

**Manila Plan of Action to Further Enhance Cooperation
Between East Asia and Latin America**

1. We, the Foreign Ministers of the thirty-two member countries of the Forum for East Asia-Latin America Cooperation (FEALAC) met in Manila, Philippines, on 30 and 31 January 2004 to deepen and broaden the links between our two regions. In this context, we welcomed the admission of Guatemala and Nicaragua as new members of the Forum.
2. Our meetings were conducted in a transparent and constructive atmosphere and were built upon the work begun at the First FEALAC Foreign Ministers' Meeting (FMM I), held in Santiago, Chile on 29-30 March 2001.
3. We noted the Forum's progress with satisfaction and recognized that it has accomplished much despite being a relatively new intergovernmental entity. FEALAC continues to demonstrate its value through the advancement of important inter-regional projects in various fields. This has shown that the Forum has a valuable complementary role in the international system.
4. We reiterated our commitment to abide by the Framework Document as FEALAC's guiding beacon. We resolved at this meeting in Manila that we will set a more focused direction for the Forum that will make full use of the momentum generated since the FMM I.
5. We reiterated that enhanced economic and cultural links would lead to closer and deeper political ties. We enjoined our officials responsible for the Forum to ensure that FEALAC stays true to this path. The FMM I gave the Forum its foundation. The forthcoming biennium will be a critical period of consolidation that will give FEALAC its determining character. Therefore, now is the time to move to a more substantive direction.
6. We recognized that FEALAC can help in promoting peace and strengthening multilateral cooperation in all fields in today's international environment. We appreciated the importance of building on our achievements and seizing opportunities to make FEALAC more agile and responsive to the changing international environment.

7. We acknowledged that FEALAC plays a valuable part in bringing together countries from two very diverse regions for dialogue and cooperation. We agreed that better understanding among FEALAC member countries on matters of mutual interest could be useful in addressing issues in the relevant multilateral fora, particularly in forging better cooperation where our views converge.

8. We agreed that while FEALAC plays an important complementary role to activities in other fora, it should not duplicate existing efforts. We recognized that FEALAC has an important role in adding value through its inter-regional, consensus-based approach.

9. We acknowledged that the three Working Groups established at the FMM I developed many useful projects. The Working Groups brought the two regions closer through more frequent contacts among individuals from the member countries. We attached particular importance to those projects that promote a greater understanding between the two regions, including through greater information dissemination and people-to-people contact through, among others, modern information technologies. There is a need for further dialogue and cultural exchange among the Forum's members in order to better appreciate and understand their respective cultures and ways of life.

Enhancing Economic Ties to Further Economic Development and Creating Opportunities to Overcome Poverty

10. We noted the important roles of stability and security in promoting economic development and agreed that they should be enhanced through strengthening the role of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security as well as cooperation at the national, regional and global levels, while respecting the sovereignty of nations, to allow development to take place at a sustained and sustainable pace.

11. We reaffirmed that one of the cornerstones of FEALAC's foundation is to enhance economic ties and expand cooperation between the two regions, including through South-South Cooperation. We recalled the important roles of the business and academic sectors in socio-economic development, and the part that trade and investments should play in promoting the prosperity of our populations, taking into account the challenges presented by today's global economy.

12. We reiterated that one of FEALAC's priorities is overcoming poverty and providing equal opportunities including by promoting among our people, particularly among the disadvantaged and marginalized, including women and youth, a worldview that embraces entrepreneurship and the right to a better life, thus contributing to socio-economic advancement. We can achieve this through the economic empowerment of our populations and the enhancement of social justice. We expressed our determination to

strengthen national efforts and work together towards ensuring that the positive effects of globalization are enjoyed more broadly and equitably and that its negative effects will not contribute to the marginalization of any sectors of human society, particularly those in developing countries including landlocked developing countries and the less developed countries.

13. We recognized that education is one of the best means of empowering our people and promoting sustainable development. In this regard, we noted the importance of embarking on projects complementary to the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, which will begin in 2005.

14. We recognized that most FEALAC member countries face the challenge of developing at a fast enough pace while safeguarding the environment. We recognized the importance of allocating the necessary resources to accomplish this, including through the promotion of employment and social services, including health and education for all. We reiterated the importance of accomplishing the internationally agreed development goals including the Millennium Development Goals, the actions set forth in the Monterrey Consensus, and the outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development. We expressed the need for work to continue urgently to ensure that the results of the Doha Development Round will contribute to a fairer and more equitable international trading system, bringing gains for all economies, particularly developing countries, via agricultural reform, improved market access for goods and services, and clarification and improvement of trade disciplines. We also expressed our support for the abolition of all forms of agricultural export subsidies in accordance with the Doha mandate.

