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Latinoaméricain et Caribéen



Final Report

Economic and Technical Cooperation

*XXIII Meeting of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean:
Regional Cooperation in the Area of Food Security
Belize City, Belize
1 and 2 October 2012
SP/XXIII-RDCIALC/IF-12*

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RAPPOREUR'S REPORT

1. The "XXIII Meeting of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean: Regional cooperation in the area of food security," organized by the Permanent Secretariat of the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA), in conjunction with the Government of Belize, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), and the Pérez Guerrero Trust Fund (PGTF) of the Group of 77, took place on 1 and 2 October 2012, in Belize City.

2. The main objectives of this regional meeting were as follows: i) Identify actions and initiatives for better coordination and synergy among the various international cooperation actors at the regional and subregional levels as regards food security; ii) Analyze, organize and update available information on cooperation programmes, projects, and actions related to food security that have been undertaken by the various regional and subregional integration and cooperation schemes in Latin America and the Caribbean, in order to identify their strengths and weaknesses, and support inter-institutional coordination; iii) Promote the identification of bilateral and multilateral cooperation sources for the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as cooperation opportunities that can be exploited within the region to support food security; iv) Identify policy proposals and recommendations for strengthening international cooperation, South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation in the area of food security; v) Promote and facilitate opportunities for exchanging offers and requests in priority areas of international cooperation and in fields with an impact on economic and social development in the region. The agenda for this meeting is included in Annex I.

3. Delegations of the following Member States of the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA) participated in the event: Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, and Peru; representatives of the following regional organizations: Caribbean Development Bank (CDB); Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC); Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI); Central American Agricultural Council (CAC); Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA); Institute of Nutrition of Central America and Panama (INCAP); United Nations Population Fund (UNPF); United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO/WHO); International Regional Organization for Agricultural Health (OIRSA); Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS); United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); Regional Programme of Food and Nutrition Security for Central America (PRESANCA); Central American Integration System (SICA); and representatives of the following international organizations: Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA); Pérez Guerrero Trust Fund (PGTF) of the Group of 77; World Food Programme (WFP) and the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA). The list of participants is included in Annex VII.

4. Speakers in the opening session included the following authorities:

a) His Excellency José Alpuche, Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry of Agriculture of Belize, greeted and welcomed participants, and congratulated and thanked the organizers and sponsors of the meeting for promoting this initiative. He noted that feeding the most vulnerable sectors of the region is quite a challenge, and stressed that spaces for encounter like this meeting offer the opportunity to better understand the situation and join efforts to face the challenges related to the food security problem in the region.

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He said that due to multiple causes, a large part of the Latin American and Caribbean population suffers from hunger and solutions are varied. In referring to Belize, he explained that hunger suffered by part of its population has hampered the struggle to eradicate various diseases. Finally, he expressed optimism about the results of this meeting, which in his opinion will be very useful for the analysis and adoption of effective solutions for such pressing problems as food insecurity in the region.

b) The Honourable Mourad Ahmia, Executive Secretary of the Group of 77 and representative of the Pérez Guerrero Trust Fund (PGTF), summarized the contribution of this international body in the field of food security within the framework of international cooperation in the region, with particular emphasis on South-South Cooperation. Then, he said that the food crisis had emerged in a situation of poor distribution of the world food supply and lack of coherence in international policies, as well as an unfavourable environment towards development, including agriculture and food production. He added that there is a pressing need to promote actions that minimize the negative impact of food crisis, especially on the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. He pointed out that the achievement of long-term food security requires strengthening the agricultural sector in developing countries, through enhanced research by governments in partnerships with the international community. He also emphasized that international cooperation remains critical to ensure food security. Finally, he referred to the need for the PGTF to increase its financial funds in order to develop its project portfolio, much of which relates to countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.

c) The Honourable José Miguel Pérez, Head of the Office of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) in Belize, greeted and welcomed participants. Then he highlighted some of the factors contributing to the food crisis: inadequate policies, absence of strategic planning, poor harvests, lack of availability of good-quality genetic material, volatile food prices, increasing use of farmland to provide materials for bio-fuels, and rising global demand for safe and nutritious food. Pérez stressed that IICA promotes the adoption of policies for food security aimed to (i) increase investment in agriculture to build on capacity for research and development, and innovation and extension; (ii) foster the integration of small and medium-sized agricultural enterprises; and (iii) promote free international trade in food. He added that IICA also participates in the implementation of food security programmes to facilitate access to food to the most vulnerable segments of the population.

Finally, Pérez pointed out that IICA is also dealing with issues such as the relationship between agriculture and the environment, natural resources and climate change, and, at the same time, it has helped its Member States to meet the challenges associated with food security, biotechnology, biosafety, agri-tourism, organic agriculture, agricultural security, agribusiness and rural development, among others.

d) The Honourable Ricardo Rapallo, Food Security Official of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), greeted and welcomed the audience. Then, he underscored the importance of the meeting in view of the dimension of the problem of food insecurity in the region, especially because it would be analyzed on the basis of shared solutions, from the perspective of international cooperation. Finally, Rapallo expressed his conviction that the presentations to be delivered during the meeting and the discussions stemming from them would contribute to make strides in regional efforts to ensure food security in the region.

e) The Honourable Ambassador Carlos Bivero, Director of Relations for Integration and Cooperation of the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA), greeted and

welcomed the audience, and thanked, on behalf of Ambassador José Rivera Banuet, Permanent Secretary of SELA, for the support provided by the co-sponsors of the meeting. Then he highlighted the objectives set out in the agenda of the event.

Bivero proceeded to summarize SELA's activities in the field of food security, stressing that this issue has been a priority for Latin American and Caribbean governments and it has been so reflected in the various summits and meetings at presidential level held recently in the region. He recalled that Latin America and the Caribbean is one of the largest food producers among the regions of the world, however out of its 589 million inhabitants, 218 million live in poverty, and out of the latter figure, 53 million suffer from hunger and malnutrition. He also said that, although there is still a long way to go, the region has outlined policies to allow a good number of this population to have access to basic food staples through various State programmes for direct transfer of resources or through social security systems. Then he said that there are several pending tasks faced by the region, but probably the most urgent one is building more egalitarian and equitable societies. Bivero added that other necessary steps are: to outline policies to control speculation in food prices; support farmers; achieve a progressive convergence between the agricultural and food agendas and the agenda on climate change; analyze efficiency in food production, the use of pesticides, fertilizers and especially water; and address the issue of food waste.

Finally, he announced that, within the context of its Work Programme for the year 2013, the Permanent Secretariat of SELA will submit an activity specifically designed for the Government of Belize in order to support and enhance the experiences of small and medium-sized enterprises for the promotion and internationalization of agricultural production. This activity will form part of the SELA-SMEs Project: "Inter-institutional cooperation for the development of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Latin America and the Caribbean."

The speeches delivered during the opening session are included in Annexes II, III and IV of this report.

A. DEVELOPMENT OF WORKS

5) The moderator submitted the Draft Agenda of the meeting for consideration by the delegates, who approved it without amendment. Both the agenda and the informative documents submitted by the Permanent Secretariat, as well as the presentations of the regional and international agencies and Member States are available on SELA's Web page (<http://www.sela.org>).

