of traditional knowledge, folklore and genetic resources have been dealt with in the international trade negotiations and the bilateral and regional free trade agreements.
2. To gain knowledge about the different experiences of subregional integration schemes (the Andean Community, SICA, CARICOM and MERCOSUR), as well as ALBA and UNASUR, in the area of regional cooperation, in addition to the initiatives undertaken by other international organizations as regards protection of traditional knowledge, folklore and genetic resources.
3. To identify the regional mechanisms that could be applied to strengthen and protect traditional knowledge, folklore, genetic resources and intellectual property in Latin America and the Caribbean.
4. To propose fundamental ideas to create a regional programme for protection of traditional knowledge, folklore, genetic resources and intellectual property in Latin America and the Caribbean.

C. Expected results

The expected results of this project include:

1. Assessment of the current situation of multilateral trade negotiations, as well as the negotiations with respect to traditional knowledge being held within the framework of the Free Trade Agreements.
2. Systematization of the main cooperation initiatives, regional sources of financing and mechanisms for protection and strengthening of traditional knowledge, folklore, genetic resources and intellectual property in Latin America and the Caribbean.
3. Guidelines for creation of a regional programme for protection of traditional knowledge, folklore, genetic resources and intellectual property in Latin America and the Caribbean.

D. Activities and schedule

This regional seminar will last two days and is tentatively scheduled for June 2009. Participants will include officials of national agencies dealing with intellectual property, experts in the area of traditional knowledge of the Member States of SELA, as well as representatives of regional and international organizations.

Deadlines: Tentative schedule for the project

Activities	Tentative dates
Preparation of two base documents for the meeting	February – April 2009
Selection of speakers and regional and international experts	March 2009
Convening of Regional Meeting	April 2009
Holding of Regional Meeting	June 2009
Preparation and dissemination of Rapporteur's Report	June 2009
Submittal for consideration of the Latin American Council of the Draft Regional Cooperation Programme	October-November 2009

Project II.2. Technical assistance to contribute to economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean

The general objectives of this project are the following:

1. To promote cooperation actions in the area of technical assistance to support the formulation and implementation of national policies for economic and social development of the Member States of SELA.
2. To support the process of training public sector officials in Latin America and the Caribbean related to the design, implementation and evaluation of economic and social policies.
3. To contribute to increasing effectiveness in outlining, implementing and evaluating national policies to fight poverty and promote FDI.

Activity II.2.1 Seminar-workshop, with collaboration of UNCTAD, to support public policy making in the Member States of SELA to fight poverty

A. Background and justification

Poverty reduction and social inclusion have become high-priority issues at the regional and international levels. In this regard, an increasingly stronger global consensus has allowed to join efforts and to guide national public policies and the mandates stemming from international organizations in order to accomplish such objectives.

This has also allowed for allocating resources stemming from international cooperation and development assistance to the fight against poverty on a preferential basis.

In this connection and considering the projections as regards inter-institutional cooperation between the Permanent Secretariat of SELA and UNCTAD – which started in 2008 – a proposal is made to hold a seminar-workshop to support the formulation of public policies in the Member States of SELA to fight poverty.

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B. Objectives

1. To contribute to strengthening institutional capacities of Member States of SELA for designing, implementing and evaluating the policies to fight poverty.
2. To support training of government officials in LAC in charge of strategies and policies for social development.

C. Expected results

1. Holding a seminar-workshop with the participation of officials of government organizations in the Member States of SELA directly in charge with outlining, implementing and evaluating social policies.

D. Activities and schedule

1. Coordination and preparation of the seminar-workshop by the Permanent Secretariat of SELA and the General Secretariat of UNCTAD.

Activity II.2.2. Seminar-workshop, with collaboration of UNCTAD, to support training of negotiators in the area of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)**A. Background and justification**

The Member States of SELA have requested the Permanent Secretariat to develop a training programme for international negotiators in the area of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) agreements to take advantage of the current FDI flows towards the region for development and integration, while incorporating the dimension of development in the agreements subscribed.

B. Objectives

1. To contribute to strengthening the negotiation capacity of government officials of the Member States of SELA for outlining, implementing and evaluating policies related to the reception of FDI, and to take advantage of its potentials for growth and development.
2. To support training of government officials for the negotiation of international agreements that allow for improving FDI flows towards LAC, and to incorporate the dimension of development.

