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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN BACKGROUND GUIDE 2016

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NATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS





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Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 2016 National Model United Nations Conference in New York (NMUN•NY)! We are pleased to introduce you to our committee, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). This year's staff is: Directors Aiskell Román (Conference A) and Joshua Cummins (Conference B), and Assistant Directors Kelly Morrison (Conference A) and Daniel Sweeney (Conference B). Aiskell completed her B.A. in Political Science and International Affairs in 2011 and currently works at *Latin American Perspectives*, a political science scholarly journal, in Riverside, California. This will be her third year on staff, and she is excited to return to NMUN•NY. Joshua received his Master's degree in International and Comparative Politics from Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio. He currently works as a research assistant for Lockheed Martin, where he does research and analysis on the Middle East, and he is also an Adjunct Professor of Political Science at Sinclair Community College. This will be his third NMUN conference on staff. Kelly is a senior Political Science and Spanish major at Lee University in Cleveland, Tennessee. This is her first year on NMUN•NY staff. Daniel is working to receive his degree in Political Science from Arizona State University. This will be his second year on staff for NMUN.

The topics under discussion for ECLAC are:

- I. Social and Economic Development in Cities
- II. Guaranteeing Indigenous Peoples' Rights in Latin America and the Caribbean
- III. Promoting the Sustainable Use of Natural Resources

ECLAC is an important regional organization within the UN system, and it plays a crucial role in advancing regional cooperation and growth by incorporating social and economic policies into its core objectives. It is one of five regional commissions of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), and its significant work specifically focuses on development within the ECLAC region. ECLAC is also dedicated to promoting equality and sustainability to ensure the successful implementation of the recently adopted Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

We hope you will find this Background Guide useful as an introduction to the topics for this committee; however, it is not intended to replace individual research. We highly encourage you to explore your Member State's policies in-depth, as well as use the Annotated Bibliography and Bibliography to further your knowledge on these topics. In preparation for the conference, each delegation will submit a [position paper](#). Please take note of the [NMUN policies](#) on the website and in the [Delegate Preparation Guide](#) regarding plagiarism, codes of conduct, dress code, sexual harassment, and the awards philosophy and evaluation method. Adherence to these guidelines is mandatory.

The [NMUN Rules of Procedure](#) are available to download from the NMUN website. This document includes the long and short form of the rules, as well as an explanatory narrative and example script of the flow of procedure. It is thus an essential instrument in preparing for the conference, and a reference during committee.

If you have any questions concerning your preparation for the committee or the conference itself, feel free to contact the Under-Secretaries-General for the ECOSOC Department, Dinah Douglas (Conference A) and Lauren Shaw (Conference B). You can reach either USG by contacting them at: usg.ecosoc@nmun.org.

We wish you all the best in your preparations and look forward to seeing you at the conference!

Sincerely,

Conference A

Aiskell Román, *Director*
Kelly Morrison, *Assistant Director*

Conference B

Joshua Cummins, *Director*
Daniel Sweeney, *Assistant Director*

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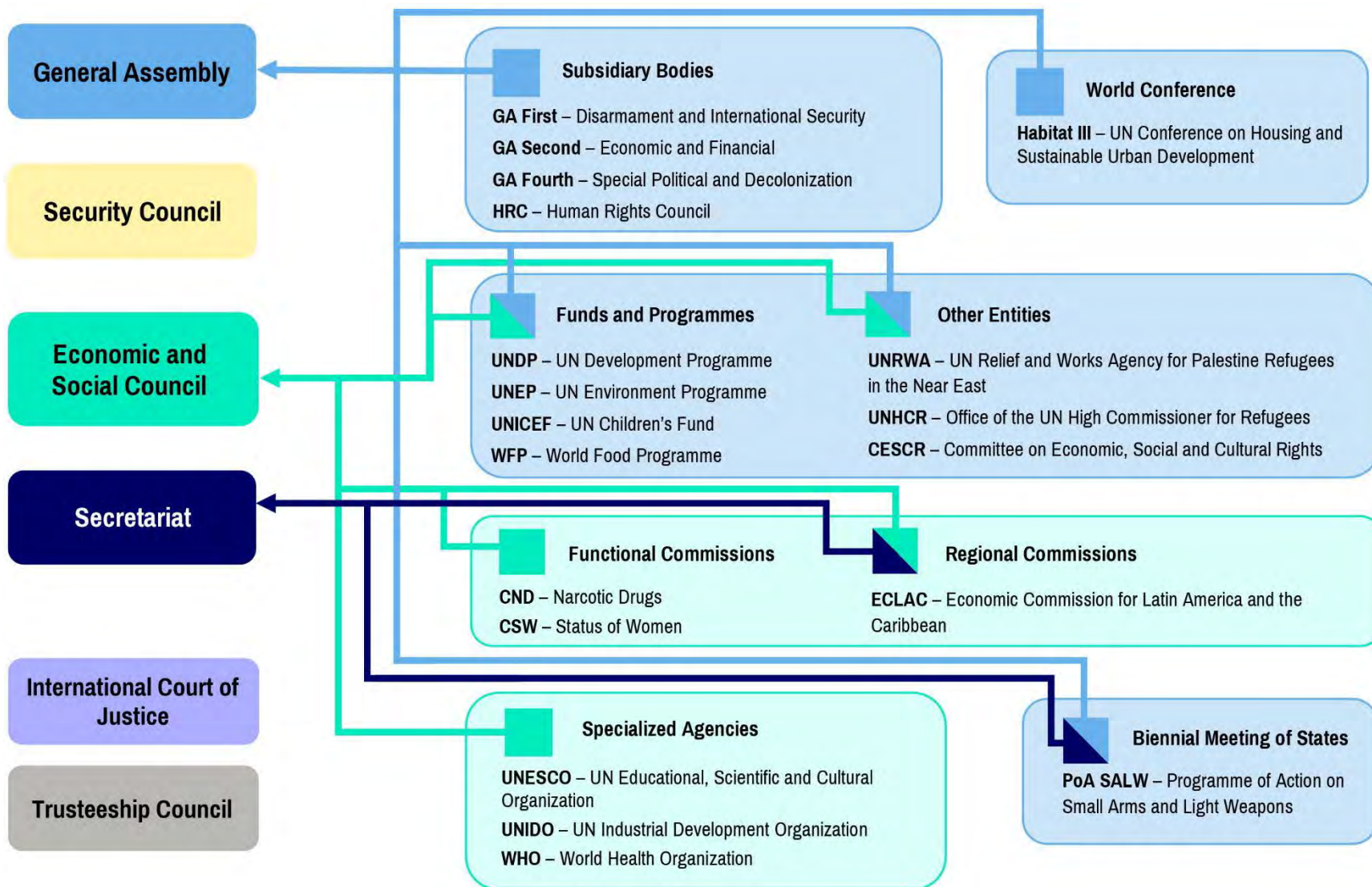
C169	Convention No. 169
CEPAL	Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe
CESCR	Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
CIDS	Inter-American Committee on Sustainable Development
CSD	Commission on Sustainable Development
CSO	Civil society organization
CSocD	Commission for Social Development
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
DRD	Declaration on the Right to Development
DRR	Disaster risk reduction
ECLA	Economic Commission for Latin America
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
EITI	Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative
EMRIP	Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
FfD	Financing for Development
FFD3	Third International Conference on Financing for Development
GA	General Assembly
GNI	Gross national income
HDI	Human Development Index
IACHR	Inter-American Commission on Human Rights
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IGO	Intergovernmental organization
ILO	International Labour Organization
ILPES	Latin American and Caribbean Institute for Economic and Social Planning
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
IWGIA	International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs
JPOI	Johannesburg Plan of Implementation
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
LDCs	Least developed countries
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OAS	Organization of American States
OHCHR	Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights
Rio+10	World Summit on Sustainable Development
Rio+20	United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN	United Nations
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNCSD	United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN DSD	United Nations Division for Sustainable Development
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNFPII	United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees



UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UN-OHRLLS	United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Development Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Development States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WCED	World Commission on Environment and Development
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development
WUF	World Urban Forum

United Nations System at NMUN·NY

This diagram illustrates the UN System simulated at NMUN·NY. It shows where each committee “sits” within the system, to help understand the reportage and relationships between the entities. Examine the diagram alongside the Committee Overview to gain a clear picture of the committee's position, purpose, and powers within the UN System.



Committee Overview

Introduction

Only three years after the creation of the United Nations (UN) in 1945, Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) resolution 106(VI) created the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA) in 1948.¹ The Commission began operations in that year and in 1984, through resolution 1984/67, expanded its scope to incorporate the European colonies, mainly Caribbean islands that achieved independence during this 36-year period.² Thereafter, the Commission changed its name to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), or in Spanish, CEPAL.³ As stated by ECLAC resolution 553(XXVI) in 1996, the Commission's role and operations were strengthened to ensure greater synergy between ECLAC, its Member States, and the UN.⁴ The goal of this change was to streamline efforts to develop activities and policies that specifically further the priorities of the region as well as to better evaluate, improve, coordinate, and empower the work of the Commission in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC).⁵

The **Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)** is one of the five regional commissions of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

ECLAC is a regional commission of ECOSOC, one of five, and under ECOSOC, focuses its work particularly on the ECLAC region.⁶ Since its creation, ECLAC's principles and practices focused on economic development, regional relationships, and cooperation with the international community, yet although social development was not a priority area during the earlier years of the Commission, it was later incorporated as one of ECLAC's highest priorities.⁷ Throughout time, ECLAC's priorities evolved to reflect ideological changes of the global economy; for example, the main priority in the first three decades focused on implementing reforms to foster industrialization and equality.⁸ The economic crisis of the 1980s and the introduction of neo-liberalism in the late 1990s resulted in major global economic changes that shifted ECLAC's priorities to focus more on macroeconomics through trade development and greater regional cooperation.⁹ During the first decade of the 21st century, ECLAC's mandate was refined to reflect a comprehensive set of ideologies to deal with the rise of the global economy by focusing on "macroeconomics and finance, productive development and international trade, social development and environmental sustainability."¹⁰ An ECOSOC evaluation of ECLAC done in 2015 clearly delineated the committee's mandate to: "Foster economic integration at the regional and subregional level; Promote integration of international agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); Support sustainable development by helping to bridge economic, social and environmental gaps between its member countries and subregions."¹¹

The Commission's headquarters is located in Santiago, Chile.¹² There are also two subregional headquarters; one in Mexico City, established in 1971 to represent Central American countries, and one established in 1966 in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, to serve the Caribbean islands and Belize, Guyana, and Suriname.¹³ Also, ECLAC has four national offices throughout South America, including in Bogotá, Colombia, Brasília, Brazil, Buenos Aires, Argentina, and Montevideo, Uruguay.¹⁴ It has a liaison office in Washington, D.C., in the United States to build the economic relationship between the United States, Canada, and international organizations with LAC.¹⁵

¹ UN ECLAC, *About ECLAC*, 2015.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ UN ECLAC, *553(XXVI) Reform of the United Nations and Its Impact on ECLAC (E/1996/37)*, 1996.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ UN ECLAC, *About ECLAC*, 2015.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Bielschowsky, *Sixty years of ECLAC: structuralism and neo-structuralism*, 2009, p. 172.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ UN ECOSOC, *Evaluation of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (E/AC.51/2015/6)*, 2015, p. 4.

¹² UN ECLAC, *About ECLAC*, 2015.

¹³ UN ECLAC, *About ECLAC Subregional Headquarters in Mexico*, 2015; UN ECLAC, *About ECLAC*, 2015.

¹⁴ UN ECLAC, *Headquarters and Offices*, 2015.

¹⁵ UN ECLAC, *ECLAC Office in Washington, D.C.*, 2015.