6) **Introductory session:** The Permanent Secretariat submitted its study "Latin American and Caribbean cooperation in the area of food security" (SP/XXIII-RDCIALC/DT N° 2-12). The presentation was in charge of Carlos Ortuño, Coordinator of Projects and Official of the Centre of Information and Database of SELA.

7) **Session I: Cooperation in the area of food security from the perspective of regional and international organizations.** The session was moderated by José Alpuche, Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Agriculture of Belize. After making a brief introduction to the subject, Alpuche gave the floor to the following speakers:

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8) Gerardo de Cosio, Representative of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) in Belize, dealt with the issue of ["Cooperation in the Area of Food Security from the Perspective of PAHO/WHO"](#) (SP/XXIII-RDCIALC/Di N° 5-12).

9) Luther St. Ville, Operations Officer of the Ministry of Agriculture of Barbados, delivered the presentation ["Caribbean Development Bank: priorities in the area of Food Security"](#) (SP/ XXIII-RDCIALC/Di N° 6-12).

10) Julio Torres, Officer of the Direction for Multilateral and Global Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Chile and representative of the Pro Tempore Presidency of the [Community of Latin America and the Caribbean States \(CELAC\)](#), spoke about the vision and prospects of CELAC concerning food security (SP/XXIII-RDCIALC/Di N° 8-12).

11) José Miguel Pérez, Head of the Office of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) in Belize, made a presentation entitled ["Situation of food security in the Americas"](#) (SP/ XXIII-RDCIALC/Di N° 9-12).

12) Afterwards, the moderator thanked the speakers for their contributions and invited delegates to express their opinions.

13) In general, participants were very enthusiastic about the initiatives and actions analyzed, and about the stronger role that international agencies are playing in the area of international cooperation, relieving SELA of such role as facilitator, as it is focusing on the specific field of food security. Participants made special reference to, and welcomed, the base study presented by the Permanent Secretariat. There was an active exchange of opinions as regards the actions that international organizations have undertaken to promote food security both at the regional and subregional levels. Participants also shared their impressions about the positive results that the actions and initiatives discussed during this session might have in the short, medium and long terms, and made recommendations aimed at optimizing such actions. In general, they embraced the idea that food safety will only be possible to the extent that the region's governments and institutions continue to develop the necessary cooperation actions and implement the policies required in order to face the challenges posed by the fight against hunger and malnutrition.

14) The moderator thanked the delegates and participants for their remarks, ideas and recommendations.

15) **Session II: Priorities and mandates of development banks and regional and subregional integration schemes in the area of food security.** The moderator in this session was Mrs. Judith Alpuche, Executive Director of the Ministry of Human Development, Social Transformation and Poverty Reduction of Belize, who introduced the topic and gave the floor to the speakers.

16) George Alcee, Officer of the Agriculture Programme of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), delivered a presentation entitled ["Priorities and Mandates of Regional and Sub-regional Integration Schemes in the Area of food Security"](#) (SP/XXIII-RDCIALC/Di N° 10-12).

17) Julio Calderón Arrieta, Executive Secretary of the [Central American Agricultural Council \(CAC\)](#), described the activities of that institution, highlighting its main strategies to foster food security in Central America (SP/ XXIII-RDCIALC/Di N° 11-12).

18) Edwin Mauricio Aragón, Regional Coordinator of Programmes in Support to Food Chains of the International Regional Organization for Plant and Animal Health (OIRSA), dealt with [“The role of OIRSA and Food Security”](#) (SP/ XXIII-RDCIALC/Di N° 12-12).

19) After the presentations, the moderator thanked speakers for their contributions and invited delegates to express their opinions.

20) At the end of this session there was a lively exchange of views, which lasted for a considerably long time due to the number of questions made to the speakers, most of which were about the priorities and mandates stemming from the regional integration schemes and their impact on food security. Participants made emphasis on the challenges, activities and prospects of Eastern Caribbean countries in the area of food security, particularly the attitude and the vision of the youth vis-à-vis the issue of food security. Based on the questions and comments made to their presentations, speakers expounded on their initial ideas and made some proposals which were welcomed by participants and are included in the conclusions and recommendations of this report.

21) Session III. Cooperation in the area of food security from the perspective of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean: Successful national and regional experiences and lessons learned. This session was moderated by Alfonso Gahona, Director of International Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belize, who made a brief presentation on the subject and gave the floor to the speakers.

22) Fernando Tzib, Coordinator of the National Commission for Food Security of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Agriculture of Belize, delivered a presentation entitled [“Belize Food and Nutrition Security”](#) (SP/XXIII-RDCIALC/Di N° 13-12).

23) Mrs. Marta Villegas, Director of the Executive Secretariat for Agricultural and Livestock Sector Planning (SEPSA) of Costa Rica dealt with the issue of [“Agricultural and Food Policy – SAN National Policy: Challenges and Actions”](#) (SP/XXIII-RDCIALC/Di N° 14-12).

24) Mrs. Giovanna Valverde, Director of International Affairs of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock of Costa Rica, delivered the presentation [“International Cooperation and Food Security”](#) (SP/XXIII-RDCIALC/Di N° 15-12).

25) Camilo Luco, Specialist in South-South Cooperation of the International Cooperation Agency of Chile (AGCI), made the presentation [“International Cooperation Agency of Chile \(AGCI\)”](#) (SP/ XXIII-RDCIALC/Di N° 16-12).

26) Mrs. Tasha Nemhard, Analyst of Policies of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries of Jamaica, dealt with [“Cooperation in the area of Food Security from the perspective of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean: Successful experiences and lessons learned”](#) (SP/XXIII-RDCIALC/Di N° 17-12).

27) After a brief coffee break, speakers continued with the presentations scheduled on the Agenda of the meeting.

28) Ricardo Rapallo, Food Security Official. Coordinator a.i. of the Hunger-Free Latin America and Caribbean Initiative Support Project of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), spoke about [“Regional Cooperation in the areas of Food Security”](#) (SP/XXIII-RDCIALC/Di N° 18-12).

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29) Mrs. Patricia Palma, Director of the Regional Programme for Food and Nutritional Security in Central America (PRESANCA) of SICA, and Emil Waight, of the General Secretariat of SICA made the presentation "[Priorities and mandates in the area of Food and Nutritional Security](#)" (SP/XXIII-RDCIALC/Di N° 19-12).

30) Mrs. María Elena Montenegro, International Consultant of the World Food Programme (WFP), delivered the presentation "[WFP cooperation in the area of child malnutrition and food security](#)" (SP/XXIII-RDCIALC/Di N° 20-12).

31) Kenrick R. Leslie, Executive Director of the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC), talked about the current activities of the CCCCC and its prospect in the short, medium and long terms.

32) Mrs. Rossana Arauco Aliaga, Official of the Direction of Policies and Programmes of the Peruvian Agency of International Cooperation (APCI), delivered the presentation "Cooperation and Food Security in Peru" (SP/XXIII-RDCIALC/Di N° 21-12).

The moderator adjourned the session to resume it in the afternoon with the presentation of the video "Zero Hunger Plan in Guatemala", in charge of Enrique Gil, Director of Cooperation Programmes and Projects of the Ministry of Economy of Guatemala.