C. Expected results

1. Holding of a seminar-workshop with the participation of officials of government organizations in the Member States of SELA directly in charge with outlining, implementing and negotiating FDI policies and programmes.
2. To make suggestions in order to boost the impact of FDI agreements on development, taking into account the commitments taken on by the Member States in bilateral, plurilateral and multilateral FDI agreements.

D. Activities and schedule

Coordination and preparation of the seminar-workshop by the Permanent Secretariat of SELA and the General Secretariat of UNCTAD in the area of FDI.

Activity II.2.3 Joint training programme with higher education centres in LAC on relevant issues for social and economic development in the region**A. Background and justification**

It is crucial to effectively deal with the limitations currently hindering development in our region, with a comprehensive and multidimensional perspective that takes due account of the social dimension as an integral part of economic development.

The diversity and complexity of the problems hindering development, faced by Latin American and Caribbean societies, call for equally complex responses based on consensus. Therefore, public policies must count on the greatest possible legitimacy and the support of all sectors of society. Academic institutions and higher education centres are actors of great relevance and have the capacity to contribute to solve major regional problems.

Higher education institutions and economic and social research centres produce creative and innovative thought, promote reflection about major issues on the Latin American and Caribbean agenda, as well as proposals and recommendations on the formulation and implementation of public policies, in a free and independent manner and with the required levels of transparency, quality and efficiency.

B. Objectives

1. To engage academic higher education institutions and economic and social research centres in the debate, conception and design of alternatives for the economic and social development process in Latin America and the Caribbean.
2. To identify mechanisms for coordination and cooperation among higher education institutions, economic and social research centres, and the public sector, in order to contribute to outlining and implementing public policies aimed at human and sustainable development.
3. To promote the exchange of academic experiences and contents of educational programmes among teachers and researchers working in the area of economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean.
4. To gradually create a training programme for public sector officials in Latin America and the Caribbean for the implementation of policies for human and sustainable development in the region.

C. Expected results

1. Holding of a meeting with higher education institutions and economic and social research centre in the region, in order to hold debates on their fundamental perceptions on the challenges of development with social inclusion in Latin America and the Caribbean in the current conditions.

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2. Preparation of a report with proposals and recommendations stemming from higher education institutions and economic and social research centres for establishing a training programme aimed at public sector officials in Latin America and the Caribbean on the design and implementation of development policies in the region.

3. Creation of a virtual space to disseminate information and exchange ideas, proposals, researches and projects on the issue of human and sustainable development, and to contribute to the coordination of cooperation initiatives among groups and institutions and between academic institutions and the public sector.

D. Activities and schedule

The activities to be conducted within the framework of this project include the following:

1. Organization of a regional meeting with the participation of higher education institutions and economic and social research centres. The proposals, suggestions and recommendations stemming from this meeting as regards the regional training programme for outlining and implementing development policies would be submitted for consideration of the Member States of SELA.

2. Design and publication of a Web page.

Project II.3. Ibero-American Programme of Institutional Cooperation for the Development of Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises (SELA-IBERPYPE Programme)

A. Background and justification

During its ten years of existence, the IBERPYME Programme, executed and managed by the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA) and attached to the Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB), has provided support training activities and information about various areas to organizations and institutions related to micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) across Ibero-America.

One of the main objectives of the IBERPYME Programme is to support the development of competitiveness and internationalization programmes for MSMEs, by training officials to help them build their entrepreneurial management capacities and creating local cadres to provide direct assistance to entrepreneurs in participating countries.

B. Objective

The general objective of the IBERPYME Programme is to make contributions towards the development of institutional capacities of government agencies and business associations conducting programmes in support to MSMEs, so as to boost competitiveness of MSMEs with a view to promoting their internationalization, by outlining and implementing programmes and actions.