Governance, Structure and Membership

ECLAC's membership is comprised of 44 Member States, of which 33 Members are countries from Latin America and the Caribbean and 11 Members are industrialized countries from Europe, Asia, and North America that have historical, cultural, and economic ties to LAC.¹⁶ In addition, ECLAC has 13 associate members that are non-independent territories from the Caribbean.¹⁷

The functions and organization of the Commission and the duties of the office of the Executive Secretary are described by the UN Secretary-General's bulletin on the "Organization of the Secretariat of the United Nations" (ST/SGB/1997/5).¹⁸ The Secretariat is divided into 12 organizational Divisions headed by the Executive Secretary and officials; 10 of those Divisions respond directly to the Deputy Executive Secretary and focus on a wide range of themes such as economic, social, and sustainable development, gender affairs, natural resources, population, international trade and cooperation, publications, and statistical information, while the other two Divisions report directly to the Executive Secretary and focus on the logistical planning, accountability and administration of ECLAC's operations.¹⁹ These Divisions aim at organizing and coordinating ECLAC's activities by working with Member States to promote regional cooperation, assist in the implementation of international goals, treaties, conferences, and initiatives, provide technical and human support to carry out studies and policies, and other important aspects representative of each of the Division's areas of focus.²⁰

Moreover, ECLAC has nine subsidiary bodies with different roles and focus areas that include: generating statistical information; promoting social, gender, population, and technological development; and encouraging regional and international cooperation and capacity-building.²¹ The overall goal of these subsidiary bodies is to serve as a platform for Member States to facilitate regional discussions to promote socioeconomic development policies on issues affecting LAC to ensure follow-up review of these issues and to analyze changes in global trends.²² For instance, the Conference on Science, Innovation and Information and Communications Technologies in 2013 began operations with the goal to emphasize the relationship between economic development, technology advancement and social equality.²³ Moreover, in 2014, ECLAC's 35th session was held in Peru, and its discussions resulted in the creation of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean to be held for the first time from 2-4 November 2015; this new subsidiary body aims at streamlining social development policies into global discussions and regional cooperation to target the different aspects of poverty and inequality.²⁴

In addition, ECLAC also established four observatories with the objective to analyze, provide support, promote cooperation, and report on the region's social and economic development in the areas of LAC and Asia-Pacific relations, fiscal policy, and regional broadband.²⁵ For instance, in order to increase the role of gender within the Commission's priorities, in 2007, ECLAC established a gender equality observatory to not only foster greater awareness about the empowerment of women, but to also coordinate ECLAC's efforts with other UN agencies.²⁶

Current ECLAC Executive Secretary Alicia Bárcena assumed office in 2008.²⁷ The administrative office is comprised of Antonio Prado, Deputy Executive Secretary of ECLAC, and Luis Fidel Yáñez, Officer-in-Charge, Secretary of the Commission.²⁸ In a recent statement, Ms. Bárcena explained that 2015 is the year for sustainable development to pave the path for economic growth, international trade and social and environmental protection to

¹⁶ UN ECLAC, *Member States and associate members*, 2015.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ UN Secretariat, *Secretary-General's bulletin: Organization of the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ST/SGB/2000/5)*, 2000, pp. 1-2.

¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 3-8.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ UN ECLAC, *Subsidiary Bodies*, 2015.

²² Ibid.

²³ UN ECLAC, *ECLAC Launched Subsidiary Body for Science, Innovation and Information and Communications Technologies*, 2012.

²⁴ UN ECLAC, *Countries Create a New Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2014.

²⁵ UN ECLAC, *Observatories*, 2015.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ UN ECLAC, *Office of the Executive Secretary*, 2015.

²⁸ Ibid.

benefit the global community without compromising future generations' access to resources.²⁹ Additionally, Ms. Bárcena highlighted that the three main conferences of this year, the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (FFD3), the UN Sustainable Development Summit, and the Paris Climate Change Conference on the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), share a common goal that the international community is still fighting to establish and promote: sustainability.³⁰

Mandate, Functions and Powers

ECLAC's mandate is to provide a platform for its Member States to promote regional and subregional cooperation, to discuss and analyze particular situations affecting the region, and to develop and encourage the implementation of policy recommendations that are based on sustainable economic, social, and environmental development.³¹

The Secretariat implements ECLAC's mandate and objectives by coordinating the administrative and subjective activities of the Commission.³² The duties of the Secretariat include: documentation of ECLAC's work; organizing, evaluating and making available data and research gathered from the socioeconomic situation of the region; encouraging negotiations among Member States and giving advice on alternative policies and support for their implementation; encouraging region-specific solutions to global concerns; promoting collaboration with other UN agencies and intergovernmental organizations, including through conferences and meetings; and streamlining efforts, decreasing overlap, and exchanging complementary information and resources.³³

ECLAC administrative, legislative, and program planning uses a biennial system of strategic framework, in which Member States establish the mandate and main objectives for the Commission to focus on for the subsequent two years.³⁴ In addition, the framework reviews, plans and manages the funding and accountability of the programs.³⁵ Hence, the strategic framework is fundamental to ECLAC's work and organization, as it sets the vision, programs, and goals of the Commission within the UN system, including the expectations and priorities for each subprogramme.³⁶ Before adoption by the General Assembly (GA), the strategic framework draft is considered and reviewed by intergovernmental organizations of the GA before it is adopted by the GA.³⁷ Thereafter, once it is implemented, every six months the Office of the Executive Secretary and the senior staff of the ECLAC bodies meet to discuss and revise the framework and procedures and to modify them accordingly to ensure success.³⁸

In addition to establishing the mandate and thematic framework for ECLAC and the subprogrammes, the strategic framework arranges the funding for the subprogrammes and other activities highlighted in the biennium.³⁹ The budget is based on the work needed for ECLAC and the subprogrammes, including the cost of financial and human resources; this sum is then negotiated and approved by the GA, and it becomes the budget ceiling for ECLAC, and if needed, the Commission must reconsider its activities and cost of operations as allowed by budget.⁴⁰ Nevertheless, just as most UN bodies, ECLAC's budget resources are drawn from Member States' contributions to the UN.⁴¹

Recent Sessions and Current Priorities

Currently, the 2014-2015 strategic framework main goal is to promote cooperation and coordination among regional organizations to streamline important issues and to strengthen the relationship of LAC within the region and the international community.⁴² For ECLAC's upcoming biennium 2016-2017 strategic framework, the main goal is to mainstream the three pillars of sustainable development – economic, social, and environmental development – in the

²⁹ IISD Reporting Services, *ECLAC Executive Secretary Outlines Importance of 2015*, 2015.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ UN ECOSOC, *Evaluation of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (E/AC.51/2015/6)*, 2015.

³² UN ECLAC, *Mandate and Mission*, 2015.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ UN ECLAC, *Strategy and Legal Framework*, 2015.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ UN ECLAC, *Programme and Budgeting*, 2015.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² UN ECLAC, *Strategy and Legal Framework*, 2015.

region by fostering international cooperation through capacity building and analysis of development strategies to support improvement in the region.⁴³ While the Commission will continue to maintain its core objectives, it will also incorporate in its mission the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to diminish the global economic, social, and environmental divide.⁴⁴ For instance, in preparation to adopt the SDGs, ECLAC organized a Symposium on SDGs for the Caribbean within the Post-2015 Development Agenda in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, to consider the SDGs that best identify and address the challenges faced by the Caribbean in adopting sustainable development policies.⁴⁵

During the first half of the 21st century, Latin America benefitted from economic growth and a substantial decrease in poverty and unemployment levels; however, due to the financial crisis of 2008, LAC's societies and economies suffered from high levels of inequality.⁴⁶ In July 2015, Ms. Bárcena, in the presence of ECOSOC and high-level representatives, released a statement highlighting that the current and greatest challenge faced by LAC is achieving equality.⁴⁷ In this context, this refers to the "equality of means, opportunities and capacities, but in the framework of a deeper understanding of equality as the equal dignity of citizens, in which individuals are simultaneously autonomous and vulnerable and should be acknowledged for both qualities mutually."⁴⁸ Even though measures to promote equality were incorporated into ECLAC's mission, Ms. Bárcena emphasized that equality remains a "main structural challenge and must be the core value and principle at the heart of its sustainable development agenda."⁴⁹

Due to the recent economic crisis, equality became a main priority for ECLAC.⁵⁰ Subsequently, this theme was incorporated into three previous sessions of the Commission and resulted in these three key outcome documents: "Time for Equality, Closing Gaps, Opening Trails" (2010); "Structural Change for Equality: An Integrated Approach to Development" (2012); and "Compacts for Equality: Towards a Sustainable Future" (2014).⁵¹ As ECLAC focuses on promoting the three pillars of sustainable development in the next biennium strategic framework, its goal is to also help Member States incorporate equality into their economic and social policies according to the approach developed by ECLAC in the frameworks mentioned above.⁵² To move countries closer to equality, these documents provide a guide for Member States to implement policies that include structural changes that close the internal and external gaps while paving the path to implementing further changes according to the SDGs.⁵³ These policies focus on increasing territorial, employment, and social inclusion and encouraging sustainability through the integration of social and production policies based on knowledge-intensive activities into macroeconomics principles.⁵⁴

For 2015, ECOSOC's Integration Segment was dedicated to "achieving sustainable development through employment creation and decent work for all," and ECLAC contributed to this segment.⁵⁵ As part of highlighting how fundamental equality is for socioeconomic development in relation to this topic, ECLAC stressed the importance of equality in the creation of and access to quality jobs, capacity building, and best employment practices, as well as in the increase of women's participation through policies that protect their role as mothers and workers while also incorporating strategies that promote environmental sustainability.⁵⁶ To increase access to decent, inclusive, productive employment opportunities and close the inequality gap, ECLAC recommends that the international community adopt national goals according to their income growth to promote higher rates for those

⁴³ UN ECLAC, *Draft Programme of Work of the ECLAC System, 2016-2017*, 2014, p. 5.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ UN ECLAC, *ECLAC Highlights Strategic Regional Action in Defining Sustainable Development Goals for the Caribbean*, 2015.

⁴⁶ UN ECOSOC, *Evaluation of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (E/AC.51/2015/6)*, 2015, p. 1.

⁴⁷ UN ECLAC, *ECOSOC Dialogue with the Executive Secretaries of the United Nations Regional Commissions*, 2015.

⁴⁸ UN ECLAC, *Compacts for Equality: Towards a Sustainable Future*, 2014, p. 19.

⁴⁹ UN ECLAC, *ECOSOC Dialogue with the Executive Secretaries of the United Nations Regional Commissions*, 2015.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid..

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ UN ECLAC, *Compacts for Equality: Towards a Sustainable Future*, 2014, pp. 13-15.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ UN ECOSOC, *Economic Commission for Latin American and the Caribbean (ECLAC) Contribution to the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Integration Segment*, 2015, pp.1-2.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

living on the bottom 40% of the income spectrum.⁵⁷ In addition, ECLAC recognizes that changes to the current microeconomic platform must support smaller enterprises and economies to encourage overall growth and productivity.⁵⁸

Conclusion

Even though ECLAC's main objective is to promote economic growth in LAC, it is also increasingly incorporating sustainable development into its core policies and focusing more in the social and environmental protection and development of the region. As one of the five regional bodies of ECOSOC, the Commission is an active participant in promoting regional and subregional dialogue, policy recommendations, as well as research and data analysis. ECLAC's involvement in the region is well established, and it continues to move forward with its adherence to the post-2015 development agenda while upholding its core objectives and addressing its main concern of achieving socioeconomic equality in the region.

⁵⁷ UN ECLAC, *Preliminary Reflections on Latin America and the Caribbean in the Post-2015 Development Agenda based on the Trilogy of Equality*, 2014, p. 6.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

Annotated Bibliography

Bielschowsky, R. (2009). Sixty Years of ECLAC: Structuralism and Neo-structuralism. *CEPAL Review*, 97: 171-192. United Nations, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. Retrieved 16 August 2015 from: <http://www.cepal.org/publicaciones/xml/2/36662/rvi97bielschowsky.pdf>

In order to understand the mandate, structure, current views and future goals, delegates should familiarize themselves with ECLAC's history. Hence, this is a necessary read for delegates that will provide delegates with an overview of the committee's past theoretical frameworks and the evolution of current ideals. This historical introduction of ECLAC will help delegates recognize how can ECLAC move into future discussions based on new social and economic concerns.

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2015). *Economic Commission for Latin American and the Caribbean (ECLAC) Contribution to the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Integration Segment* [Report]. Retrieved 20 July 2015 from: <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/integration/2015/pdf/eclac.pdf>

This is a statement made by ECLAC to ECOSOC's 2015 Integration Segment, which serves as a platform to consolidate ideas from subsidiary bodies of the Council and other important actors to promote sustainable development. This document shows the relationship between ECLAC and ECOSOC by recognizing ECLAC's involvement in sustainable development. ECLAC highlights the need to incorporate equality in the social and economic sectors, in particular to foster employment opportunities while promoting environmental sustainability. Delegates will find this document useful as to better understand the importance that ECLAC places on incorporating equality when making recommendations.