The moderator thanked speakers for their presentations, and invited the delegates and participants to make their remarks about them.

There was an active exchange of opinions, questions and observations relating basically to the role of the International Cooperation Directors and possible strategies to promote national, regional and subregional efforts to promote food security, on the basis of cooperation and joint and coordinated work. Item B of this report reflects some of the conclusions and recommendations resulting from the discussions carried out during the working sessions.

33) Session IV. Follow-up to the conclusions and recommendations of the last meeting of Cooperation Directors. The session was moderated by Ambassador Carlos Bivero, Director of Relations for Integration and Cooperation of the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA).

34) Pursuant to the agreements reached at the last meeting of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean, the Permanent Secretariat of SELA made available to the national authorities and focal points for international cooperation the [Directory of Cooperation Sources for Financing South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Latin American and Caribbean countries](#) (SP/XXIII-RDCIALC/Di N° 7-12.) and [SELA's sub-portal of International Cooperation Directors](#), which can be accessed through SELA's Web site (www.sela.org). Both tools were presented by Javier Gordon, Coordinator of Cooperation Projects of SELA.

35) Venue, date and topic for the XXIV Meeting of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean. Mrs. Claudia Aguilar, Director-General for Development Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of El Salvador, made an offer for her country to provide the venue and co-sponsor the XXIV Meeting of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean (Annex V), whose central topic would be "Cooperation for border integration in Latin America and the Caribbean".

In turn, Enrique Gil, Director of Cooperation Programmes and Projects of the Ministry of Economy of Guatemala, offered his country to host and co-sponsor the XXV Meeting of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean. (Annex VI).

B. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The “XXIII Meeting of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean: Regional Cooperation in the area of Food Security,” organized by the Permanent Secretariat of SELA, in conjunction with the Government of Belize, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) and the Pérez-Guerrero Trust Fund (PGTF) of the Group of 77, took place on 1 and 2 October 2012 in Belize City, Belize.

The participants took note of the base document “Latin American and Caribbean cooperation in the area of food security (SP/XXXIII-RDCIALC/DT No. 2-12), submitted by the Permanent Secretariat.

In addition, they welcomed the “Directory of Cooperation Sources for Financing South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation in Latin American and Caribbean countries” (SP/Di N° 16-12) and the portal enabled by the Permanent Secretariat, in compliance with its Work Programme for 2012 and in its capacity as regional focal point, for the exchange of information on technical cooperation in developing countries. This portal was also put at the disposal of the International Cooperation Directors in Latin America and the Caribbean with the purpose of facilitating the systematization and the exchange of experiences on regional cooperation. Both tools were designed by taking into account the existence of other digital spaces, the complementarity, the need to avoid duplication of efforts and waste of time and resources; and, above all, the need to incorporate the regional bodies involved in the Latin American and Caribbean cooperation.

The participants appreciated the presentations and speeches delivered by representatives from subregional, regional and international organizations specializing in the area, as well as those of international cooperation directors focused on national efforts and cooperation initiatives to promote food security in the region.

The exchange of information and perspectives on the issue led to the following conclusions and recommendations, to be submitted for consideration of the respective authorities:

Conclusions:

- 1) Food prices continue to generate concern in the international community. In the past four years, they have been consistently above pre-2008 levels. In particular, they have remained at high levels in the first six months of 2012. In addition, FAO and OECD have projected higher actual food prices for the next decade with respect to the 2001-2010 average, and therefore difficulties to ensure food security are expected to persist in the long term.
- 2) The final impact of the increase and volatility of food prices in Latin America and the Caribbean has been moderated by the GDP growth and the current situation of high prices for exports of agricultural products from most countries. All this has a positive long-term effect due to increased uptake of private investment in the agricultural sector, thus favouring the productivity of the sector. However, it is

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necessary to recognize that, in the case of other countries, in particular those that are net importers or highly sensitive to climate change, mitigation factors have not necessarily had the same effect.

- 3) There is a general consensus about the need to strengthen regional cooperation to promote food security, and it has been confirmed that the current situation represents an opportunity to increase such cooperation in order to counter the possible effects of a slowdown of the economic growth and the potential decline in the international prices of commodities in the coming years.
- 4) The main challenge for Latin America and the Caribbean is to ensure the population's access to food, taking into account that prices will continue to rise and that production in the region will step up, but in a context of increasing scarcity and global crisis of natural resources due to, among other factors, the prospects for substantial increase in the world population in the coming decades.
- 5) Latin American and Caribbean countries have been very active in the technical diagnosis and the political recognition of the situation in the field of food security. The most recent initiatives in this direction have been the 2012 Caracas Action Plan and Declaration of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC); the Regional Conference of FAO for Latin America and the Caribbean (Buenos Aires, March 2012); the Declaration of Cochabamba on Food Security with Sovereignty in the Americas (the OAS General Assembly, June 2012); and the follow-up actions of the Hunger-Free Latin America and the Caribbean Initiative (Guyana, 2012).
- 6) In this context, the cooperation and the coordination of policies in the productive and food areas among the countries in the region have been considered key factors to promote regional food security. Moreover, stress has been made on the importance of avoiding protectionist measures at regional and global levels and, in this connection, of facilitating market access to meet national demands.
- 7) At present, not enough relevant information is available at the regional level to facilitate an efficiently documented decision-making and the adoption of appropriate measures to counteract future food emergencies.
- 8) Although the factors linked to the international situation are important, it was found that food security problems in the region are also related to domestic factors, such as individual access to food, which is determined by multiple factors, including the purchasing power of people to ensure adequate intake of food and nutrition, among others.
- 9) The availability of food in the region is threatened by climate variability in the short term and climate change and natural disasters in the medium and long terms. This situation affects particularly, although not exclusively, the Caribbean and Central America.

Recommendations:

- 1) Cooperation and coordination should be promoted among the countries in the region and between them and subregional, regional and international organizations to achieve greater food and nutrition security. The ultimate goal is to

prevent the risk of a food crisis in the event of adverse changes in the international context and/or conditions of national economies.

- 2) A rapprochement between public and private sectors should be promoted and strengthened to increase the public-private investment for better infrastructure and market conditions in the agricultural sector and to boost the exchange of ideas, knowledge and information with a view to incorporating improvements and innovations in agriculture, as well as in research, education, investment and infrastructure, among other aspects.
- 3) It is recommended to promote the systematic use of the various mechanisms for financing and supporting available regional projects and programmes launched by multilateral organizations.
- 4) Indicators for measuring regional food security should be optimized and monitored, with a particular focus on the situation in each country.
- 5) The concept and scope of nutrition security should be analyzed as a complementary but specific factor to be considered in a strategy for the promotion of food security.
- 6) A boost should be given to actions aimed at ensuring free market access and facilitating food trade through existing integration agreements or a specific agreement covering the entire region.
- 7) A recommendation is made to improve coordination among legal frameworks related to the right to food in each country, including the regulation of food markets.
- 8) The creation of national information and monitoring systems in the area of food and nutrition should be promoted to facilitate timely and efficient access to relevant quantitative and qualitative information and support decision-making on this topic in the region.
- 9) Emphasis should be made on the systematization of efforts aimed at the exchange of experiences and information in many aspects, such as: improvement of productivity; design and implementation of social, welfare, research and innovation programmes; and knowledge transfer, among others, and to seek greater coordination and synergy among regional and subregional stakeholders involved in the efforts to make strides towards food security in the region.
- 10) It is recommended to take advantage of the productive capacity of Latin American and Caribbean countries through the establishment of mechanisms for the cooperation and coordination of economic, productive, food and nutrition policies at the regional level.
- 11) National efforts in the area of food security should be strengthened through the implementation of public policies on prices, wages, education, health, infrastructure and transportation, among others, incorporating monitoring and evaluation systems to assess progress towards the achievement of expected results and to determine the state of progress.