C. Expected results

1. To inform and train officials responsible for public and private programmes to support MSMEs as regards strategies for their internationalization.
2. To promote the exchange of experiences on the adoption of institutional organization mechanisms of intermediate bodies, in order to improve the supply of goods and services to the beneficiaries of those programmes.
3. To develop information services to support MSMEs.
4. To support and strengthen efforts to establish thematic networks on MSMEs.
5. To encourage cooperation activities among Ibero-American countries in the area of MSMEs.
6. To promote cooperation with other national and international, public and private bodies, whose programmes and actions have the same goals.
7. To promote the development of the following thematic areas: partnerships and inter-entrepreneurial cooperation, productivity and competitiveness, internationalization of SMEs, public policies to support MSMEs, guarantee systems and financing for MSMEs, institutional development of private business associations, information and communications technologies for MSMEs, innovation, and development of entrepreneurs and micro-enterprises businessmen, and social corporate responsibility.

D. Activities of the SELA-IBERPyme Programme 2009

The SELA-IBERPyme Programme has carried out a great number of activities across Ibero-America, with very successful and useful results in favour of development of MSMEs.

Both SELA and SEGIB have the fundamental purpose of deepening the role that the SELA-IBERPyme Programme has played in supporting public and private intermediate organizations in the region, as well as MSMEs that have participated in its activities over these years.

The main idea is that the SELA-IBERPyme Programme becomes a mandatory reference as far as all the issues related to public policies and actions to promote the support to MSMEs in Ibero-America are concerned; and that the Programme facilitates an exchange of experiences, knowledge about best practices and analyses among the main actors in the region in charge of decision-making and formulation of policies related to MSMEs.

Taking into account the above-mentioned aspects, following is the list of activities of the SELA-IBERPyme Programme for 2009. It shows the topics and events foreseen thus far, without specifying their venue or date, since they will be defined in greater detail in late 2008 and early 2009. There is a number of "support" activities, which hinge on the reception of extra budgetary financial resources from the organizations involved in them, or from other sources of cooperation.

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E. Guidelines, key thematic areas and activities foreseen**Activity II.3.1 Integration and productive articulation: Clusters, territorial economic development, productive chains, export consortiums, entrepreneurial networks, development of suppliers and distributors**

1. IV Training Workshop on Coordination and Productive Integration Strategies.
2. II Ibero-American Seminar on productive clusters and territorial economic development.
3. I Seminar on public policies on integration and productive articulation.
4. Support to activities and events on Productive Integration in MERCOSUR.
5. Support to activities and events on Cluster Development of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).
6. Support to activities and events of focal points of the SELA-IBERPYPME Programme on the issue of integration and productive articulation.

Activity II.3.2 Innovation and entrepreneurship

1. III Workshop "Developing New Enterprises"
2. II Workshop on Innovation for SMEs
3. I Seminar on public policies on Innovation and entrepreneurship
4. Support to activities and events of focal points of the SELA-IBERPYPME Programme on the issue of innovation and entrepreneurship

Activity II.3.3 Information and Communications Technologies

1. V Training Workshop on Internet-based marketing and business strategies for SMEs.
2. III Entrepreneurial Forum on Knowledge Management, Information and Communication Technologies, and Innovation.
3. Support to events on innovation, as well as Information and Communication Technologies, of the Programme on Sustainable Development for Central America (DESCA), coordinated by the German Technical Cooperation Agency (GTZ).
4. Support to activities and events on Information and Communication Technologies of the Ibero-American cooperation project Virtual Educa.
5. Support to activities and events on Information and Communication Technologies of the IDB / Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF).
6. Support to activities and events of focal points of the SELA-IBERPYPME Programme on the issues of Information and Communication Technologies and Innovation.

Activity II.3.4 Internationalization

1. X Training Workshop on internationalization strategies for SMEs.
2. V Latin American Entrepreneurial Mission to Spain.
3. Support to activities and events on internationalization of the Latin American Industrialists Association (AILA)
4. Support to activities and events of focal points of the SELA-IBERPyme Programme on the issue of internationalization.

Activity II.3.5 Productivity, Quality and Competitiveness

1. Seminar on Public Policies on Quality, Productivity and Competitiveness.
2. Support to activities and events on Quality of the Ibero-American Foundation for Quality Management (FUNDIBEQ) – an Ibero-American cooperation project.
3. Support to activities and events on Competitiveness of Mexico's COMPITE.
4. Support to activities and events of focal points of the SELA-IBERPyme Programme on the issues of productivity, quality and competitiveness.