15. We entrusted the SOM to coordinate the efforts of the working groups so that FEALAC may better contribute to fostering economic opportunities among FEALAC member countries, and encouraged the sharing of lessons learned and Best Practices. The SOM should ensure that the Working Groups undertake relevant projects in this regard, putting special attention on those projects that have a direct impact on our communities.

a. We encouraged efforts to strengthen trade and investment cooperation in FEALAC with particular attention given to the development of micro, small and medium enterprises as well as projects and fora that further build their capacity including through the strengthening of entrepreneurship and human resources.

b. We noted the need for a public-business sector partnership in FEALAC to promote socio-economic development and create opportunities to help overcome poverty and facilitate individual and social progress. We called for an increasing role of the various economic agencies in our respective countries to better interface between FEALAC's public, business, and academic sectors. There is a need to promote exchanges of Best

Practices to, among others, enhance governmental infrastructure to combat corruption, minimize red tape in bureaucracy, and strengthen the enabling environment for business and sustainable socio economic development. We encourage the participation of the FEALAC member countries in trade promotion programs offered by the International Trade Center (ITC), which is jointly sponsored by the World Trade Organization and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. Furthermore the establishment, therefore, of a FEALAC Business Council and a FEALAC Academic Exchange Program could be considered as important means to strengthen partnerships between the two regions.

c. We recognized that the provision of economic opportunities must be combined with a climate favorable to development. We noted the role of the international financial institutions in development and considered it imperative to foster important reforms in the international financial architecture to enhance their participation in developing countries' efforts to eradicate poverty and promote economic and social progress and alleviate the problem of external debt affecting many countries. We further recognized the contributions of multilateral specialized agencies and programs. We also recognized the contributions of regional financial institutions, such as the Asian Development Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank, in promoting bi-regional exchanges. We encouraged them to improve their efforts to uplift the poor and underprivileged, and to make East Asia-Latin America Cooperation a priority area.

d. We viewed the economic role of technology, especially information and communications technology, as an important engine of development. FEALAC should promote more exchanges and other technology transfers as well as collaborative research, while improving communications at all levels of the Forum to translate into better business opportunities. We encouraged activities that contribute to bridging the growing digital divide, particularly among and within FEALAC member countries including initiatives set forth in the Program of Action at the World Summit on the Information Society. Attention should also be placed on the exchange of best practices in the fields of environmental, agricultural and health technology.

e. We acknowledged that it would be useful for FEALAC member countries to share experiences and Best Practices in promoting, among others, urban renewal, urban planning, land-use planning and infrastructure development and urban transport, mass housing and waste management, as well as rural development concerns.

Securing the Future

16. We noted that, while increased interdependence between nations has brought about certain advantages, including accelerated communications and economic interaction, it

has also increased the vulnerability of countries and individuals to transnational threats. We believe that enhancing security for the well being of all people contributes positively to global sustainable development. It is therefore necessary to renew our commitment to combat crime, terrorism, and other trans-national threats, including by understanding their root causes.

17. We acknowledged as important the need to mitigate against threats to human lives while realizing the full potential and security of each individual and state. In this context, a holistic approach that takes into account challenges such as environmental degradation, natural disasters, extreme poverty and hunger, illicit drugs, infectious diseases, human trafficking, transnational crime and terrorism, must be elaborated to secure the future of our people. Recognizing that it remains the principal responsibility of the state to promote the well being of its citizens, we highlighted the importance of enabling our populations to confront these tests as united societies.

18. We entrusted the SOM to coordinate the efforts of the Working Groups so that FEALAC may better contribute in addressing challenges to our security in an integrated and efficient manner.

a. We emphasized that the dialogue on matters affecting security should be broadened and deepened and relevant projects, including those to promote inter-faith and inter-cultural understanding, be undertaken at the appropriate time. These efforts could include a program of interfaith dialogue so as to minimize religious prejudices, including as a result of the fight against terrorism.

b. We recognized the importance of cooperation between the two regions on disaster reduction, mitigation, relief and rehabilitation, and the strengthening of our efforts including in the various fora of the United Nations, and as part of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction. The SOM should therefore promote projects in this regard in the appropriate Working Groups with emphasis on projects related to early warning for natural and epidemic emergencies.

Strengthening FEALAC to Further Inter-Regional Dialogue

19. We agreed on the following to enhance our on-going inter-regional dialogue:

a. We authorized the Senior Officials to establish an ad referendum mechanism to secure the imprimatur of the Foreign Ministers once they have already reached consensus on procedural and administrative matters. Such a mechanism shall be used only if and when necessary. This is to ensure that decisions can be finalized with a minimum of delay while maintaining consensus-based decision-making in the Forum.

b. We agreed that sub-regional and inter-regional contacts at the official and unofficial levels, including the business and academic sectors, as well as the exchange of youth and cultural troupes, should continue to be enriched and that these interactions should serve to reinforce the intergovernmental nature of the Forum.

c. We instructed the SOM to avoid duplication of efforts and to evaluate projects, inter alia, with regard to their effectivity in the accomplishment of their respective goals; in furthering FEALAC's objectives; and in involving a significant number of member countries. We recognized that existing projects have contributed to accomplishing these objectives.

d. We agreed that while it is preferable for Co-Chairs and Regional Coordinators to host FEALAC meetings, and that they should be the choice of first instance, a greater degree of flexibility could be exercised in selecting hosts for meetings. Such a selection should be on the basis of consensus.

20. We agreed to meet again at the level of Foreign Ministers when appropriate, at a venue to be decided upon on the basis of consensus.

21. We expressed our appreciation to the out-going coordinators of the Forum, the Philippines and Colombia. We welcomed the new Regional Coordinators, Brazil and the Republic of Korea. We also expressed our appreciation to the Government of the Philippines for the excellent arrangements and warm hospitality accorded to all delegations.

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