United Nations, Economic and Social Council, Committee for Programme and Coordination. (2015). *Evaluation of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (E/AC.51/2015/6)* [Report]. Retrieved 22 August 2015 from: <http://undocs.org/E/AC.51/2015/6>

This report published by ECOSOC presents a description of ECLAC's operations, core functions, and overall objectives. It also evaluates the current development issues faced by the region and how ECLAC has incorporated these challenges into its discussions, policymaking, regional support, and its research and analytical work. Delegates will learn how ECLAC, as a reputable organization, has worked to advance regional cooperation and economic growth by improving its operations and functions.

United Nations, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. (2014). *Compacts for Equality: Towards a Sustainable Future*. Retrieved 20 September 2015 from: http://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/36693/LCG2586SES353e_en.pdf

This is the outcome document for the thirty-fifth session of ECLAC. This comprehensive document explains in detail the evolution of ECLAC's priorities based on the continuously changing economic and social trends and patterns of the region. This document will help delegates better understand the significance of equality as applied in Latin America and the Caribbean as well as how it relates with sustainable development, economic diversification, and social well-being.

United Nations, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. (2015, July 9). *ECOSOC Dialogue with the Executive Secretaries of the United Nations Regional Commissions* [Speech]. Retrieved 20 July 2015 from: <http://www.cepal.org/en/speeches/ecosoc-dialogue-executive-secretaries-united-nations-regional-commissions>

This statement by Alicia Bárcena, Executive Secretary of ECLAC, on 9 July 2015 is an important overview of ECLAC's main focus regarding the post-2015 development agenda. The statement explains equality and its relationship with economic development and social growth. Delegates will find this statement useful as it will provide them with a greater understanding of what are ECLAC's concerns of the region and how implementation, oversight, and follow-up measures can better the socioeconomic issues impacting Latin America.

Bibliography

Bielschowsky, R. (2009). Sixty Years of ECLAC: Structuralism and Neo-structuralism. *CEPAL Review*, 97: 171-192. United Nations, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. Retrieved 16 August 2015 from: <http://www.cepal.org/publicaciones/xml/2/36662/rvi97bielschowsky.pdf>

International Institute for Sustainable Development Reporting Services. (2015). *ECLAC Executive Secretary Outlines Importance of 2015*. Retrieved 17 August 2015 from: <http://sd.iisd.org/news/eclac-executive-secretary-outlines-importance-of-2015/>

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I. Social and Economic Development in Cities

“Cities present in essence a microcosm of the whole [development] agenda, especially in relation to issues such as poverty eradication, provision of basic services, disaster risk reduction, climate change, and governance.”⁵⁹

Introduction

Two centuries ago, only 2% of the world’s population lived in cities.⁶⁰ In 2011, the United Nations (UN) Environment Programme (UNEP) stated that 50% of the world’s population lived in cities.⁶¹ The world continues to become increasingly urbanized, and the UN estimates that by 2050, 70% of the world’s population will live in cities.⁶² This is especially true for the Latin American and Caribbean region (LAC), as it is the second most urbanized region in the world: 64% of the population in LAC lived in cities in 1980, and that number increased to 79% in 2010.⁶³ The UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) also estimates that 90% of the world’s urbanization between now and 2030 will take place in Africa, Asia, and LAC.⁶⁴

This rapid trend of urbanization creates both opportunities and challenges.⁶⁵ Cities lay the foundation for advancement in commerce, science, social development, and economic development.⁶⁶ However, cities also present many challenges, such as the inability to provide basic services, lack of resources, and increases in poverty, violence, and pollution.⁶⁷ UNEP states that “urbanization is characterized by urban sprawl and peripheralisation – which is not only socially divisive but increases energy demand, carbon emissions and puts pressure on ecosystems.”⁶⁸ These challenges are apparent in LAC, as one-third of the urban population lives in informal settlements, less than 15% of wastewater is treated prior to disposal, and LAC cities have the highest murder rates in the world.⁶⁹ According to the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), LAC contains 41 of the 50 most dangerous cities on the planet.⁷⁰

Despite these challenges, LAC cities have the opportunity for increases in social and economic development.⁷¹ The UN defines social development as progress in equity, social cohesion, democratic participation, and overall improvements in material well-being.⁷² Economic development is defined as the qualitative and quantitative changes in the economy and the measurement of human capital, literacy, regional competitiveness and overall economic growth.⁷³ These terms are sometimes grouped together and labeled human development, and the UN Development Programme (UNDP) has created the Human Development Index (HDI), which ranks Member States based on development factors such as life expectancy, literacy rates, and per capita gross national income (GNI).⁷⁴ The following guide will serve as introduction to the topic of social and economic development in cities by discussing the international and regional framework, the role of the international system, urbanization, poverty, the informal economy, and disaster risk reduction (DRR).

International and Regional Framework

There are a plethora of international and regional instruments that establish the social and economic development framework with regard to cities and urbanization. Basic individual human rights were solidified with the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) (1948), which cemented the fundamental aspects of human rights, including

⁵⁹ UN DESA, *Global Sustainable Development Report*, 2015, p. 138.

⁶⁰ UNEP, *Cities – Investing in energy and resource efficiency*, 2011.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² UN DESA, *Cities for a sustainable future*, 2014.

⁶³ IDB, *Emerging and Sustainable Cities Initiative: Urban development challenges in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2015.

⁶⁴ UN-Habitat, *UN-Habitat at a glance*.

⁶⁵ UN Time for Global Action, *Cities*, 2015.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ UNEP, *Cities – Investing in energy and resource efficiency*, 2011, p. 458.

⁶⁹ IDB, *Emerging and Sustainable Cities Initiative: Urban development challenges in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2015.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² UNRISD, *Social Development in an Uncertain World*, 2011.

⁷³ Sen, *Development: Which Way Now?*, 1983, pp. 745–46.

⁷⁴ UNDP, *Human Development Index*.

the right to life, dignity, and freedom from discrimination.⁷⁵ This document is integral in laying the foundation for the basic aspects of human rights that are connected to sustainable development.⁷⁶ The *International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights* (ICESCR) (1966) took the next step in guaranteeing a person’s ability to “freely pursue their economic, social, and cultural development.”⁷⁷ Furthermore, the *Declaration on the Right to Development* (DRD) (1986) secured a human being’s right to self-determination and the ability to contribute to and reap the benefits from social, cultural, economic, and political development.⁷⁸ The right to development was reaffirmed as a basic human right by the *Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action* (1993), adopted at the World Conference on Human Rights, which further highlights the necessity of economic and social development for lesser developed countries.⁷⁹

After the 1972 Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm, Sweden, the UN held a series of international and regional conferences committed to the issue of economic development, which further evolved into the issue of sustainable development.⁸⁰ Member States continued to discuss the issue of social and economic development at the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), which was held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 and is also known as the Rio Summit or Earth Summit.⁸¹ Sustainable development was put at the forefront of the first Rio outcome document, which was entitled *Agenda 21* (1992), and is considered the foundational program for global action on sustainable development.⁸² *Agenda 21* is an all-inclusive plan of action for implementation at the global, national, and local levels, aimed at promoting sustainable development through combatting poverty, protecting the environment, and improving the use of science and technology.⁸³ In 1993, the General Assembly (GA) established the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) as the UN’s political body responsible for monitoring and implementing the Rio outcome document.⁸⁴ Furthermore, in 1995, Member States gathered in Denmark for the World Summit for Social Development.⁸⁵ This conference resulted in the *Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action*, which pledged to put people at the center of development by focusing on social inclusion and the eradication of poverty.⁸⁶

The 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (Rio+10) gave rise to the adoption of the *Johannesburg Plan of Implementation* (JPOI).⁸⁷ The JPOI addressed aspects of economic and social development that are especially relevant to LAC, such as water resources, sustainable cities, and health and poverty.⁸⁸ In 2012, the UN convened a Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) called Rio+20 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where the international community established the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, which replaced the CSD.⁸⁹ Rio+20 resulted in the outcome document entitled *The Future We Want*, which proposed new strategies for economic, social, and sustainable development such as promoting sustainable patterns of consumption, protecting and regulating the natural resource base, and reducing inequalities.⁹⁰

At Rio+20, Member States agreed to establish a set of concise, action-oriented, and communicable development goals in order to address the current issues and shortcomings with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and with regard to development.⁹¹ These goals evolved into the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which were adopted by the international community in September 2015.⁹² The SDGs, which were adopted on 25 September

⁷⁵ UN General Assembly, *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (A/RES/217 A (III)), 1948.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ UN General Assembly, *International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights* (A/RES/2200 (XXI)), 1966.

⁷⁸ UN General Assembly, *Declaration on the Right to Development* (A/RES/41/128), 1986.

⁷⁹ UN World Conference on Human Rights, *Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action*, 1993.

⁸⁰ UN ECOSOC, *Sustainable Development*.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² UNCED, *Agenda 21*, 1992.

⁸³ UN DESA, *Agenda 21*.

⁸⁴ UN ECOSOC, *Sustainable Development*.

⁸⁵ UN DESA, *World Summit on Social Development Copenhagen 1995*.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ UN ECOSOC, *Sustainable Development*.

⁸⁸ UN WSSD, *Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development*, 2002.

⁸⁹ UN ECOSOC, *Sustainable Development*.

⁹⁰ UN General Assembly, *The future we want*.

⁹¹ UN DESA, *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*.

⁹² UN DESA, *Post-2015 Process*; UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (A/RES/70/1), 2015.

2015, address issues such as poverty reduction, social protection, and equal access to economic development, and were prepared by a 30-member Open Working Group of General Assembly Member States.⁹³ The SDGs build and expand upon the MDGs, which will be retired at the end of 2015.⁹⁴ The eight MDGs worked to reduce poverty and hunger, combat diseases such as HIV and malaria, and achieve universal education, but they failed to address the holistic nature of development or even explicitly mention economic development.⁹⁵ The SDGs specifically address the issues of economic and social development by looking to increase full employment especially for women and youth, improving social cohesion, protecting labor rights, and sustaining economic growth in developing Member States.⁹⁶ The SDGs, which will come into effect in January 2016, will serve to frame Member States' development agendas over the next 15 years.⁹⁷

Role of the International System

The international system has played an integral role in promoting social and economic development within cities in LAC. At the regional level, the Regional Conference on Population and Development in LAC was created as a subsidiary body of the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) with the responsibility to oversee matters pertaining to international migration, population, development, and indigenous peoples.⁹⁸ ECLAC resolution 670 (XXXIV) (2012) transformed the ECLAC Ad Hoc Committee on Population and Development into the Regional Conference on Population and Development, which operates in cooperation with the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and holds sessions every two years.⁹⁹ The ICPD was first held in Cairo in 1994, where 179 states adopted a 20-year program of action, known as *the Cairo Programme of Action*, which highlighted the vital relationship between population, development, and individual well-being.¹⁰⁰ At the first session of the Regional Conference on Population and Development held in Uruguay in 2013, ECLAC Member States adopted the *Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development*, which strengthens the implementation of population and development issues past 2014 in the LAC region.¹⁰¹ The *Montevideo Consensus* contains over 120 measures focusing on the priority areas that were highlighted by the 1994 *ICPD Programme of Action*.¹⁰²

The UN system also plays a vital role in promoting social and economic development in cities. The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and ECLAC, a regional commission of ECOSOC, have been important entities in the UN system in discussing and promoting economic and social development, especially at the Rio+20 conference.¹⁰³ Recently, ECOSOC hosted the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development 2015, where Member States addressed the issues of economic and social development and the post-2015 development agenda.¹⁰⁴ In May 2014, ECOSOC held its Integration Segment on sustainable urbanization, which discussed finding ways to involve women, youth, and people with disabilities in the urban planning and resource management process within emerging cities. Furthermore, during the 35th session of ECLAC held in 2014, Member States, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and regional experts established the Regional Conference on Social Development, which will facilitate international, regional, and bilateral dialogue on social development.¹⁰⁵ This newly formed subsidiary body will also examine multidimensional poverty and address inequality and structural gaps in LAC.¹⁰⁶ The Regional

⁹³ UN DESA, *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*; UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ford, *Sustainable development Goals: all you need to know*, 2015.

⁹⁶ UN DESA, *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ UN ECLAC, *Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean*.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ UNFPA, *International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action*, 2014.

¹⁰¹ UN ECLAC, *Region's Countries Adopt Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development*, 2013.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ UN ECOSOC, *Sustainable Development*.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.; UN ECLAC, *Programme of Work for the biennium 2016-2017: Subprogramme 5: Social Development*, 2014.