Activity II.3.6 Financing

1. XIV Ibero-American Forum on guarantee systems and financing for MSMEs.
2. Seminar on public policies on financing for SMEs.
3. Support to activities and events of focal points of the SELA-IBERPyme Programme on the issue of financing.

Activity II.3.7 Public policies

- a) IV FUNDES Forum: "Strengthening the SMEs Agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean"
- b) Support to activities and events of focal points of the SELA-IBERPyme Programme on the issue of public policies to support SMEs.

Activity II.3.8 Corporate Social Responsibility

1. VII Congress on Corporate Social Responsibility.
2. Support to activities and events of focal points of the SELA-IBERPyme Programme on the issue of corporate social responsibility, taking into account the development of potentials and protection of human resources.

AREA III. EXTRA-REGIONAL RELATIONS**Project III.1. Evaluation of the results from the V Latin America and the Caribbean-European Union Bi-regional Summit****A. Background and justification**

In February 2008, the V European Union (EU) and Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) Summit Conference took place in Lima. It was crucially important for relations between the two regions.

Launched with the Rio de Janeiro Summit, in 1999, these high-level biregional meetings have forged a "strategic partnership" relation. The second summit – held in Guadalajara, Mexico – defined the major axes for such partnership, namely: promotion of multilateralism in the area of international policy, development of an increasingly closer relation in the economic area, and cooperation between the two regions, based on the promotion of dynamic links in the areas of trade, regional integration and social cohesion. Within this framework, relations between the two regions have experienced substantial progress, as evidenced by the signing of partnership and free trade agreements between the EU and Mexico, in 2000; and between the EU and Chile, in 2002; the start of negotiations between the EU the Central American countries in 2006; as well as the December 2007 economic partnership agreement between the Member States of CARIFORUM and the European bloc.

Nevertheless, various factors – such as the failure of the negotiations aimed at forging an agreement on free trade, cooperation and political dialogue between the EU and MERCOSUR in 2004, and the increasing difficulties to make strides in the negotiation process with the Andean Community – have generated a feeling of stagnation or even setbacks in biregional relations. Thus, there is a growing consensus about the need to face the obstacles to the relations between the two regions and give them fresh impulse.

The Permanent Secretariat of SELA has been working since 2005 on the analysis of the status of economic relations between Latin America and the Caribbean and the European Union and has supported LAC governments in their preparatory processes for the last two biregional Summits.

In the Regional Meeting on Economic Relations between the EU and LAC that was held in the headquarters of SELA (Caracas, 28 February 2008), the Member States recommended the Permanent Secretariat to continue to conduct analyses on the dynamics of biregional economic relations and contribute to establishing common positions for Latin American and Caribbean countries concerning these relations.

In view of the above, it is convenient to hold a regional meeting to evaluate the results of the recent V LAC-EU Summit and to outline some fundamental ideas with a view to strengthening cooperation relations between the region and the European Union countries, while contributing to LAC's process of preparation ahead of the VI biregional Summit to be held in Madrid in 2010.

B. Objectives

1. To conduct an analysis of the results of the recent V Summit of Heads of State and Government of Latin America and the Caribbean and the European Union, so as to assess its possible impact on reciprocal economic relations.
2. To evaluate the most recent trends of economic relations (trade, finances and investment) between the EU and LAC, as well as the changes that have taken place in the economic and trade negotiations between the EU and groups of countries in LAC.
3. To propose lines of action to the countries in LAC in order to expand and strengthen cooperation relations between the region and the countries of the European Union.
4. To propose preliminary ideas for the process of preparation of Latin America and the Caribbean ahead of the VI biregional Summit that will take place in Madrid in 2010.

C. Expected results

1. Preparation of an analytical document to assess the results of the V LAC-EU Summit, to evaluate the most recent trends in biregional relations and to propose action lines to strengthen reciprocal cooperation relations.
2. Holding of a regional meeting with the participation of representatives of the Member States of SELA, as well as regional and subregional integration and cooperation organizations.
3. Proposal of preliminary ideas to contribute to the process of preparation of Latin America and the Caribbean ahead of the upcoming LAC-EU Summit that will take place in Madrid in 2010.