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- 12) Specific public policies to overcome poverty should be promoted, helping turn into concrete actions the will expressed by the Heads of State of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) to boost a regional food and nutrition policy.
- 13) Family farming and small and medium-scale farming should be involved in the efforts to achieve food security in the region, and local capacities should be strengthened to stimulate the production of small entrepreneurs and food production.
- 14) It is recommended to strengthen regional capacities in the implementation of programmes to ensure both the availability and quality of food.
- 15) The adoption of strategies to mitigate the effects of climate change and natural disasters should be promoted, and agricultural programmes and food production should be protected.
- 16) The formation of social protection networks to reduce food insecurity should be stimulated.
- 17) A food culture approach to nutrition should be promoted.
- 18) A greater boost should be given to intra-regional cooperation, with special emphasis on South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation.
- 19) The Permanent Secretariat of SELA is requested to submit for consideration of the Pro Tempore Presidency of CELAC the recommendations arising from this XXIII Meeting of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean, as a contribution to the analysis of the issue of food security and in compliance with decisions on social development and hunger and poverty eradication contained in the 2012 Caracas Action Plan.

The delegations warmly welcomed the offer made by the Government of El Salvador, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to be the venue and co-sponsor of the XXIV Meeting of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean, to take place in 2013. In addition, they took note of the offer of the Government of Guatemala, through the Ministry of the Economy, to be the venue and co-sponsor of the XXV Meeting of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean, to be held in 2014.

The delegations also acknowledged the valuable contributions made by the Pérez-Guerrero Trust Fund (PGTF) of the Group of 77 to the forum of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean, through the Permanent Secretariat of SELA, and urged the Fund to continue providing such support for future regional meetings.

The International Cooperation Directors of SELA Member States, representatives from regional and international organizations and other participants thanked the Government of Belize, in particular the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, for the organization of this regional meeting and for the hospitality received during the event. They also thanked the Pérez-Guerrero Trust Fund (PGTF) of the Group of 77, the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Permanent Secretariat of the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA) for

organizing the XXIII Meeting of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean and providing the technical and financial support for its conduction.

Once the presentation of the conclusions and recommendations was concluded, participants proceeded to the closing session.

C. CLOSING SESSION

At the closing session of the "XXIII Meeting of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean: Regional Cooperation in the area of Food Security", the following personalities took the floor: Her Excellency Mrs. Audrey Wallace, Chief Executive Officer in the Office of the Prime Minister; the Honourable Ambassador Mourad Ahmia, Executive Secretary of the Group of 77. Representative of the Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund (PGTF) for South-South Cooperation; the Honourable Mr. José Miguel Pérez, Head of the Office of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) in Belize; the Honourable Mr. Ricardo Rapallo, Food Security Official of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); and the Honourable Ambassador Carlos Bivero, Director of Relations for Integration and Cooperation of the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA), who reiterated the importance of regional dialogue and debates on such a crucial issue as food security, from the perspective of international cooperation. They congratulated the speakers for their valuable presentations and participants, in general. They also thanked the governments of El Salvador and Guatemala for their offers to host and co-sponsor the upcoming meetings of International Cooperation Directors.

Ambassador Carlos Bivero, on behalf of the Permanent Secretary of SELA, Ambassador Jose Rivera Banuet, and his own, thanked the government of Belize and, particularly, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its staff for their support and collaboration in conducting this regional meeting. Bivero also thanked the Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund (PGTF), of the Group of 77, for the support that it has provided to the Meetings of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean in the last few years. He also expressed gratitude to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) for their sponsorship to conduct this meeting. Bivero also thanked the Member States of SELA and the regional and international organizations for their participation. He made special reference to the governments of El Salvador and Guatemala, thanking them for their offers to provide the venues and co-sponsoring for the XXIV and XXV Meetings of International Cooperation Directors, respectively. In addition, Bivero informed that the Permanent Secretariat of SELA – in consultation with several Member States as regards the preparation for the "XXVI Meeting of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean" – has submitted a project for consideration of the Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund (PGTF), of the Group of 77, to support the conduction of that meeting.

Agenda

**XXIII MEETING OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION DIRECTORS
FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

“REGIONAL COOPERATION IN THE AREA OF FOOD SECURITY”

Date: 1 and 2 October 2012. Belize City, Belize
Address: Radisson Fort George Hotel and Marina, 2 Marine Parade

Objectives: i) Identify actions and initiatives for better coordination and synergy among the various international cooperation actors at the regional and subregional levels as regards food security; ii) Analyze, organize and update available information on cooperation programmes, projects, and actions related to food security that have been undertaken by the various regional and subregional integration and cooperation schemes in Latin America and the Caribbean, in order to identify their strengths and weaknesses, and support inter-institutional coordination; iii) Promote the identification of bilateral and multilateral cooperation sources for the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as cooperation opportunities that can be exploited within the region to support food security; iv) Identify policy proposals and recommendations for strengthening international cooperation, South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation in the area of food security; v) Promote and facilitate opportunities for exchanging offers and requests in priority areas of international cooperation and in fields with an impact on economic and social development in the region.

Monday, 1 October 2012

Morning	
8:30 – 9:00	REGISTRATION
9:00 – 9:45	<p>OPENING SESSION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speech by His Excellency José Alpuche, Executive Director of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Agriculture of Belize • Speech by Ambassador Mourad Ahmia, Executive Secretary of the Group of 77. Representative of the Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund (PGTF) for South-South Cooperation • Speech by Mr. José Miguel Pérez, Head of the Office of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) in Belize • Speech by Mr. Ricardo Rapallo, Food Security Official of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) • Speech by Ambassador Carlos Bivero, Director of Relations for Integration and Cooperation of the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA)
9:45 – 10:00	COFFEE BREAK

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- 10:00 - 10:30 **INTRODUCTORY SESSION: PRESENTATION OF THE STUDY “LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN COOPERATION IN THE AREA OF FOOD SECURITY”, PREPARED BY THE PERMANENT SECRETARIAT OF SELA**
Presentation: Carlos Ortuño, Coordinator of Projects and Official of the Centre of Information and Database of SELA
- 10:30 – 11:00 **DEBATE**
- 11:00 – 12:00 **SESSION I: COOPERATION IN THE AREA OF FOOD SECURITY FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**
Moderator: Jose Alpuche, Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of Natural Resources and Agriculture of Belize
- Panel: 15-20 minute presentations**
- Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO), Gerardo de Cosio, PAHO/WHO Representative in Belize
 - Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), Luther St. Ville, Operations Officer, Ministry of Agriculture of Barbados
 - Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), Julio Torres, Directorate for Multilateral and Global Affairs. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Chile
 - Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), José Miguel Pérez, Representative in charge of the Office of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) in Belize. Presentation: “Situation of food security in the Americas”
- 12:00 – 1:00 **DEBATE**
- 1.00 – 2:30 **FREE TIME FOR LUNCH**