¹⁰⁵ UN ECLAC, *Countries Create a New Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2014.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

Conference on Social Development will further serve as a forum to address the post-2015 development agenda and the SDGs at its first meeting, which will be held in Peru later this year.¹⁰⁷

Other UN organizations such as the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), UNDP, and UN-Habitat play an important role in social and economic development in cities. UNFPA works with governments, NGOs, and civil society to advocate for the welfare of urbanizing communities by ensuring that they have basic services such as reproductive healthcare and medical care.¹⁰⁸ UNDP works with Member States to address multidimensional poverty, exclusion, and inequality by enhancing production technologies, knowledge, and the skills necessary to sustain development.¹⁰⁹ In Venezuela, where more than 7% of the population lives in extreme poverty, UNDP and IDB have organized a project that gives musical training and education to impoverished youth, keeping them away from crime and giving them valuable skills for the future.¹¹⁰ The program, which began in 2002, gives impoverished children the chance to play an instrument in orchestras and earn a stipend; the program has reached more than 350,000 at-risk youths in Venezuela.¹¹¹ UN-Habitat, the UN organization that supports urban growth and urban planning, is another essential organization to the topic of economic and social development in cities.¹¹² UN-Habitat looks to effect changes in mindsets, approaches, and policies in urbanization in order to reduce poverty, unemployment, outdated infrastructure, and repeat crime.¹¹³ UN-Habitat will also sponsor the UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development, or Habitat III, which will take place in Quito, Ecuador from 17-20 October 2016.¹¹⁴ Habitat III will focus on achieving equity and equality in urban development through rethinking investment in basic urban resources, urban planning, local fiscal systems, and urban rules and regulations.¹¹⁵

Other members of the UN system, such as the Commission for Social Development (CSocD) and the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), focus specifically on social development.¹¹⁶ As a functional commission of ECOSOC, CSocD is responsible for monitoring and reviewing Member States' progress on social development and ensuring the full implementation of the *Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action*.¹¹⁷ CSW is also a functional commission of ECOSOC and is responsible for discussing women's rights and gender equality.¹¹⁸ CSW has been instrumental in promoting social development for women by keeping gender equality and the empowerment of women core aspects of the post-2015 development agenda.¹¹⁹

Urbanization, Poverty, and the Rise of Inequality

Urbanization has been occurring rapidly in the LAC region, and it has an immense effect on social and economic development.¹²⁰ It is estimated that around 80% of Latin America's population of nearly 600 million people now live in cities.¹²¹ As more and more people begin living in LAC cities, poverty and inequality continue to rise; these aspects are all interconnected.¹²² Rafael Correa, the President of Ecuador, argued at a recent ECLAC meeting that "poverty in Latin America is not the result of scarce resources but rather of inequality."¹²³

¹⁰⁷ UN ECLAC, *Countries Create a New Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2014; UN ECLAC, *Draft Operational Guide for Implementation and Follow-up of the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development*, 2015.

¹⁰⁸ UNFPA, *Urbanization*.

¹⁰⁹ UNDP, *Sustainable Development*.

¹¹⁰ Clarembaux, *In Venezuela, music provides hope for impoverished youth*.

¹¹¹ UNDP, *In Venezuela, music provides hope for impoverished youth*.

¹¹² UN-Habitat, *UN-Habitat at a glance*.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴ UN-Habitat, *Habitat III*.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶ UN DESA, *Commission on Social Development Mandate and Terms of Reference*; UN-Women, *Commission on the Status of Women*.

¹¹⁷ UN DESA, *Commission on Social Development Mandate and Terms of Reference*.

¹¹⁸ UN-Women, *Commission on the Status of Women*.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰ Moloney, *Latin American govts fail to tackle booming urban slums – report*, *Thomas Reuters Foundation*, 2015.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

¹²² UN ECLAC, *Poverty in Latin America Is Not the Result of Scarce Resources but rather of Inequality*, 2014.

¹²³ *Ibid.*

Rapid urbanization often places a strain on available housing and leads to the creation of slums and informal settlements.¹²⁴ This is the case in LAC, where nearly one in every five people – or 113 million – are estimated to live in slums.¹²⁵ Government policies, inadequate institutions, and obsolete regulations have left LAC Member States unable to respond to this rapid rate of urbanization.¹²⁶ Even though most LAC countries have constitutions that recognize the right to adequate and affordable housing, there remains a substantial rate of inequality and inability for impoverished families to secure the land tenure rights and housing credit needed to buy a home.¹²⁷ This results in extremely poor neighborhoods in LAC crammed on hillsides, composed of small shacks built using scrap metal, wood, and bricks.¹²⁸ As more of these slums and informal settlements appear, more social exclusion, inequality, and separation between rich and poor occur, leading to the consideration of LAC as one of the most unequal regions in the world.¹²⁹

There have been several solutions posed to the issue of slums and the increase in poverty and inequality in LAC, such as finding innovative ways to provide adequate housing and involve more of the population in urban planning.¹³⁰ UN-Habitat estimates that nearly 50 million dwellings must be added in LAC to meet current housing needs.¹³¹ Progress has been made in countries such as Chile, Colombia, and Venezuela, where government subsidies and low interest loans have been used to purchase homes for low-income families.¹³² However, the simple fact of owning a home does not always ensure social equality; regional and local governments must ensure that the lower income communities play a larger role in decision-making and urban planning.¹³³ Urban planning in LAC must take a two-fold approach, which includes using public-private partnerships and public capital investments to retrofit current settlements, and proactive planning to ensure a more sustainable future.¹³⁴

Right to Work and the Informal Economy

One of the major obstacles to social and economic development in LAC is the informal economy and lack of worker's rights. The informal economy is defined as “work without workers’ rights established by national labor regulations, such as social security and overtime compensation,” which usually occurs as a result of weak legal frameworks, complicated tax systems, and the prevention of entrepreneurship.¹³⁵ The informal economy could also refer to “economic activity that operates outside the formal reach of the law,” or activity not subject to enforcement by the law.¹³⁶ This issue is especially burdensome to the youth population in LAC, and ultimately affects both social and economic development. The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates that there are at least 27 million youth in LAC who currently work in conditions of informality and that 6 out of every 10 jobs available to youth are in the informal economy.¹³⁷

Jobs in the informal economy are poor in quality, offer low wages, and do not offer workers protections such as overtime compensation and social security.¹³⁸ The ILO found that only 56 million of the 108 million young people of working age in LAC currently hold jobs or are seeking employment.¹³⁹ This leaves a large portion of the LAC community with low job stability and dismal career prospects.¹⁴⁰ Informal employment also has a direct correlation with those that live in slums and informal settlements, which continues to lead to the segregation between the rich

¹²⁴ UN-Habitat, *Housing and Slum Upgrading*.

¹²⁵ Moloney, Latin American govts fail to tackle booming urban slums – report, *Thomas Reuters Foundation*, 2015.

¹²⁶ UN-Habitat, *Housing and Slum Upgrading*.

¹²⁷ Moloney, Latin American govts fail to tackle booming urban slums – report, *Thomas Reuters Foundation*, 2015.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁹ Vakis, et al, *Left Behind: Chronic Poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2015.

¹³⁰ Irazabal, *Revisiting Urban Planning in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2009.

¹³¹ UN-Habitat, *Housing and Slum Upgrading*.

¹³² Moloney, Latin American govts fail to tackle booming urban slums – report, *Thomas Reuters Foundation*, 2015.

¹³³ Irazabal, *Revisiting Urban Planning in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2009.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵ Gonzalez, Weekly Chart: Latin America's Informal Economy, *Council of the Americas*, 2015.

¹³⁶ ILO, *27 million Latin American and Caribbean youth in the informal economy*, 2015.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸ Gonzalez, Weekly Chart: Latin America's Informal Economy, *Council of the Americas*, 2015.

¹³⁹ ILO, *27 million Latin American and Caribbean youth in the informal economy*, 2015.

¹⁴⁰ ILO, *Promoting Formal Employment Among Youth: Innovative Experiences in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2015.

and poor and the rise of inequality.¹⁴¹ Inequality and poverty are a hindrance to social and economic development within cities.¹⁴²

Informal employment and youth unemployment must be addressed with a combination of policies that address the specific needs of each Member State.¹⁴³ Governments in LAC can adopt measures and incentives to allow for the creation of more formal employment and create strategies for formalizing informal employment.¹⁴⁴ LAC Member States may also explore the possibility of providing subsidies for business development, youth unemployment programs, and labor inspection measures.¹⁴⁵ Finally, policymakers can attempt to find innovative ways of expanding social protection coverage such as unemployment, maternity leave, and health insurance to informal workers.¹⁴⁶

Protecting Social and Economic Development: Disaster Risk Reduction

In light of the increasing occurrences of natural disasters such as floods, earthquakes, hurricanes, tornados, and landslides in LAC, there is an increasing need for pre- and post-disaster recovery planning and the development of all-encompassing DRR strategies.¹⁴⁷ Natural disasters pose a direct threat to the sustainment of economic and social development in LAC.¹⁴⁸ The majority of these natural disasters occur in urban areas, which makes the quality and access to disaster relief even more challenging.¹⁴⁹ Segregation between the rich and poor and the location of infrastructure and disaster relief services multiplies the economic and social impact of these disasters.¹⁵⁰

At the 2013 ECLAC Conference on Population and Development, it was stated that “the Latin American and Caribbean region has the highest percentage of the population living in high-risk areas in the world, and 6 of the 10 countries with the greatest percentage of the population living in at-risk areas are in this region.”¹⁵¹ Since the 1960s, floods, droughts, earthquakes, hurricanes, desertification, and landslides in LAC have led to the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people, disrupted the lives of millions, and caused billions of dollars in property damage.¹⁵² The UNDP estimates that 240,000 people have lost their lives, 57 million people have been affected, and \$85 billion dollars have been lost in LAC between 2005 and 2012 as a result of natural disasters.¹⁵³ However, the social and economic impacts of natural disasters are far worse and last long after the disaster strikes. Natural disasters leave lasting social and economic effects such as unemployment, reduced access to education, foreign indebtedness, and the imbalance of trade for the LAC population.¹⁵⁴ Furthermore, informal settlements and slums are often devastated by disasters, which leaves the poorest segments of the region’s population hit the hardest.¹⁵⁵ Ultimately, natural disasters pose a risk to development in urban areas within LAC and result in increases in poverty and inequality.¹⁵⁶

The international community has taken steps to address the effects that natural disasters have on social and economic development in LAC. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) provided almost \$10.5 million in 2013 for stand-alone DRR initiatives aimed at strengthening disaster preparedness and response.¹⁵⁷ USAID also worked regionally and at the Member State level to engage communities, local and national governments, NGOs, and regional and international organizations to develop strategies aimed at improving capacity

¹⁴¹ Irazabal, *Revisiting Urban Planning in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2009.

¹⁴² Vakis, et al, *Left Behind: Chronic Poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2015.

¹⁴³ ILO, *27 million Latin American and Caribbean youth in the informal economy*, 2015.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁷ Irazabal, *Revisiting Urban Planning in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2009.

¹⁴⁸ UN ECLAC, *Proposed regional agenda on population and development*, 2013.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 24-25.

¹⁵² Irazabal, *Revisiting Urban Planning in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2009, p. 21.

¹⁵³ UNDP, *Disaster Risk Reduction: What does UNDP do in Disaster Risk Reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean?*, 2014.

¹⁵⁴ Irazabal, *Revisiting Urban Planning in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2009.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁶ UNDP, *Disaster Risk Reduction: What does UNDP do in Disaster Risk Reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean?*, 2014.

¹⁵⁷ USAID, *Latin American and the Caribbean-Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2013.

building, risk monitoring systems, early warning systems, and increasing disaster planning with urban growth.¹⁵⁸ UNDP's Strategic Plan for 2014-2017, "Changing the World," includes DRR as one of its three priority areas.¹⁵⁹ UNDP has focused on implementing its plan within LAC by improving risk reduction, preparedness, implementation strategies, and including gender mainstreaming within DRR.¹⁶⁰ The most effective long-term approach to DRR is to incorporate natural disaster assessment and mitigation strategies into urban planning.¹⁶¹ However, more than 90% of international aid is focused on disaster response, relief, and rehabilitation, leaving less than 10% for disaster prevention.¹⁶² The interconnectedness of DRR with other aspects of social and economic development such as inequality, poverty, and urbanizations makes disaster planning and prevention an integral area of concern for LAC cities.¹⁶³

Case Study: Medellín, Colombia

Despite the many challenges facing urban communities in LAC, opportunities for social and economic development exist as well.¹⁶⁴ For example, Medellín, Colombia, has become a model success story for social and economic development within LAC.¹⁶⁵ Once known for its violence, poverty, and social inequality, Medellín has become a breeding ground for economic and social development, especially at the local level.¹⁶⁶ Medellín has initiated programs to upgrade slums, reduce informal employment, and undertake other efforts in order to help the most impoverished Colombian citizens.¹⁶⁷ Medellín has improved social development through the establishment of a community center, schools, libraries, and public parks.¹⁶⁸ The city also served as a model for social and economic development in the LAC community when it hosted the World Urban Forum (WUF7) in 2014, with the theme "Urban Equity in Development – Cities for Life."¹⁶⁹ This example highlights the progress that can be achieved by LAC communities that focus on improving and protecting social and economic development within their cities.