D. Activities and schedule

Activities	Dates
1. Preparation of analytical document about the results of the V LAC-EU Summit on the status of biregional relations	December 2008 - February 2009
2. Preparation for regional meeting on LAC-EU economic relations and convening	Late January 2009
3. Holding of the regional meeting	Late February 2009
4. Submittal of Conclusions and Recommendations of the regional meeting to Member States	March 2009

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Project III.2 Evaluation and support to the coordination of positions for Latin America and the Caribbean in the multilateral trade negotiations of the Doha Round**A. Background and justification**

The broad variety of issues included in the current multilateral trade negotiations of the Doha Round – which are at a standstill – and in the trade agreements currently in force, and their direct relation with domestic policies, the modalities for international insertion and the prospects for development, make it necessary for Latin American and Caribbean governments to give top priority to the analysis and definition of trade policy strategies.

The official positions of the governments of the region on the series of issues that have been under negotiation as part of the Doha Round are not homogenous. Although there is consensus as regards certain areas, substantial differences persist at the subregional level, and even within the various geographic groups, as regards several aspects of the multilateral negotiations and also with respect to the inter-regional trade negotiations.

Nevertheless, the conclusions and recommendations adopted by consensus by the Member States of SELA in the Regional Dialogue of Latin America and the Caribbean ahead of the XII Ministerial Conference of UNCTAD (Caracas, 26 March 2008) reveal that it is necessary to identify the main areas of consensus existing at the regional level on important issues of the negotiations of the Doha Round, and with respect to the issue of agricultural trade, the questions concerning market access for non-agricultural products (NAMA negotiations), services and the intellectual property regime. According to the Member States of SELA, it is absolutely necessary to strengthen the negotiating capacity of Latin American and Caribbean countries in multilateral forums.

In addition, in the Regional Dialogue on Financing for Development and External Debt ahead of the UN High-Level Meeting to review the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus (Caracas, 20 June 2008), the representatives of the Member States requested the Permanent Secretariat to organize a regional meeting for consultation on the analysis of the various existing perspectives on the status of the Doha Round negotiations.

B. Objectives

1. To systematize the analysis about the current status of the stagnant negotiations of the WTO Doha Round, as well as the different positions of the Latin American and Caribbean countries participating in the negotiations.
2. To support the governments of the Member States of SELA in their process of preparation for the trade negotiators and in the definition of their trade policies.
3. To organize and hold a meeting with the participation of representatives of the Member States of SELA, and the relevant regional and international organizations in order to discuss the main aspects and the different visions as regards some issues of the multilateral trade negotiations: agricultural trade, market access for non-agricultural goods, services, and the intellectual property rights regime.
4. To encourage articulation and coordination of common positions for Latin America and the Caribbean on the most relevant issues of the multilateral trade negotiations.

C. Expected results

1. Preparation of an analytical and informative document on the status of the stagnant multilateral trade negotiations of the Doha Round, with some recommendations about possible lines of action for the governments of the region.
2. Organization and holding of a regional meeting for consultation in the headquarters of the Permanent Secretariat, to discuss the most relevant aspects of issues of the trade negotiations that are crucially important for the region.
3. Definition of possible positions or common interests for Latin America and the Caribbean as regards some of the areas that form part of the agenda of the Doha Round negotiations.

D. Activities and schedule

Activities	Dates
1. Preparation of analytical document on the status of the trade negotiations and the different positions of Latin America and the Caribbean	January-March 2009
2. Preparation for regional meeting on the trade negotiations and LAC; convening	April 2009
3. Holding of regional meeting	May 2009
4. Submittal of Conclusions and Recommendations of the regional meeting to Member States	Late May 2009

Project III.3. Evaluation of the UN high-level meeting on financing for development (Doha, 2008)

A. Background and justification

Access to external financial flows for Latin American and Caribbean nations has historically determined, to a great extent, the capacity for growth and investment of the countries of the region.

In spite of the changes that have occurred in the macroeconomic and external conditions of Latin American and Caribbean economies over the last few years – as reflected in the fact that the region has once again become a net exporter of financial resources – Latin American and Caribbean nations are still vulnerable to the fluctuations of external capital flows and to the conditions prevailing in international financial markets.

As a matter of fact – particularly in view of the current crisis – international financial markets are evolving independently from the countries of the region and our nations must often adjust themselves to changing conditions on which they have little influence.