Afternoon

- 2:30 – 4:15 **SESSION II: PRIORITIES AND MANDATES OF DEVELOPMENT BANKS AND REGIONAL AND SUBREGIONAL INTEGRATION SCHEMES IN THE AREA OF FOOD SECURITY**
Moderator: Judith Alpuche, Executive Director, Ministry of Human Development, Social Transformation and Poverty Reduction of Belize
- Panel: 15-20 minute presentations**
- Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), George Alcee, Official of the Agriculture Programme
 - Central American Agricultural Council (CAC), Julio Calderón Arrieta, Executive Secretary

- International Regional Organization for Plant and Animal Health (OIRSA), Edwin Mauricio Aragón, Regional Coordinator of Programmes in Support to Food Chains

4:15 – 4:30 **COFFEE BREAK**

4:30 – 5:30 **DEBATE**

Tuesday, 2 October 2011

Morning

9:00 - 10:40

SESSION III: COOPERATION IN THE AREA OF FOOD SECURITY FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION DIRECTORS FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN: SUCCESSFUL NATIONAL AND REGIONAL EXPERIENCES AND LESSONS LEARNED

Moderator: Alfonso Gahona, Director of International Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belize

Panel: 15-20 minute presentations

- Belize, Dr. Fernando Tzib, Coordinator of the National Commission for Food Security of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Agriculture
- Costa Rica, Marta Villegas, Director of the Executive Secretariat for Agricultural and Livestock Sector Planning (SEPSA)
- Costa Rica, Giovanna Valverde, Director of International Affairs of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock
- Chile, Camilo Luco, Specialist in South-South Cooperation of the International Cooperation Agency of Chile (AGCI)
- Jamaica, Tasha Nemhard, Policy Analyst, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries

10:40 – 11:15

COFFEE BREAK

11:15 - 01:00

SESSION III (continued)

- Hunger-free Latin America by 2025 – Guatemala. Ricardo Rapallo, Food Security Official. Coordinator a.i. of the Hunger-Free Latin America and Caribbean Initiative Support Project of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
- Regional Programme of Food and Nutrition Security for Central America (PRESANCA). Patricia Palma de Fulladolsa, Director of PRESANCA, and Emil Waight, General Secretariat of SICA
- World Food Programme (WFP), María Elena Montenegro, International Consultant. Presentation: "Cooperation of the WFP in the areas of childhood malnutrition and food security"

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- Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC), Kenrick R. Leslie, Executive Director
- Peru, Rossana Arauco Aliaga, Official of the Office of Policies and Programmes of the Peruvian Agency for International Cooperation (APCI)

01:00 – 2:30

FREE TIME FOR LUNCH**Afternoon**

2:30 – 3:00

SESSION III (continued)

- Guatemala, Enrique Gil, Director of Cooperation Programmes and Projects of the Ministry of Economy. Presentation of the video *Zero Hunger Plan in Guatemala*.

3:00 – 4:00

DEBATE

4:00 – 5:00

SESSION IV: FOLLOW-UP TO THE CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE LAST MEETING OF COOPERATION DIRECTORS

Moderator: Carlos Bivero, Director of Relations for Integration and Cooperation of SELA

- Directory of Cooperation Sources for Financing South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Latin American and Caribbean countries and SELA's sub-portal of International Cooperation Directors. Javier Gordon, Coordinator of Cooperation Projects of SELA

VENUE, DATE AND TOPIC FOR THE XXIV MEETING OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION DIRECTORS FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

- Remarks by Claudia Aguilar, Director-General for Development Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of El Salvador. Offer to host and co-sponsor the XXIV Meeting of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean
- Remarks by Enrique Gil, Director of Cooperation Programmes and Projects of the Ministry of Economy of Guatemala. Offer to host and co-sponsor the XXV Meeting of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean

5:00

SESSION V: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5:30

CLOSING SESSION

- Speech by the Her Excellency Audrey Wallace, Chief Executive Officer in the Office of the Prime Minister
- Speech by Ambassador Mourad Ahmia, Executive Secretary of the Group of 77. Representative of the Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund (PGTF) for South-South Cooperation
- Speech by Mr. José Miguel Pérez, Head of the Office of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) in Belize
- Speech by Mr. Ricardo Rapallo, Food Security Official of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
- Speech by Ambassador Carlos Bivero, Director of Relations for Integration and Cooperation of the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA)

**Speech by the Honourable Ambassador Mourad Ahmia, Executive Secretary
of the Group of 77 and Representative of the Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund (PGTF)**

**Message from Dr. Eduardo Praselj,
President of the Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund (PGTF)
for South-South Cooperation**

Your Excellency José Alpuche, Executive Director of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Agriculture of Belize;

Honourable José Miguel Pérez, Head of the Office of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) in Belize;

Honourable Ricardo Rapallo, Food Security Official of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO);

Honourable authorities of the government of Belize;

Representatives of regional and international organizations;

Ladies and gentlemen:

1. I would like to seize this opportunity to share with you the contribution of the Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund for South-South Cooperation in terms of regional cooperation in the area of food security.

2. As we all know, the global food crisis, reinforced by the ongoing global financial and economic crisis, has become a major challenge for developing countries. It has emerged in a situation of significant mal-distribution of the world food supply and lack of coherence in international policies, as well as unfavourable environment towards development, including rural development, agriculture and food production. There is a pressing need to promote the implementation of actions that will minimize the negative impact of food crisis especially on the achievement of the MDGs.

3. We believe that the achievement of food security requires strengthening and revitalizing the agriculture sector in developing countries, through enhanced agricultural research by national governments in partnerships with the international community, including research on improved and adapted crop varieties better tailored to agro ecological regions, and wide and rapid diffusion of improved varieties, technologies and land, soil and water management practices, notably through capacities building in extension services.

In addition, improving food security requires going beyond short-term responses in order to protect and promote people's livelihoods over the longer term. The long term solutions should promote reinforcing agricultural development including enhancing market access for agricultural products from developing countries, sustainable investments in agricultural production and research, and targeting support to the advancement of the agricultural sector in developing countries, including small-scale farmers and the poor.

4. In that regard, international and regional cooperation remain critical to ensure long-term food security and there is a need to promote adequate investment in rural infrastructure, enhance market access for developing countries and promote responsible international investment in agriculture.

5. As you know, the Second South Summit has encouraged developing countries to work together to strengthen strategic partnerships so as to contribute to the sharing of knowledge, innovation and transfer of technology to improve food security among others critical sectors. In this context, many developing countries have engaged in regional and subregional cooperation in order to meet their food needs.

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6. Countries of the South can learn a great deal from each other especially from those that have faced or are facing similar difficulties. A more intensive sharing of agricultural knowledge and experience between developing countries should therefore be encouraged. Furthermore, developing countries could envisage sharing the costs of mutually beneficial agricultural research and development, in order to enable greater investment in this crucial field.