Conclusion

As the international community begins to implement the SDGs, the topic of social and economic development in cities is more pertinent than ever before. Urban areas in LAC present many challenges for the regional and international communities, such as the concentration of poverty and inequality, the influx of informal employment, and the risks posed by natural disasters.¹⁷⁰ 150 million people living in LAC cities are below the poverty line.¹⁷¹ The issues of poverty, urbanization, informal employment, and the effects of natural disasters are interconnected issues that must be addressed collectively. However, despite these challenges, urban areas still present opportunities for social and economic development, and such development can lead to more successful urbanization.

Future Research

Within this context, some questions for delegates to consider include: What institutional instruments can be put in place to address the rise of slums and informal housing within LAC urban centers? What can ECLAC Member States do to decrease the spread of informal employment and increase worker's access to basic rights in LAC cities? How do LAC Member States ensure that development is protected from natural disasters? Within ECLAC, what can be done to address the connection between urbanization, poverty, and inequality in LAC cities?

¹⁵⁸ USAID, *Latin American and the Caribbean-Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2013

¹⁵⁹ UNDP, *Disaster Risk Reduction: What does UNDP do in Disaster Risk Reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean?*, 2014.

¹⁶⁰ UNDP, *Disaster Risk Reduction: What does UNDP do in Disaster Risk Reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean?*, 2014.

¹⁶¹ Irazabal, *Revisiting Urban Planning in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2009.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*

¹⁶³ UN ECLAC, *Proposed regional agenda on population and development*, 2013.

¹⁶⁴ Bateman, Medellín emerges as a Latin American trailblazer for local economic growth, *The Guardian*, 2012.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁷ Betancur, Approaches to the Regularization of Informal Settlements: The Case of Primed in Medellín, Colombia, *Global Urban Development Magazine*, 2007.

¹⁶⁸ *Medellin's Comeback: The trouble with miracles*, 2014.

¹⁶⁹ UN-Habitat, *World Urban Forum: Urban Equity in Development – Cities for Life*, 2014.

¹⁷⁰ IDB, *Urban Development*, 2015.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*

Annotated Bibliography

Inter-American Development Bank & Emerging and Sustainable Cities Initiative. (2015). *Urban development challenges in Latin America and the Caribbean* [Website]. Retrieved 21 July 2015 from: <http://www.iadb.org/en/topics/emerging-and-sustainable-cities/responding-to-urban-development-challenges-in-emerging-cities,6690.html>

The Inter-American Development Bank has supplied an excellent information hub around urban development challenges in Latin American and the Caribbean (LAC) through this website. Comprehensive and extensive, the main page provides a summary of key challenges, including approachable infographics of the growing relevance and needs of this topic. It summarizes what the IDB does to address these challenges and links to key subtopic pages that provide more in-depth information, including one page focusing on inequality and poverty. This hub also links to project models, information on specific cities, publications, and a variety of blogs, interactive data tools, and media. This is a great place for delegates to start exploring urban development of sustainable cities in LAC and engage in a variety of content.

International Labour Organization. (2015). *Promoting Formal Employment Among Youth: Innovative Experiences in Latin America and the Caribbean* [Report]. Retrieved 21 July 2015 from: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---americas/---ro-lima/documents/publication/wcms_361990.pdf

This report from the International Labour Organization addresses one of the sub-topics within the larger topic of economic and social development in cities. It discusses the issue of informal employment among youth in LAC. This document is useful because it is a very recently updated report that addresses a core aspect of this topic. It discusses the differences between formal and informal employment, which is important for delegates to understand. It also discusses initiatives for transitioning youth employment from the informal economy to the formal economy.

Irazabal, C. (2009). *Revisiting Urban Planning in Latin America and the Caribbean* [Report]. United Nations Human Settlements Programme. Retrieved 24 August 2015 from: <http://unhabitat.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/GRHS2009RegionalLatinAmericaandtheCaribbean.pdf>

This source is a report commissioned by UN-Habitat, and it discusses the issue of urban planning in LAC, as well as many of the subtopics found within this topic. It begins by addressing the trends and challenges posed by urbanization in LAC. It then moves on to discussing urban planning as a source for alleviating several of the issues posed by urbanization. For example, it discusses how urban planning can be used to transition away from the informal economy and assist with disaster risk reduction.

Moloney, A. (2015). Latin American govts fail to tackle booming urban slums – report. *Thomas Reuters Foundation*. Retrieved 24 August 2015 from: <http://www.trust.org/item/20150817000612-yh553>

This site examines the issue of slums and informal housing within LAC and the broader effects this has on the region such as poverty and inequality. This is an important source for delegates to utilize because it gives a recent overview of slums in Latin America and the correlation between slums and development in the region. It begins by giving relevant facts and statistics, which put the issue of slums and informal housing into perspective. It also discusses how the issue of slums falls into the broader context of the SDGs.

United Nations Development Programme. (2014). *Disaster Risk Reduction: What does the UNDP do in Disaster Risk Reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean?* [Brochure]. Retrieved 31 August 2015 from: http://www.latinamerica.undp.org/content/dam/rblac/docs/Research%20and%20Publications/Crisis%20Prevention%20and%20Recovery/Brochure_Disasters_english.pdf

This website is a UNDP report that looks at the effects of natural disasters on the LAC region. This is an important source for delegates as they research UN programs on disaster risk reduction in Latin America. It also gives up-to-date statistics on the effects of natural disasters in the LAC region. The report details DRR efforts, gender mainstreaming, and South-South cooperation as potential sources for reducing the negative effects of natural disasters in LAC.

United Nations, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. (2013). *Proposed regional agenda on population and development for Latin America and the Caribbean beyond 2014*. Retrieved 20 July 2015 from: http://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/3123/S2013417_en.pdf?sequence=1

This source is an agenda from a 2013 regional conference. The agenda aims to identify and propose the issues for the population and development agenda for LAC past 2014. This is useful to delegates because it highlights the issues that directly effect economic and social development in LAC, such as inequality, poverty, and social injustice. It also addresses globalization and the economic crisis and its medium and long term effects on the region. Finally, it takes a human rights approach to development, which is useful for delegates to consider in their research.

United Nations, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. (2014). *ECLAC Programme of Work for the biennium 2016-2017: Subprogramme 5: Social Development*. Retrieved 20 July 2015 from: http://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/pages/files/programme-2016-2017_social_development.pdf

The ECLAC Programme of Work is an excellent resource for delegates looking to orient themselves to what ECLAC's actual work looks like in action. Technical but still approachable, this Programme of Work summarizes the regional needs and priorities for ECLAC relating to social development through a strategy overview and list of planned activities to achieve the strategy. Delegates are encouraged to review these activities, which include trainings, advisory services, technical cooperation, and a variety of publications, and to consider how these might align with their positions and proposals.

United Nations, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. (2015). *Draft Operational Guide for Implementation and Follow-up of the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development (LC/L.4016 (MDP.2/3))*. Retrieved 20 July 2015 from:

http://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/events/files/operational_guide_0.pdf

Delegates should rely on this source to understand the full scope of population and development issues in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as the current opinions of ECLAC countries on how to address the issues. This document first summarizes the Montevideo Consensus, the regional agenda on population and development, then provides operational plans and recommendations for the priority measures. These include sustainable development, gender rights, rights of youth, spatial vulnerability, and protection of human rights.

United Nations Human Settlements Programme. (n.d.). *Housing and Slum Upgrading* [Website]. Retrieved 24 August 2015 from: <http://unhabitat.org/urban-themes/housing-slum-upgrading/>

This source is a website from UN-Habitat that examines the issue of slums and informal settlements and how living conditions can be improved within these dwellings. This is an important source for delegates to consider, because it gives up-to-date statistics on effects of slums within urban areas, which include statistics for Latin America. This source also provides estimates for what can be expected if urbanization trends continue, and emphasizes the importance of urban planning.

United Nations, Time for Global Action. (2015). *Cities* [Website]. Retrieved 20 July 2015 from:

<http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/cities/>

This site provides an excellent place for delegates to begin their research on the UN and the development of cities. Focused on the post-2015 development agenda, this site provides critical facts and figures around this topic, links to relevant UN bodies, and videos delving into some dynamics of the urban development. The website is particularly useful because it maintains a timeline of relevant UN actions and news stories under the topic, and will continue to be updated, thus letting delegates stay abreast of current developments.

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II. Guaranteeing Indigenous Peoples' Rights in Latin America and the Caribbean

Introduction

Human rights have been a primary focus for the United Nations (UN) since its inception, and are emphasized in numerous treaties, declarations, and resolutions.¹⁷² While many people throughout the world face hardships and have their rights taken away by a variety of factors, indigenous people face some of the greatest obstacles to obtaining proper education, healthcare, water, and other basic needs.¹⁷³ A large amount of the world's indigenous population live in Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) Member States, with over 40 million people in 600 groups living in the region.¹⁷⁴ The UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), as a regional organization of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), has a responsibility to guarantee human rights for all.¹⁷⁵ With rights for indigenous peoples very much uncertain in many areas, ECLAC has a special responsibility to ensure their standard of living is upheld within the LAC region.¹⁷⁶

International and Regional Framework

The second line of the *Charter of the UN* reads that the UN calls on all global citizens “to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small.”¹⁷⁷ The Charter later notes that one of the main objectives of the UN is to promote human rights for all regardless of race, sex, religion, or language.¹⁷⁸ Just three years after the Charter's adoption, the UN General Assembly (GA) voted to adopt the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948), which reaffirmed the belief that all people have certain inalienable rights, including that of both security and property.¹⁷⁹

In 1966, the GA adopted the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* (ICCPR).¹⁸⁰ A Member State ratifying this document agrees to a series of political rights to both its own citizens and those who enter its borders, both lawfully or illegally.¹⁸¹ Included in these rights is that of self-determination for individuals, the right for a culture to define itself politically, and the right to life for all.¹⁸² Presently, almost all Member States have ratified the ICCPR, including the entirety of ECLAC.¹⁸³ The GA also adopted the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (ICESCR) in 1966.¹⁸⁴ Countries which ratify this document are beholden to ensuring fair work conditions for all their people such that they might become self-independent in their economic futures.¹⁸⁵ The ICESCR also furthers the idea that all people should benefit from economic growth and scientific inquiry.¹⁸⁶ All peoples are then guaranteed to not have their lands and living areas contaminated by unsafe or unclean facilities, regardless of private or public ownership.¹⁸⁷

The *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* was adopted in 2007 as a supplement to the UN's existing treaties and resolutions concerning human rights.¹⁸⁸ This document very specifically outlines the necessity for indigenous peoples to receive economic, social, cultural, and political equality in their country of residence.¹⁸⁹ It also calls for respect for cultural integrity and the right for indigenous peoples to have the capacity by which they can

¹⁷² UN OHCHR, *Status of Ratification Interactive Dashboard*.

¹⁷³ IWGIA, *Indigenous Peoples in Latin America – a general overview*.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁵ UN ECLAC, *Guaranteeing Indigenous Peoples Rights in Latin America*.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁷ *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Preamble.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁹ UN General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217 A (III))*, 1948.

¹⁸⁰ UN General Assembly, *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (A/RES/2200 (XXI))*, 1966.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁸² *Ibid.*

¹⁸³ UN OHCHR, *Status of Ratification Interactive Dashboard*.