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This occurs within a general context of reduction in the amounts of the Official Development Assistance (ODA) received by Latin American and Caribbean countries, and a relative loss of importance of the region as the main destination for foreign direct investment (FDI) flows at the global level. At the same time, six years after the adoption by the international community of the commitments as regards financing for development contained in the Monterrey Consensus, the evaluation thus far reveals that there has been a substantial lack of compliance, which in some cases has prevented achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in several developing nations.

The Permanent Secretariat of SELA held the Regional Dialogue on Financing for Development and External Debt ahead of the UN High-Level Meeting to review the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus (Caracas, 20 June 2008), where the Member States recommended to convene a regional meeting to assess the results and commitments adopted in that UN High-Level Meeting. Additionally, the Member States of SELA pointed out that it is necessary to analyze the impact of the current international financial architecture on development in the region and the feasibility of taking the greatest possible advantage of regional experiences in this area.

B. Objectives

1. To conduct an analysis of the results of the UN High-Level Meeting on Financing for Development, scheduled to be held in the city of Doha from 29 November to 2 December 2008.
2. To identify the changes and trends of financial flows of various types, with particular emphasis on the behaviour of the external debt and the international developments related to this issue, and to evaluate the possible consequences for the evolution of Latin American and Caribbean economies.
3. To encourage the exchange of ideas and proposals among government representatives of the Member States in order to assess the region's responses vis-à-vis the issue of financing for development in the conditions currently faced by international financial markets and the probable implementation of initiatives for regional financial cooperation.

C. Expected results

1. Preparation and distribution of an analytical document on the main discussions that took place within the framework of the UN High-Level Meeting on Financing for Development and the prevailing trends in the international financial system, as well as their implications for growth and economic development in the region.
2. Holding of a regional meeting with government representatives and officials of regional and international organizations in charge of the issue of financing for development, in order to discuss and agree on lines of action with a regional scope.
3. Preparation of a report with the results and recommendations of the regional meeting, which will include suggestions for strengthening financial cooperation among the Member States of SELA.

D. Activities and schedule

Activities	Dates
1. Preparation of the analytical document on the results of the Conference and the trends prevailing in financial markets	February-April 2009
2. Distribution of the document and convening of regional meeting	Late April 2009
3. Holding of regional meeting	May 2009
4. Distribution of final report and recommendations	June 2009

Project III.4. Diversification of foreign economic relations of Latin America and the Caribbean**A. Background and justification**

The bulk of the external economic relations of Latin American and Caribbean countries concentrate on the United States and Europe, although it must be noted that for several countries the weight of intra-regional trade has increased, and for others, Asia and the Pacific Rim countries have gained strategic importance.

In spite of that, in general, the geographic concentration of trade exchanges and investment in Latin America and the Caribbean is still noticeable, which calls for efforts to promote a diversification of the region's matrix of external economic relations.

Considering the important position that some countries and regions, such as the People's Republic of China, the Russian Federation, the Republic of India and the East Asian bloc, have gained in the global system, their active participation in the multilateral and international economic forums, and the increasing weight of the relations with these nations or with the East Asian region for some Latin American countries, it is convenient for the Permanent Secretariat of SELA to undertake actions, in the medium and long terms, with the following purposes:

1. To explore inter-institutional cooperation mechanisms of the Permanent Secretariat of SELA with organizations of the governments of the People's Republic of China, India, the Russian Federation and the regional bodies of East Asia.
2. Dynamize the exchange of information and experiences between the Member States of SELA and the subregional organizations existing in Latin America and the Caribbean with respect to the new relevant actors in the current global economy, such as the People's Republic of China, India, the Russian Federation and other East Asian countries.
3. To conduct an assessment of the status of external economic relations between Latin American and Caribbean countries and China, India, the Russian Federation and other East Asian countries.

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4. To promote training and capacity building programmes for the various economic and social sectors related to Latin American and Caribbean external relations, in order to gain more knowledge on the evolution and prospects of the economies of the People's Republic of China, India, the Russian Federation and other East Asian countries in the short and medium terms.

5. To coordinate an annual meeting with the participation of representatives of the Member States of SELA on the status of the region's economic relations with the People's Republic of China, India, the Russian Federation and East Asian countries, and their potentials.