Excellencies,
Ladies and gentleman:

7. I wish to state that the Group of 77 has greatly contributed in promoting South-South Cooperation in the area of food security through the Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund (PGTF) for South-South Cooperation. As you are aware, the PGTF was a fund established for the purpose of supporting activities of critical importance in terms of south-cooperation. In 26 years of operation the PGTF has proved to be a useful mechanism for supporting South-South cooperation. It was launched in 1986 with an initial core capital of US\$ 5 million, with the condition that only interest earnings could be used for support so as to preserve intact the initial capital. Including the projects approved last week by the 36th Annual Meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77, held on 28 September 2012, PGTF has supported 243 projects with a total allocation of US\$ 12.0 million, benefitting directly 122 member countries members of the Group of 77 and collectively all of them through projects carried out by numerous organizations of the South.

8. Supported projects include 62 on food and agriculture, which received US\$ 3.3 million from PGTF. This total includes 45 projects that have been completed, 7 that are under implementation and 5 that are under preparation. The remaining 5 were not implemented and allocated funds reverted to PGTF. Twenty-one of the supported projects are interregional, while 34 are subregional and 7 are regional. Latin America and the Caribbean has been a particularly active region in this area, accounting for 13 of the 34 subregional projects and for 6 of the 7 regional projects. Finally, PGTF has supported 8 projects submitted by the SELA Permanent Secretariat, including three in the field of food and agriculture.

9. Over the years, the PGTF has built and consolidated momentum as a Fund responsive to the growing needs in support of South-South cooperation. As a result, many institutions of the South regularly submit well-prepared proposals, which have translated into the large number of approved and successfully completed projects that are at the basis of the excellent track record of the PGTF.

10. However, the current low interest rate environment in the banking system has made it necessary to expand the PGTF resources beyond interest earnings and, to this end, the Annual Ministerial Meetings of the Group of 77 have decided on several occasions to expand the PGTF resources and explore ways and means to implement it. This resource mobilization initiative has also been reflected in the documents adopted by the First and Second South Summits. I am honoured to report that member countries have generously responded to these appeals and so far the PGTF has received 105 contributions from 37 member countries, and 22 countries have already made multiple contributions for the yearly project cycle. In the context of this effort, a large contribution increased PGTF's core capital from US\$ 5 million to US\$ 6 million.

11. While the PGTF has undertaken a number of measures within its purview, aimed at maximizing to the extent possible the yield and multiplier effect of its resources, estimated interest earnings for the foreseeable future would be in the range of US\$ 210,000 to

US\$ 230,000 per annum, i.e. one-third less than in 2007. This amount is insufficient to meet the present demand for support of South-South cooperation projects through PGTF, which is at least US\$ 500,000 per annum according to past experience. Therefore, we need a strong support from member countries to bridge the present gap, and provide time to identify and implement other solutions aimed at ensuring the long term sustainability of PGTF.

12. In the past three years the PGTF faced similar situations and it was possible to bridge the gap due to generous contributions made by member countries, in response to appeals made at the Annual Ministerial Meetings of the Group. In light of the present and foreseeable difficult circumstances, the PGTF continues to need short term support by the members of the Group which may wish to consider a significant generous contribution to the PGTF in the immediate future.

13. The 2012 UN Pledging Conference for Development Activities, scheduled to be held in New York on 14 November 2012, constitutes another timely opportunity for all Latin America and Caribbean countries to announce their generous contributions to the PGTF. I wish to appeal to all of you to contribute to the PGTF for South-South Cooperation and provide us the means to make a greater impact in regional cooperation.

14. I wish all success to your deliberations.

I thank you.

A N N E X I I I

**Speech by the Honourable José Miguel Pérez, Head of the Office
of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) in Belize**

Thank you, Mr. Master of Ceremonies.

Mr. Maximiliano Ruiz, Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

Your Excellency, Mr. José Alpuche, Chief Executive Officer of Agriculture, Ministry of Natural Resources and Agriculture;

Honourable Mourad Ahmia, Executive Secretary of the Group of 77 and Representative of the Perez Guerrero Trust Fund;

Mr. Ricardo Rapallo, Food Security Official of FAO;

Ambassador Carlos Bivero, of the Latin America and Caribbean Economic System;

Members of the Diplomatic Corps;

Other government officials;

Other invited guest and friends:

My Director General, Dr. Victor Villalobos, extends his best wishes to the people of Belize and participants of this XXIII meeting, highlighting the importance of food security.

Food security has recently been given much attention in the global context despite continued food security crisis around the world. Factors contributing to the global food crises included inadequate government policies, lack of strategic planning, poor harvest, unavailability of improved genetic material, volatile prices, steady increase in the use of crop lands to supply material for bio-fuels and the growing world demand for safer and more nutritious food.

IIICA is a specialized agency of the Inter-American System for the promotion of agriculture and rural well-being and our efforts are fully focused on making agriculture competitive and sustainable in the Americas.

This year, we are celebrating our 70th anniversary of dedicated service in the hemisphere. Since our founding in 1942, we have acquired a wealth of experience in the provision of technical cooperation in the areas of technology and innovation for agriculture, agricultural health and food safety, agribusiness, agricultural trade, rural development and training.

More recently, the Institute has become involved in the relationship between agriculture and the environment, natural resources and climate change. It has also helped its member states to meet the new challenges of food security, biotechnology and biosafety, agro-energy, agro-tourism, organic agriculture, agricultural insurance, rural agro-industry and rural development from a territorial approach.

In our 34 Member States, we work closely with the ministries of agriculture, they give us our mandates. Our governing body is the Inter-American Board of Agriculture, comprising the ministers of agriculture of the hemisphere. In addition, we serve as the secretariat of the Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture in the Context of the Summit of the Americas process.

IIICA promotes the adoption of comprehensive food security policies; policies to increase investment in agriculture in order to develop needed scientific, research, innovation and

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extension capabilities; develop efficient and transparent agricultural local and foreign markets; institutional arrangements that promote the integration of small and medium-scale agricultural enterprises into existing and emerging markets; and promotion of free international trade for food.

Thank you very much.

**Speech by the Honourable Ambassador Carlos Bivero,
Director of Relations for Integration and Cooperation
of the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA)**

Your Excellency, Mr. José Alpuche, Chief Executive Officer of Agriculture, Ministry of Natural Resources and Agriculture;

Honourable Mourad Ahmia, Executive Secretary of the Group of 77 and Representative of the Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund (PGTF);

Honourable José Miguel Pérez, Representative a.i. of the Office of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) in Belize;

Honourable Ricardo Rapallo, Food Security Official of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO);

Honourable authorities of the Government of Belize;

Representatives of regional and international organizations;

Ladies and gentlemen:

The Permanent Secretariat of the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA) is very glad to warmly welcome you all in this "XXIII Meeting of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean", whose central topic this year is "Regional Cooperation in the area of food security".

Without a doubt, this is a top-priority issue for all the countries of the region, in view of its impact on the economies and, above all, its relevance in the social field, particularly at the level of nutrition and health in the most vulnerable sectors of society.

This new meeting of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean has been organized with the co-sponsorship of the Government of Belize, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund (PGTF) of the Group of 77 (G-77), and two organizations that have an undisputed leadership in the area of agricultural cooperation and food security: the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA).