¹⁸⁴ UN General Assembly, *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (A/RES/2200 (XXI))*, 1966.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁸ UN General Assembly, *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (A/RES/61/295)*, 2007.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

control their own futures.¹⁹⁰ In total, the UN Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) recognizes 18 distinct treaties concerning the topic of human rights and equality.¹⁹¹ All members of ECLAC have ratified at least nine, with many having ratified over 15.¹⁹² The large amount of existing framework concerning human rights indicates that there is at least some political will in ensuring a high quality of life for all.¹⁹³

Role of the International System

The International Labour Organization (ILO) has been one of the leaders in guaranteeing rights for indigenous peoples through its 1989 *Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (Convention No. 169)*.¹⁹⁴ This document, which is open for ratification and has been ratified by 22 Member States worldwide, presents an international binding agreement to guarantee rights for indigenous peoples.¹⁹⁵ Some of the main provisions of this Convention include the right for indigenous groups to self-identify as such and for Member States to give some level of autonomy to these peoples for the purposes of deciding their own futures.¹⁹⁶ Once ratified, a country allows itself to be routinely inspected by the ILO to ensure indigenous peoples are being treated fairly within its borders and full compliance with the convention.¹⁹⁷ Latin America as a region has the highest number of States Parties to *Convention No. 169*, and many local courts have often cited it in decisions regarding indigenous peoples.¹⁹⁸

At the most recent ECLAC meeting, the body did not directly address indigenous issues; however, ECLAC has found other ways to contribute to ensuring equal rights for native persons as an organization.¹⁹⁹ In 2014, at the World Conference on Indigenous Issues, ECLAC gave a presentation specifically outlining the challenges facing indigenous peoples in Latin America, and also highlighting specifically what women, children, and other marginalized groups experience.²⁰⁰ The report came at the request of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) and also takes time to highlight some of the issues native individuals would like to see come to the forefront of ECLAC's agenda, such as autonomy.²⁰¹ As ECLAC has several intergovernmental (IGO) counterparts such as the Organization of American States (OAS), they work with other bodies to create solutions that will help indigenous peoples specifically in Latin America.²⁰²

ECLAC and its parent organization, ECOSOC, have taken great lengths to recognize the challenges faced by indigenous peoples; other UN entities that discuss their rights include UNPFII, the UN Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP), and the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples.²⁰³ These latter three UN entities came together for a special summit of the UN GA in 2014, known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, to examine proper methodology and implementation of laws for guaranteeing the rights of native peoples.²⁰⁴ Through this conference, ECLAC promoted constitutional changes and autonomy of indigenous peoples as the best practice for ensuring guaranteed rights.²⁰⁵ These constitutional changes are designed to promote consensus-building in policy, rather than a complete majority rule system.²⁰⁶ Member States of ECLAC have been very successful over the past decade in increasing political participation for indigenous peoples by reaching international consensus on methodology.²⁰⁷ However, work remains to be done to ensure not just political

¹⁹⁰ UN General Assembly, *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (A/RES/61/295)*, 2007.

¹⁹¹ UN OHCHR, *Status of Ratification Interactive Dashboard*.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁴ ILO, *Convention no. 169*.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁸ ILO, *Application of Convention no. 169 by Domestic and International Courts in Latin America*, 2008.

¹⁹⁹ UN ECLAC, *Resolutions Adopted at the Thirty-Fifth Session of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2014.

²⁰⁰ UN ECLAC, *ECLAC Will Present Special Report on Indigenous Peoples at World Conference in New York*, 2014.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*

²⁰² OAS, *Indigenous Peoples*.

²⁰³ UN ECLAC, *Guaranteeing Indigenous Peoples Rights in Latin America*, 2014.

²⁰⁴ UN General Assembly, *Indigenous Issues (A/RES/65/198)*, 2010.

²⁰⁵ UN ECLAC, *Guaranteeing Indigenous Peoples Rights in Latin America*, 2014.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁷ UN ECLAC, *Contributions Made by ECLAC from a Rights Perspective Regarding Indigenous Peoples and Afro-Descendants Affairs*, 2013.

participation but economic sustainability, namely through guaranteeing land rights for what are mostly agrarian persons.²⁰⁸

As a UN entity, UNFPII does much to discuss the importance of the rights of indigenous peoples and uphold native peoples' cultural identities.²⁰⁹ This board consists of 16 members, eight of whom are appointed by ECOSOC and its Member States, while the other half are selected by regional indigenous organizations.²¹⁰ The representatives are instructed to operate in their individual capacity, with no allegiance to their respective country, in order to better promote indigenous issues throughout the world.²¹¹

A regional body that also works within the region is OAS, which was established in 1948 and is the preeminent international body in the western hemisphere.²¹² OAS brings together all 35 countries of North and South America, and recognizes human rights as one of the pillars for measured success for this intergovernmental organization.²¹³ A main priority for OAS has been to establish a means for a legal route in guaranteeing the rights of native people, known better as the *Draft American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People*.²¹⁴ Although this substantive document has not yet been adopted by the OAS General Assembly, this has not prevented the organization from holding summits and using their court, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), to further grant rights for native people.²¹⁵

State of Indigenous Persons in the LAC Region

Despite comprising a large proportion of the population, indigenous peoples still face issues of marginalization leading to substandard living conditions throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.²¹⁶ In fact, there are many instances in LAC where upholding fundamental human rights has proved difficult; for example, more than half of countries with a “very high” femicide rate are located in the LAC region.²¹⁷ Further, 75% of murders of land rights activists occur in LAC, with roughly 40% of those being indigenous persons.²¹⁸ In Brazil, the rate of murders for indigenous peoples is higher than that of all persons in Maceio, its most violent city, indicating that it is safer to live in the most dangerous city in Brazil than to be an indigenous person in Brazil.²¹⁹ While these murders do not qualify as violations of the ICCPR because they are not state ordered, the statistics speak to an issue in guaranteeing the right to life for all in the LAC region.²²⁰ ECLAC reports that institutionalized discrimination against native persons, including Afro-Americans, has become a primary reason for these insufficient standards of living.²²¹ To further aggravate these issues, most native people find themselves without access to quality education in line with their cultural and language-based needs.²²²

With the economic strain on indigenous peoples mounting, more individuals find themselves moving from their traditional rural communities to urban centers, although they still find themselves facing discrimination and unsteady wages.²²³ One promising outlook from this is that there seems to be less focus on cultural upheaval for indigenous peoples leaving their communities and more focus on social integration, possibly diminishing the effect of discrimination in urban areas.²²⁴ Because of the continued marginalization towards rural indigenous communities,

²⁰⁸ UN ECLAC, *Contributions Made by ECLAC from a Rights Perspective Regarding Indigenous Peoples and Afro-Descendants Affairs*, 2013.

²⁰⁹ UNPFII, *United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues: Fourteenth Session of the Permanent Forum*.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹¹ *Ibid.*

²¹² OAS, *Who We Are*.

²¹³ *Ibid.*

²¹⁴ OAS, *Draft American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.

²¹⁵ OAS, *Indigenous People*.

²¹⁶ IWGIA *Indigenous Peoples in Latin America – a general overview*.

²¹⁷ UN-Women, *Femicide in Latin America*, 2013.

²¹⁸ *Latin American Most Dangerous Place for Land Rights Activists*, Al Jazeera America, 2015.

²¹⁹ Fellet, *High Murder Rates blight Brazils Indigenous Communities*, 2014.

²²⁰ IWGIA, *Indigenous Peoples in Latin America – a general overview*.

²²¹ UN ECLAC, *Current Situation of Indigenous and Afro-American Peoples in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2003.

²²² *Ibid.*

²²³ *Ibid.*

²²⁴ *Ibid.*

many natural resources remain un-tampered, leading to potential opportunities regarding ecotourism.²²⁵ One of the main obstacles indigenous peoples face in using this for their advantage is protecting their intellectual property.²²⁶ Not being able to own their cultural identity presents the opportunity for outside actors to enter and take on an indigenous group's cultural identity for financial gain.²²⁷ It remains an aspiration of native persons to see their cultural identity protected and to hold proportional wealth within their respective Member States.²²⁸

Equal Access to Land and Water

Despite participating in the present Latin American trend of increased urbanization, indigenous people still make up over 40% of the rural community in LAC.²²⁹ With so many indigenous persons still living in rural areas, natural resources such as water and land rights represent not just an important part of survival, but also hold cultural significance to their way of life.²³⁰ The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) made note in its *General Comment 15* that States Parties to the ICESCR should take special care to ensure the rights of water to indigenous peoples, such that they can appropriately carry out their traditional lifestyle.²³¹ Further, a union of global indigenous peoples declared in 2003 at the Kyoto Third World Water Forum that indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination with regards to any spiritual relationship with natural resources.²³² They also expressed alarm at the rate of climate change and toxins being supplied into their air and water, which has damaged their ability to carry on with many cultural practices.²³³

Most indigenous groups take a “communal regime” approach to the handling of natural resources, a notion that can often find itself in direct opposition with private ownership and investment.²³⁴ The IACHR, the main judicial body for the OAS, ruled in 2001 that property rights did not just stem from private ownership, but that communal ownership can exist in a legal-plurality system.²³⁵ As most LAC countries do allow for some autonomy and self-governance within native groups, the effect is that indigenous peoples may apply their notion of communal regime with equal legitimacy as a private business.²³⁶ Essentially, this means that indigenous land can be considered without any governing or ownership entity, private or public.²³⁷ On a federal level, governments are charged with protecting the sanctity of communal regime using their system of courts.²³⁸ National governments then have a responsibility not just to ensure they do not interfere in the wellness of water and lands, but also to keep private third-party groups from doing so.²³⁹ One such success in upholding these rights was a court case in Ecuador in which several small indigenous groups successfully won a multi-billion dollar lawsuit against Chevron, which had been accused of dumping several dangerous toxins in Amazonian lands.²⁴⁰ The plaintiffs claimed that these toxic chemical dumps led to difficulty in pursuing their agrarian economic lifestyle by harming their plants and increasing cancer rates.²⁴¹ Peru, where over 40% of the population is indigenous, hopes to prevent this exploitation by passing a law which requires consultation with indigenous peoples before any potentially environmentally harmful natural resource extraction project may proceed.²⁴²

²²⁵ IFAD, *Indigenous Peoples and Sustainable Development*, 2003.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*

²²⁷ *Ibid.*

²²⁸ *Ibid.*

²²⁹ IWGIA, *Indigenous Peoples in Latin America – a general overview*.

²³⁰ Parriciatu & Sindico, *Contours of an Indigenous Peoples Right to Water in Latin American Countries Under International Law*, 2012, p. 212.

²³¹ UN CESCR, *General Comment No. 15 (2002): The right to water (arts. 11 and 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights)*, 2002.

²³² Third World Water Forum, *Indigenous Peoples Kyoto Water Declaration*, 2003.

²³³ *Ibid.*

²³⁴ Parriciatu & Sindico, *Contours of an Indigenous Peoples Right to Water in Latin American Countries Under International Law*, 2012, p. 220.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 230.

²³⁷ *Ibid.*

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 232.

²³⁹ Cultural Survival, *Indigenous Peoples and Water Rights*.

²⁴⁰ Cabitza, *Peru Leads the Way for Latin Americas Indigenous Communities*, 2011.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*

²⁴² *Ibid.*

Ensuring Equal Participation

Gender Equality and the Division of Family Responsibilities

Traditional indigenous lifestyles in LAC saw men and women playing equal roles in order to substantiate healthy living and family upbringing.²⁴³ However, this idea of equal roles has become less prevalent, with indigenous women facing significantly more forms of discrimination than their non-native counterparts.²⁴⁴ With the desecration of native lands, the normal agrarian lifestyle sought out by these indigenous peoples has begun to dissipate, forcing men to leave their families to work in urban areas and help provide income.²⁴⁵ However, this leaves the women of these indigenous groups to take on a dual role of cultivating agriculture in the remaining useful land while working to raise the children alone.²⁴⁶ This trend has increased the necessity for child labor to be used in order to sustain an agricultural lifestyle.²⁴⁷ As such, young people in indigenous communities are increasingly denied their right to education, a direct negative in accomplishing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), in addition to aspects of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).²⁴⁸

A joint report from ECLAC and the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) shows that most LAC Member States see a sharp contrast in child poverty levels between indigenous peoples and non-indigenous citizens, citing insufficient healthcare and lack of access to water as examples of poverty standards.²⁴⁹ One recommendation given for helping in eliminating this child poverty has been the establishment of bilingual schools, so that all children have access to an education they can understand and use.²⁵⁰ Ultimately, the return to a traditional indigenous family division of responsibilities may be beneficial for ensuring child poverty levels are reduced and seeing access to education more fully restored.²⁵¹ Additionally, indigenous women and children are more likely to be imprisoned than their non-native counterparts, indicating that governments need to better assess data to determine sources of discrimination and work to ensure it is not as prevalent.²⁵²

Equal Political Participation

According to the World Bank, indigenous peoples make up nearly 13% of LAC’s population and about 40% of its rural inhabitants.²⁵³ Although a significant portion of the population, indigenous rights cannot be ensured without adequate representation in their home state.²⁵⁴ Even in LAC, where the indigenous population holds steady at around half of the overall residents, political participation still dwindles at incredibly low rates for native groups.²⁵⁵ Native persons have had some success in becoming representatives for their governments, most notably in Bolivia, which has an indigenous person serving as its head of state.²⁵⁶ Despite having the capacity to be elected into public office, most constitutional governments in LAC do not guarantee any sort of political protection for indigenous peoples.²⁵⁷ As a solution to guaranteeing a role in political decision-making, Colombia specifically reserves five seats for indigenous persons, although this number falls well short of representing their native population proportionately.²⁵⁸ Recently, other LAC Member States have made incredible gains in poverty reduction and the standard of living for the LAC region, but there has been marginal change in these areas for indigenous peoples.²⁵⁹ ECLAC has noted

²⁴³ Hall, *Latin America’s Indigenous Women*.