6. To contribute to improve the conditions for conducting foreign trade activities, investments and economic cooperation projects between Latin American and Caribbean countries and the People's Republic of China, India, the Russian Federation and East Asian countries.

7. To encourage an active participation of representatives of the governments of China, India and other East Asian countries in the Regional Meeting of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean, organized by the Permanent Secretariat of SELA on a yearly basis.

B. Objectives

The general objective of this project is to gradually consolidate in SELA a regional forum to promote the diversification of the external relations of Latin American and Caribbean countries, and particularly to strengthen the exchanges of information and analyses, and to promote initiatives with a view to boosting the region's economic relations with the People's Republic of China, India, the Russian Federation and other East Asian countries.

The actions to be undertaken as part of this project will have the following specific objectives:

1. To promote a permanent dialogue between government agencies of the Member States of SELA and the authorities of the People's Republic of China, India, the Russian Federation and other East Asian countries for the analysis of national and regional experiences in outlining policies for growth and economic development.

2. To promote a regional space for the systematic exchange of information and experiences among the Member States of SELA on the economic relations (trade, investment and cooperation) between Latin American and Caribbean countries and the People's Republic of China, India, the Russian Federation and East Asian countries.

3. To explore and outline initiatives for strengthening trade and financial relations between the Member States of SELA and the People's Republic of China, India, the Russian Federation and other East Asian countries.

4. To analyze, evaluate and propose actions for the consolidation of cooperation relations between the People's Republic of China, India and East Asian countries with Latin America and the Caribbean, as an expression of the potentials of South-South cooperation to face the challenges posed by development amid conditions of globalization.

5. To promote and implement actions to associate business sectors in Latin America and the Caribbean with their counterparts in the People's Republic of China, India, the Russian Federation and other East Asian countries.

C. Expected results

Within the framework of this project, various actions would be undertaken during 2009, which should have the following results:

1. Preparation and dissemination by the Permanent Secretariat of SELA of four analytical documents on the economic situation and external relations with: i) the People's Republic of China, ii) India, iii) the Russian Federation and iv) East Asian countries; including their economic links with Latin American and Caribbean countries.
2. Holding of an Annual Meeting for each one of these four axes, to present an assessment of the most outstanding characteristics of economic relations between Latin America and the Caribbean and i) the People's Republic of China, ii) India, iii) the Russian Federation and iv) East Asian countries.
3. Conduction of a business seminar to explain to the representatives of Latin American and Caribbean companies the prevailing trends and potentials of economic relations (trade, investment and cooperation) between Latin America and the Caribbean and i) the People's Republic of China, ii) India, iii) the Russian Federation and iv) East Asian countries.

D. Activities and schedule

This project foresees four major activities:

- III.4.1. LAC – People's Republic of China Relations
- III.4.2. LAC – India Relations
- III.4.3. LAC – Russian Federation Relations
- III.4.4. LAC – East Asia Relations

The foregoing activities involve the following actions:

1. Definition of the terms of reference and the consultants who will be in charge of conducting the four studies on the economic situation of, and external relations with: i) the People's Republic of China, ii) India, iii) the Russian Federation and iv) East Asian countries; and their economic links with Latin American and Caribbean countries.
2. Holding of an Annual Meeting to assess the status of the economic relations between the People's Republic of China and Latin American and Caribbean countries.
3. Holding of a business seminar to analyze the trends and potentials of economic relations between Latin America and the Caribbean and i) the People's Republic of China, ii) India, iii) the Russian Federation and iv) East Asian countries.

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Activities	Dates
Design of contents and hiring of consultants for each one of the four studies	January-February 2009
Conclusion of the process to prepare the studies	June 2009
Preparation and convening of the four annual meetings	May 2009
Holding of the four annual meetings: a) LAC-China Relations. (late July 2009) b) LAC-Russia Relations. (late August 2009) c) LAC-India Relations. (late September 2009) d) LAC-East Asia Relations. (late October 2009)	Late July and late October 2009
Holding of business seminars a) LAC-China Relations. (late August 2009) b) LAC-Russia Relations. (late September 2009) c) LAC-India Relations. (late October 2009) d) LAC-East Asia Relations. (late November 2009)	Late August and late November 2009