Thus, I am expressing our sincerest appreciation to our co-sponsors, and particularly to the Government of Belize for welcoming us in this beautiful country, which marked a new year of its independence on 21 September.

Dear representatives:

Our work agenda will allow us for analyzing one of the most relevant issues for the region at present, namely: cooperation for food security in Latin America and the Caribbean.

On this occasion, we have set ourselves a very ambitious agenda, which addresses four fundamental aspects:

- i) Gain knowledge about the initiatives and actions undertaken by the various cooperation stakeholders in the area of food security, both in regional and subregional integration and cooperation groupings in Latin America and the Caribbean and in bilateral and multilateral development agencies.

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- ii) Gain knowledge about the cooperation programmes and projects implemented by the Member States of SELA in this area, underscoring best practices and successful experiences.
- iii) Identify spaces to promote cooperation in all its forms and to achieve greater coordination and synergy among the different regional cooperation actors.
- iv) And finally, identify proposals and policy recommendations for improving cooperation in the field of regional food security.

As many of you probably already know, the issues of agricultural cooperation and food security have been a concern of the Permanent Secretariat since its inception in 1975. Hence the intense activity and regional discussions that it has promoted by convening specialized meetings, which some years ago led to the establishment of various action committees to deal with this problem.

Some examples are: i) the Action Committee on Food Supplements (CACA, 1976); (ii) the Action Committee on Seafood and Fresh Water (CAPMAD, 1977), which later on gave rise to the Latin American Organization for Fisheries Development (OLDEPESCA); (iii) the Action Committee for the Manufacture of Fertilizers and certain Basic Raw Materials (CAFER, 1977), which later on led to the creation of the Latin American Multinational Company for Marketing of Fertilizers S.A. (MULTIFERT, 1980); (iv) the Action Committee for the Establishment of the Regional Food Security System (CASAR, 1982); and v) the Action Committee to support Economic and Social Development of Central America (CADESCA, 1986).

But it was in 2008 when this issue became an urgent one in the wake of the crisis resulting from the increase in food and fertilizer prices worldwide, which caused a global food crisis that continues to threaten Latin American and Caribbean countries.

Therefore, the Permanent Secretariat started a special follow-up to this subject by convening regional meetings and preparing analytical documents in compliance with Decision No. 495, adopted by the Latin American Council, maximum political body of SELA, in its XXXIV Regular Meeting (Caracas, 25 to 27 November 2008), relating to the "Regional Cooperation Programme on Food Security in Latin America and the Caribbean," which is aimed at consolidating a regional forum for the exchange of information, analysis, dissemination of information and support to public sector training in the area of food security.

Thus, since 2008, the Permanent Secretariat has organized three regional meetings and drafted five specialized studies that address this problem. It is worthwhile recalling that such information is available on SELA's Web site and the minisite that was especially developed for this meeting.

One of those studies has been prepared precisely as a contribution by the Permanent Secretariat for this meeting. Entitled "Latin American and Caribbean Cooperation in the area of food security", it analyzes cooperation initiatives in food security in Latin America and the Caribbean, which reflect the willingness, commitment and consensus as regards the adoption of joint measures to promote food security, and have brought about positive results that are now reference models and examples of best practices.

As I said earlier, food security has been considered by the Governments of Latin America and the Caribbean as a priority, and it has been so reflected in the various summits and meetings at the presidential level that have taken place recently in the region.

In 2012, the subject was dealt with at the highest level in the “XXXII Regional Conference of FAO for Latin America and the Caribbean”, which took place in Argentina in March 2012. It was also analyzed in the “Rio+20 Conference”, held in Brazil in June 2012; and in the “42nd General Assembly of the Organization of American States”, in Bolivia in June 2012.

And it could not be otherwise. Estimates indicate that one billion people are suffering from hunger worldwide (one in seven people); five million children die every year from malnutrition and others are suffering from diseases that have disabled them because of blindness, mental retardation and learning difficulties. Deficiencies and diseases caused by malnutrition in the first years of life are irreparable. More than 1.3 billion people are living on less than 1.25 dollars per day, which does not allow them to buy the minimum amount of foodstuff to survive.

Latin America and the Caribbean is one of the largest food producing regions in the world, but out of its 589 million inhabitants, 218 million people live in poverty, and out of them, 53 million people suffer from hunger and malnutrition.

Although there is a long way to go, the region is already designing policies to allow a great portion of that needy population to ensure basic food consumption through various State programmes for direct transfer of income or through social security systems. The region has enormous potential since it has approximately 576 million cultivable hectares, corresponding to 30% of the world’s total. However, sustainable development policies are required in order to take advantage of those lands so as to control soil degradation and pollution.

There are several pending tasks faced by the region, but probably the most urgent one is building more egalitarian and equitable societies.

As part of the agricultural agenda, this would imply, among other things, to design policies to control speculation in food prices (according to FAO only 2% of future commodity contracts end up in actual supply, since 98% is sold in speculative markets); to support farmers through loans, insurance, protection of family farming, to finance SMEs and to provide training and technical assistance, among other tasks. This is possible, and a proof thereof are the excellent initiatives undertaken by Brazil in this regard with the “Zero Hunger Program in Brazil” and “Brazil Without Misery” and the initiative “Latin America and Caribbean Without Hunger by 2025”, among others.

But it is also necessary to achieve a progressive convergence between the agricultural and food agendas and the agenda on climate change, in view of the greater frequency, magnitude and impact of the natural disasters that are affecting the region, mostly hurricanes, droughts and floods.

In addition, we need to analyze the efficiency of food production, the use of pesticides, fertilizers and especially water (according to FAO, 1,500 litres of water are required to produce one kilogram of grain and 10 times that amount for one kilogram of meat). Another important issue is the waste of food (according to FAO, nearly 1.3 billion tons of food – i.e. about one-third of the annual production – are lost or wasted each year). Consumers in rich countries throw away nearly 222 million tons of food, which is the

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equivalent to the net annual production in sub-Saharan Africa. This is morally unacceptable.

Before concluding, I would like to inform you that the Permanent Secretariat is submitting to the international cooperation directors the document entitled "Directory of Cooperation Sources for Financing South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Latin American and Caribbean countries," in compliance with a commitment agreed to at the latest meeting of International Cooperation Directors held in Panama.

In addition, I would like to take this opportunity to inform you that the Permanent Secretariat, acting in its capacity as "Regional Focal Point for exchanging information about technical cooperation among developing countries," has made available to the international cooperation directors a sub-portal in SELA's Web site to facilitate the exchange of information and generate informative products. In outlining this initiative, due account was taken of the existence of other digital spaces, while ensuring complementarity, avoiding duplication of efforts and waste of time and resources, and above all, including the regional bodies linked to cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Please also be informed that within the context of the XXXVIII Regular Meeting of the Latin American Council, to be held in Caracas, from 17 to 19 October 2012, the Permanent Secretariat will submit, as part of its Work Programme for the year 2013, an activity specifically designed for the Government of Belize in order to support and enhance the experiences of small and medium-sized enterprises for the promotion and internationalization of agricultural production. This activity will form part of the SELA-SMEs Project: "Inter-institutional cooperation for the development of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Latin America and the Caribbean."