²⁴⁴ UN HRC, *Access to justice in the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples: restorative justice, indigenous juridical systems and access to justice for indigenous women, children and youth, and persons with disabilities (A/HRC/27/65)*, 2014.

²⁴⁵ Hall, *Latin America’s Indigenous Women*, p. 40.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

²⁴⁷ UNICEF, *The Rights of Indigenous Children*, 2012.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁵¹ Hall, *Latin America’s Indigenous Women*, p. 39.

²⁵² UN HRC, *Access to justice in the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples: restorative justice, indigenous juridical systems and access to justice for indigenous women, children and youth, and persons with disabilities (A/HRC/27/65)*, 2014.

²⁵³ IWGIA *Indigenous Peoples in Latin America – a general overview*.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁵ UN DPI, *Political Participation by Indigenous Peoples in Latin America Still Low – UN Report*, 2013.

²⁵⁶ IWGIA, *Indigenous Peoples in Latin America – a general overview*.

²⁵⁷ Grote, *The Status and Rights of Indigenous Peoples in Latin America*, 2009.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁹ UN DPI, *Political Participation by Indigenous Peoples in Latin America Still Low – UN Report*, 2013.

significant gains in healthcare, but has also noted concern over the lack opportunities for secondary education and low completion rates for those who do attend.²⁶⁰ The gains in the quality of life for indigenous people show some correlation with political participation; the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has found that access to information and incorporating women into the political process remain the most distinctive barriers in ensuring equal political participation for indigenous peoples.²⁶¹ Without proper political representation in national governments, it will be difficult to see noticeable gains in the quality of life for native persons.²⁶²

The desire and interest of native persons is to hold autonomous rule within their Member State.²⁶³ This then presents two major issues: the identification of indigenous groups and state sovereignty.²⁶⁴ With regards to identification, most governments already allow for self-identification while receiving input from third-party experts as to what defines an indigenous person.²⁶⁵ One such issue with self-identification is how to classify a mixed-race individual, many of whom trace their lineage back through the colonial era and therefore have some European ancestors.²⁶⁶ This question remains an unsettled debate, but it is important that some sort of consensus be reached in order to establish what equal participation for native persons may look like.²⁶⁷ In response to the second issue, many governments are actively working to create specialized offices for interaction with indigenous peoples.²⁶⁸ These agencies are meant to coordinate with local governments of indigenous people who are given the capacity to impose local customs and certain economic laws.²⁶⁹ Many governments are beginning to recognize their country as multi-ethnic, which noticeably comes with land protection for traditionally indigenous areas in most cases.²⁷⁰ Having a Member State identify itself as multi-ethnic, while invaluable for indigenous peoples, does invite the complication of a legally plural system within a state.²⁷¹ More so, it is critical that ECLAC members resolve how to balance the interests of national and local governments in this legally pluralistic system.²⁷² Additionally, with the continual growth of urbanization for indigenous persons, the question of how to implement autonomy appropriately has become a concern.²⁷³

Affording local autonomy to indigenous groups means that they can organize themselves and develop laws that are most appropriate for them.²⁷⁴ One concern voiced by the UN is the status of indigenous women, most of whom still do not have the same rights as men in many native cultures.²⁷⁵ Bolivia, where indigenous peoples make up almost 60% of the population and which has an indigenous head of state, only has nine female members of parliament out of 130 representatives.²⁷⁶ Political representation by indigenous women is at a low rate throughout the region, and the effects can be seen in failing reproductive health for females.²⁷⁷ Many national governments have noted the necessity of building cooperation between indigenous leaders and government-level officials to perpetuate good will, while ensuring proper education on the policies outlined in the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* such that they can be upheld and implemented appropriately.²⁷⁸ Indigenous people have largely agreed to

²⁶⁰ Latin America and Caribbean Regional Coverage, *ECLAC Report Tracks Progress in Indigenous Peoples Rights*, 2014.

²⁶¹ UN HRC, *Progress report on the study on indigenous peoples and the right to participate in decision-making (A/HRC/15/35)*, 2010.

²⁶² *Ibid.*

²⁶³ IWGIA, *Indigenous Peoples in Latin America – a general overview*.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁵ Grote, *The Status and Rights of Indigenous Peoples in Latin America*, 2009.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁷ Inter-Parliamentary Union, *Beyond the Numbers: The Participation of Indigenous Peoples in Parliament*, 2014.

²⁶⁸ Cultural Survival, *NOTES FROM THE FIELD: Indigenous Peoples and Democracy in Latin America and Bolivia*.

²⁶⁹ Grote, *The Status of Rights and Indigenous Peoples in Latin America*, 2009.

²⁷⁰ Cultural Survival, *NOTES FROM THE FIELD: Indigenous Peoples and Democracy in Latin America and Bolivia*.

²⁷¹ Patriciatu & Sindico, *Contours of an Indigenous Peoples Right to Water in Latin American Countries Under International Law*, 2012, p. 217.

²⁷² *Ibid.*

²⁷³ IWGIA, *Indigenous Peoples in Latin America – a general overview*.

²⁷⁴ Patriciatu & Sindico, *Contours of an Indigenous Peoples Right to Water in Latin American Countries Under International Law*, 2012, p. 217.

²⁷⁵ UN DPI, *Political Participation by Indigenous Peoples in Latin America Still Low – UN Report*, 2013.

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁸ UN HRC, *Final summary of responses to the questionnaire seeking the views of States and of indigenous peoples on best practices regarding possible appropriate measures and implementation strategies to attain the goals of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, 2014.

these ideas, but have also noted the importance of international governing bodies, namely the UN, with non-governmental organizations helping to bridge remaining disagreements and reach agreements that benefit both sides.²⁷⁹

Conclusion

With there already being a significant framework dedicated to human rights, both universally and for indigenous peoples, it is now imperative that these documents be upheld. While crafting new documents could be a useful tool for reaffirming existing rights and addressing the issues plaguing native peoples, such as diminished access to water and low political participation, Member States of ECLAC should spend significant time discussing implementation of the existing framework. While there does appear to be existing commitment to improving the standard of living for native peoples, there remains significant work to be done in guaranteeing rights for all indigenous groups.

Further Research

When exploring how to guarantee rights for indigenous peoples in Latin America, delegates should consider the following: how can discrimination towards indigenous people be curbed in the LAC region? What is necessary for cooperation between autonomous indigenous governments and those at the national level? What are best practices for balancing the interests of countries and indigenous peoples in a plural legal system? How will it be possible to ensure the environmental sanctity of indigenous lands and resources against intentional or inadvertent threats by third party groups? What barriers remain to seeing indigenous people, particularly women, represented in state-level governing bodies, and how can they be overcome?

²⁷⁹ UN HRC, *Final summary of responses to the questionnaire seeking the views of States and of indigenous peoples on best practices regarding possible appropriate measures and implementation strategies to attain the goals of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, 2014.

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Grote, R. (1999). The Status and Rights of Indigenous Peoples in Latin America. *Heidelberg Journal of International Law*, 59: 497-528. Retrieved 20 July 2015 from:

http://www.zaerv.de/59_1999/59_1999_2_a_497_528.pdf

In this publication, Grote writes mostly on the current state of political participation for indigenous peoples in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), and how this translates to a lack of human rights. With political participation being so crucial to making progress towards increased indigenous rights, this document will provide clarity to the current situation and how it might be improved. It can also be used to show constitutional examples of what those in the LAC region might intend to do in the future.

International Labour Organization. (1989). *Convention concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries, 1989 (Convention No. 169)*. Retrieved 20 July 2015 from:

http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100_ILO_CODE:C169

One of the oldest and most important pieces of international framework concerning the rights of indigenous people throughout the world, the Convention concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries (Convention No. 169, or C169) covers a broad array of issues, from healthcare to vocational training. C169 touts itself as legally binding, and all States Parties consent to inspections by the ILO to ensure full compliance. It also requires all domestic laws and policies to be brought up-to-date within a year of ratification. Thus far most Member States have yet to ratify it, which suggests that one challenge for this topic may be gaining more participation in C169.

International Labour Organization. (2009). *Application of Convention No. 169 by Domestic and International Courts in Latin America*. Retrieved 20 July 2015 from: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---normes/documents/publication/wcms_123946.pdf

This casebook looks at seven LAC countries and how they have upheld their ratification of Convention No. 169 through their court systems. With implementation being just as important, if not more important, as ratification, this publication looks to understand what Member States in Latin America have done with regards to Convention No. 169 thus far. The ILO has authority to inspect Member States that ratify C169 to ensure they are being compliant with its mandates. As a resource, this shows some of what has already been done at a state level, and provides examples for potential future resolutions in relation to this topic.

International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs. (n.d.). *Indigenous Peoples in Latin America – a general overview* [Website]. Retrieved 20 July 2015 from: <http://www.iwgia.org/regions/latin-america/indigenous-peoples-in-latin-america>

The importance of this webpage from the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA) is largely due to its broad overview of the challenges that indigenous peoples face, in addition to information it provides concerning the demographic breakdown of indigenous populations. It also showcases the political efforts in LAC to ensure equality of opportunity while highlighting already successful models undertaken by specific countries. The majority of the page discusses future challenges, which provides a good base point in determining what ECLAC's future role is on this issue.

Parriciatu, M. & F. Sindico. (2012). Contours of an Indigenous Peoples Right to Water in Latin American Countries Under International Law. *International Human Rights Law Review*, 1 (2011): 211-236. Retrieved 20 July 2015 from:

http://www.freshwateraction.net/sites/freshwateraction.net/files/HRLR_001_02_ParriciatuSindico_art01.pdf

This article seeks to understand access to water for indigenous peoples through the lens of cultural norms. By highlighting autonomy efforts, it provides information concerning concepts such as communal regime and the potential conflicts of interest between governments' desire for private investment and the needs of indigenous peoples who live in resource-rich areas. The article also spends significant time discussing international law and frameworks and how they have been implemented in LAC, which is key to understanding the current situation.

United Nations Children’s Fund. (2012). *The Rights of Indigenous Children* [Report]. Retrieved 20 July 2015 from: <http://www.unicef.org/lac/challenges-14-ECLAC-UNICEF.pdf>

This document provides invaluable data concerning the rights of indigenous children, and should aid in researching and discovering the priority of indigenous rights for children and youth, an important aspect of this topic. With such information, it can be determined what specifically should be discussed with regards to the rights of native persons. This document provides another perspective from which delegates can analyze human rights in the LAC region.

United Nations, Economic Commission for Latin American and the Caribbean. (2013). *Contributions made by ECLAC from a rights prospective regarding indigenous peoples and afro-descendants affairs* [Report]. Retrieved 20 July 2015 from: http://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/21779/S2013551_en.pdf?sequence=1

Written as part of a larger conference on economic development in LAC, this publication shows how ECLAC hopes to balance recruitment of private investment, sustainable development, and respect for the cultural norms of indigenous peoples. This gives critical understanding of what ECLAC hopes to accomplish in the future with regards to indigenous peoples and their access to natural resources and economic opportunity. It also looks at the role of gender, something that is crucial to understanding the challenges facing a large sub-group of indigenous peoples.

United Nations, Economic Commission for Latin American and the Caribbean. (2014). *Guaranteeing Indigenous Peoples Rights in Latin America* [Report]. Retrieved 20 July 2015 from:

http://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/37051/S1420782_en.pdf?sequence=4

Directly from ECLAC, this document looks at what it believes needs to be done in ensuring that indigenous peoples’ rights are guaranteed in LAC. In addition to highlighting what recent successes have been made, this document discusses in depth the idea of local autonomy, which is crucial in understanding this topic. Delegates should look to it for understanding on what ECLAC’s role is in guaranteeing the rights of indigenous peoples.