To sum up, I would like to reiterate my gratitude to all you for your participation, and I wish you the greatest of success in conducting the activities and debates.

Thank you very much.

**Official communiqué from His Excellency Jaime Miranda,
Vice-Minister of Cooperation for Development of El Salvador
(Sponsoring and venue of the XXIV Meeting of International Cooperation Directors
for Latin America and the Caribbean)**



MINISTERIO DE RELACIONES EXTERIORES

SECRETARÍA DE ESTADO
MRREE/DGCD/CCMROFI/1974/2012

Antiguo Cuscatlán, 13 de septiembre de 2012

Estimado Señor Embajador Rivera Banuet:

Tengo el agrado de dirigirme a usted, con el propósito de hacer referencia a la reunión que sostuvo con el Ing. Hugo Martínez, Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores, el día 10 de julio del presente año, en el marco de su visita a El Salvador, en la que se expresó nuestro interés de ser sede de la "XXIV Reunión de Directores de Cooperación Internacional de América Latina y el Caribe" para el año 2013.

Al respecto, deseo trasladar a usted de manera formal el ofrecimiento y disposición de El Salvador de ser el país sede y copatrocinador de la XXIV Reunión, solicitando sus buenos oficios para que nuestra candidatura sea aceptada y anunciada durante la próxima reunión de Directores de Cooperación Internacional a celebrarse en Belice en octubre próximo.

Sin otro particular, aprovecho la ocasión para renovar las muestras de nuestra alta y distinguida consideración.



Jaime Miranda

Viceministro de Cooperación para el Desarrollo

Embajador José Rivera Banuet
Secretario Permanente del
Sistema Económico Latinoamericano y del Caribe (SELA)
Presente

UNOFFICIAL TRANSLATION

REPUBLIC OF EL SALVADOR
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

SECRETARIAT OF STATE
MRREE/DGCD/CCMROFI/1974/2012

Antiguo Cuscatlán, 13 September 2012

Dear Ambassador Rivera Banuet:

I have the honour to address you on the occasion of referring to the meeting that you held with Eng. Hugo Martínez, Minister of Foreign Affairs, on 10 July of this year, during your visit to El Salvador, in which we expressed our interest in hosting the XXIV Meeting of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean in 2013.

In this connection, I would like to formally notify of the offer and readiness of El Salvador to provide the venue for the XXIV Meeting and co-sponsor it, while requesting your good offices to accept our candidacy and make an announcement about it during the next Meeting of International Cooperation Directors, to be held in Belize in October.

I avail myself of the opportunity to renew to Your Excellency the assurances of my highest and most distinguished consideration.

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Jaime Miranda
Vice-Minister of Cooperation for Development

[There appears a seal of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of El Salvador]

To: Ambassador José Rivera Banuet
Permanent Secretary of the
Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA)

**Official communiqué from His Excellency Sergio de La Torre Gimeno,
Minister of Economy of Guatemala (Sponsoring and venue of the XV Meeting
of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean)**



MINISTERIO DE ECONOMIA

GUATEMALA, C. A.

DESS/289-2012
JEGN/aycr

Guatemala, 18 de septiembre del 2,012

Señor Secretario:

Tengo el honor de dirigirme a Vuestra Excelencia, en atención a su atenta nota referencia SP-12/0500 de fecha 10 de septiembre del presente año, relacionada con la XXIV Reunión de Directores de Cooperación Internacional de América Latina y el Caribe.

Al respecto me permito manifestarle nuestra complacencia por la designación de la República de El Salvador para la citada reunión. En este sentido agradecemos el ofrecimiento del SELA para ser la Sede de la XXV Reunión de Directores de Cooperación Internacional de América Latina y el Caribe, a realizarse en el año 2,014, lo cual aceptamos y nos sentimos muy honrados por esta nominación.

Al agradecer al Señor Secretario Permanente todas sus atenciones en el tema, hago propicia la ocasión para renovarle las muestras de mi más alta consideración y estima.



Sergio de la Torre Girones
MINISTRO DE ECONOMIA

Señor
José Rivera Banuet
Secretario Permanente
Sistema Económico Latinoamericano y del Caribe
Su Despacho

UNOFFICIAL TRANSLATION

MINISTRY OF ECONOMY
GUATEMALA, C.A.

DESS/289-2012

Guatemala, 18 September 2012

Dear Secretary:

I have the honour to address Your Excellency in response to your kind Note SP-12/0500, dated 10 September 2012, concerning the XXIV Meeting of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean.

In this connection, I would like to point out that we are very pleased by the fact that the Republic of El Salvador was designated as the venue for that meeting. We also appreciate the proposal made by SELA for Guatemala to host the XXV Meeting of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean, to be held in 2014, a nomination which we are honoured to accept.

In thanking the Permanent Secretary for his consideration of this issue, I avail myself of the opportunity to renew the assurances of my highest and most distinguished consideration.

[Illegible signature]
Sergio de la Torre Gimeno
Minister of Economy

[There appears a seal of the Ministry of Economy of Guatemala]

Mr. Ambassador José Rivera Banuet
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SP/XXIII-RDCIALC/Di N° 16-12	<p>Presentation: "International Cooperation. The International Cooperation Agency of Chile"</p> <p>Camilo Luco, Specialist in South-South Cooperation of the International Cooperation Agency of Chile (AGCI)</p>
SP/XXIII-RDCIALC/Di N° 17-12 (English version only)	<p>Presentation: "Jamaica's Food and Nutrition Security Initiatives"</p> <p>Tasha Nemhard, Analyst of Policies of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries of Jamaica</p>
SP/XXIII-RDCIALC/Di N° 18-12	<p>Presentation: "Regional Cooperation in the area of food security"</p> <p>Ricardo Rapallo, Food Security Official. Coordinator a.i. of the Hunger-Free Latin America and Caribbean Initiative Support Project of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) – Guatemala</p>

SP/XXIII-RDCIALC/Di N° 19-12	<p>Presentation: "Food and Nutritional Security in the Member States of SICA"</p> <p>Patricia Palma de Fulladolsa, Director of PRESANCA, and Emil Waight, General Secretariat of SICA – Regional Programme for Food and Nutritional Security in Central America</p>
SP/XXIII-RDCIALC/Di N° 20-12	<p>Presentation: "WFP cooperation in the area of child malnutrition and food security"</p> <p>María Elena Montenegro, International Consultant of the World Food Programme (WFP)</p>
SP/XXIII-RDCIALC/Di N° 21-12	<p>Presentation: "Cooperation and food security in Peru"</p> <p>Rossana Arauco Aliaga, Official of the Direction of Policies and Programmes of the Peruvian Agency of International Cooperation (APCI)</p>
VIDEO	<p>Guatemala, Enrique Gil, Director of Cooperation Programmes and Projects of the Ministry of Economy. Presentation of the video: "Zero Hunger Plan in Guatemala"</p>
SP/XXIII-RDCIALC/Di N° 22-12	<p>Presentation: Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund for South-South Cooperation (PGTF)</p> <p>Ambassador Mourad Ahmia, Executive Secretary of the Group of 77 and Representative of the Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund (PGTF) for South-South Cooperation</p>
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