United Nations, Human Rights Council. (2010). *Progress report on the study on indigenous peoples and the right to participate in decision-making (A/HRC/15/35)* [Report]. Retrieved 19 August 2015 from:

<http://www.undocs.org/A/HRC/15/35>

This report of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples highlights what challenges currently prevent greater representation for indigenous peoples in decision-making processes. While discussing what work still needs to be done, it also notes some of recent successes in the field of this topic. If used in conjunction with Grote’s work, it can be valuable in showing what type of progress has been made in the last decade. By understanding what progress has already been made, delegates can then become more familiar with what remains to be done.

United Nations, Human Rights Council. (2014). *Final summary of responses to the questionnaire seeking the views of States and of indigenous peoples on best practices regarding possible appropriate measures and implementation strategies to attain the goals of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (A/HRC/27/67)*.

Retrieved 19 August 2015 from <http://undocs.org/A/HRC/27/67>

An official United Nations document, this report shows many of the perspectives regarding next steps from the view of both states and indigenous peoples. It predominately suggests that better cooperation between governing bodies is necessary for improvement of the current situation. Delegates should look for what it says about the role of international bodies as they begin research and thinking about potential solutions to this topic.

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III. Promoting the Sustainable Use of Natural Resources

“We envisage a world in which...consumption and production patterns and use of all natural resources – from air to land, from rivers, lakes and aquifers to oceans and seas - are sustainable.”²⁸⁰

Introduction

Sustainable development is one of the core tenets of the work of the United Nations (UN).²⁸¹ One of the first documents to emphasize a framework for sustainable development was *Our Common Future*, which was published by the UN World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) in 1987.²⁸² Also known as the Brundtland Report, *Our Common Future* defines sustainable development as development that “meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”²⁸³ One important facet of this type of development is the sustainable use of natural resources.²⁸⁴ In order for future generations to be able to meet their needs, they must have access to life-sustaining resources such as water and energy and be able to depend on a viable economy.²⁸⁵ Although the UN has long recognized the value of sustainable development in theory, the international community falls short of meeting this goal in practice.²⁸⁶ The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) estimates that humans will be using nearly 140 billion tons of nonrenewable natural resources per year by 2050.²⁸⁷ Given current growth rates and production patterns, today’s use of nonrenewable resources is unsustainable in the long term.²⁸⁸

The unsustainable use of natural resources can lead to political instability, poor economic strategies, and environmental ills such as increased greenhouse gas emissions, global warming, and loss of biodiversity and ecosystems.²⁸⁹ Due to these negative externalities, the UN and its regional partners have worked to produce frameworks to guide Member States towards sustainable development.²⁹⁰ The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) is a UN body that focuses its work on sustainable development, specifically in the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) region.²⁹¹ With the help of ECLAC’s research and agenda-setting power, the region made important progress towards sustainable development in recent years.²⁹² For example, ECLAC’s work has helped the region to increase protection of terrestrial and marine areas to 13.3% (up from 4.9% in 1990) and provide 95% of its people with sustainable access to fresh drinking water.²⁹³ Nevertheless, there is still work to be done for Latin America’s use of natural resources to be fully sustainable.²⁹⁴ For example, the region must work to improve energy efficiency and promote the sustainable use of water resources.²⁹⁵ Given the importance of sustainable development for the wellbeing of future generations, the UN and ECLAC must continue to promote comprehensive frameworks and programs that will enable Member States to reach this goal.

International and Regional Framework

Though the UN’s sustainable development agenda has gained recent momentum, aspects of the need for development and sustainability were present at the organization’s founding in 1945.²⁹⁶ The *Charter of the United Nations* states that a primary goal of the UN will be to promote “higher standards of living, full employment, and conditions of economic and social progress and development.”²⁹⁷ In later years, the international community

²⁸⁰ UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, p. 4.

²⁸¹ UN DESA, *Sustainable Development from Brundtland to Rio 2012*, 2010, pp. 2-3.

²⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 6.

²⁸³ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁴ UN DPI, *Humanity’s Voracious Consumption of Natural Resources Unsustainable - UN Report*, 2011.

²⁸⁵ UN DESA, *Global Sustainable Development Report*, 2015, p. 150.

²⁸⁶ UN DPI, *Humanity’s Voracious Consumption of Natural Resources Unsustainable - UN Report*, 2011.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁹ UN DESA, *Global Sustainable Development Report*, 2015, p. 150.

²⁹⁰ UN SDKP, *Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform*, 2015.

²⁹¹ UN ECLAC, *ECLAC: The Region Achieved Several Key Goals of the MDGs, the Starting Point for the 2030 Agenda*, 2015.

²⁹² *Ibid.*

²⁹³ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁵ UN DESA, *Global Sustainable Development Report*, 2015, p. 22.

²⁹⁶ *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945; UN General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217 A(III))*, 1948.

²⁹⁷ *Charter of the United Nations*, 1945, Chapter IX, Art. 55.

realized that such higher standards of living would only be achieved through sustainable development.²⁹⁸ One way the UN promoted this understanding was by establishing a clear definition of sustainable development in the Brundtland Report.²⁹⁹ The UN further clarified its purpose at the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), also known as the Earth Summit, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992, when the *Rio Declaration on Environment and Development* was established.³⁰⁰ This declaration began to form a specific agenda for international actors about how to promote greater sustainability.³⁰¹ Several years later, the UN developed eight goals for development and poverty reduction known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which were officially adopted in 2001.³⁰² Shortly after this milestone, the UN agreed on a *Plan of Implementation* of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in 2002.³⁰³ In 2012, Member States revisited the goals of sustainable development and work of UNCED at the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (CSD), also known as the Rio+20 conference.³⁰⁴ At this conference, the international community adopted *The Future We Want*, a document that outlines the UN vision for worldwide development and the goals of Member States for the future of the international community.³⁰⁵ *The Future We Want* was also important for promoting renewed political commitments for the goals established in previous conferences and establishing the need for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).³⁰⁶

In light of understanding the importance of sustainability, as well as uneven progress towards the MDGs, the UN General Assembly (GA) adopted 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in September 2015, which will come into effect in 2016.³⁰⁷ This new development agenda is especially relevant for the LAC region.³⁰⁸ In a recent report, ECLAC director Alicia Bárcena noted that environmental sustainability should be at the forefront of the region's work in the post-2015 agenda.³⁰⁹ Several of the 17 new SDGs that make up that agenda are immediately relevant to the topic of the sustainable use of natural resources; these include Goal 6 (to ensure sustainable management of water), Goal 7 (ensure access to sustainable energy), Goal 12 (ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns), Goal 14 (conserve the use of oceans, seas, and marine resources), and Goal 15 (to protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems).³¹⁰

Role of the International System

There are many bodies within the international system that work to encourage sustainable development and effective uses of natural resources.³¹¹ Several UN entities focus on use policies for specific types of natural resources.³¹² For instance, UN-Energy and the United Nations Inter-Agency Mechanism on All Freshwater Related Issues, Including Sanitation (UN-Water) coordinate cross-sectoral efforts within the UN dealing with energy and water.³¹³ Another major player in the field of sustainable development is the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), which works to incorporate sustainability into trade patterns internationally.³¹⁴ Also, the UN Development Programme (UNDP) works to fund projects targeting sustainable development.³¹⁵ The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) focuses on protecting the environment, including the world's natural resources.³¹⁶ The UN body that facilitates much of the UN work on sustainability is the UN Division for Sustainable Development (UN DSD),

²⁹⁸ UN DESA, *Sustainable Development from Brundtland to Rio 2012*, 2010, pp. 2-3.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

³⁰⁰ UN General Assembly, *Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (A/CONF.151.26)*, 1992.

³⁰¹ *Ibid.*

³⁰² UN DESA, *Millennium Development Goals Report 2015*, 2015, p. 25.

³⁰³ UN DESA, *Sustainable Development from Brundtland to Rio 2012*, 2010, p. 8.

³⁰⁴ UN DESA, *Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development*, 2002, p. 2.

³⁰⁵ UN General Assembly, *The Future We Want (A/RES/66/288)*, 2012.

³⁰⁶ UN DESA, *Sustainable Development from Brundtland to Rio 2012*, 2010, p. 14.

³⁰⁷ UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.

³⁰⁸ UN ECLAC, *ECLAC: The Region Achieved Several Key Goals of the MDGs, the Starting Point for the 2030 Agenda*, 2015.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

³¹⁰ UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, p. 14.

³¹¹ UN DSD, *Mission Statement*, 2015.

³¹² UN-Energy, *About UN-Energy*, 2015; UN-Water, *About UN-Water*, 2015.

³¹³ *Ibid.*

³¹⁴ UNCTAD, *About UNCTAD*, 2015.

³¹⁵ UNDP, *Overview*, 2015.

³¹⁶ UNEP, *About*, 2015.

which has worked to streamline UN efforts on the topic in recent years.³¹⁷ In order to target the unique problems facing the least developed countries (LDCs), including with regard to how to utilize resources in a sustainable way, the UN also hosts an Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLS).³¹⁸

ECLAC itself has a crucial role to play with regard to sustainable development in the international system.³¹⁹ As one of the Economic and Social Council's (ECOSOC) five main regional bodies, ECLAC helps implement the general policies of the UN into the Latin American and Caribbean regional contexts.³²⁰ The body contributes to the UN's work by providing research and expertise and by hosting multiple forums for government representatives and policymakers.³²¹ In August 2015, ECLAC hosted the Second Regional Meeting of the Database of Indicators on Energy Efficiency Program, as well as the Sixth Regional Seminar on Agriculture and Climate Change, which brought together experts on energy efficiency, regional agricultural policies, and climate change to focus on how to improve these sectors in the future.³²² Also, ECLAC members have briefed other members of the UN system based on their expertise in certain areas.³²³ For example, ECLAC representative Carded Canales Dávila discussed "Capacity Development Workshop in Advancing Water and Sustainable Development" in February 2015.

Furthermore, ECLAC has a crucial role to play as an agenda-setting body by utilizing substantive working groups, several of which deal with issues relating to the sustainable use of natural resources.³²⁴ In relation to this topic, the most important subgroups are the Natural Resources and Infrastructure Division and the Division of Sustainable Development and Human Settlements.³²⁵ The stated purpose of the Natural Resources and Infrastructure Division is to "[work] to build countries' institutional capacities to devise and implement public policies and regulatory frameworks with a view to increasing efficiency in the sustainable management of natural resources" as well as to "[strive] to achieve greater policy harmonization and coordination, to promote exchanges of best practices at the subregional and regional levels in these areas and to make best use of experiences at the global level."³²⁶ It is clear that these goals are shaped by the development efforts of the UN in general, while providing a regional focus for Latin America and the Caribbean.³²⁷ One example of a project being conducted by the Natural Resources and Infrastructure Division is the Regional Carbon Forum, which was hosted by ECLAC in early September 2015.³²⁸

Another example of UN bodies (such as the ones listed above) coming together is seen through the current issue of disaster management in Latin America and the Caribbean.³²⁹ Because of the environmental changes resultant from climate change, much of Latin America is susceptible to environmental hazards such as unseasonal rainfall, hurricanes, and rising sea levels.³³⁰ In order to more fully understand these changes in weather patterns, ECLAC has led the efforts of information gathering and data analysis for changes in the region through reports such as "Infrastructure and Social Equality: Experiences in Potable Water, Sanitation, and Urban Transport in Latin America," which was published in 2013.³³¹ Additionally, UN-Water has established the International Decade for Action "Water for Life" between 2005 and 2015.³³² This movement raises awareness for the sustainable use of water and sanitation practices, which are often relevant for individuals and countries affected by climate change and the

³¹⁷ UN DSD, *Mission Statement*, 2015.

³¹⁸ UN-OHRLS, *About LDCs*, 2015.

³¹⁹ UN ECLAC, *Natural Resources and Infrastructure*, 2015.

³²⁰ UN ECLAC, *Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean Follow-up to the United Nations Development Agenda Beyond 2015 and to Rio+20*, 2013, pp. 7-9.

³²¹ UN ECLAC, *Natural Resources and Infrastructure*, 2015.

³²² UN ECLAC, *Events*, 2015.

³²³ Dávila, *Water and Sustainable Development: Opportunities and Challenges in the ECLAC Region*, 2015, pp. 3-4.

³²⁴ UN ECLAC, *Natural Resources and Infrastructure*, 2015.

³²⁵ *Ibid.*; UN ECLAC, *Division of Sustainable Development and Human Settlements*, 2015.

³²⁶ UN ECLAC, *Natural Resources and Infrastructure*, 2015.

³²⁷ *Ibid.*

³²⁸ UN ECLAC, *ECLAC Will Host Regional Carbon Forum With an Eye Towards the Climate Conference in Paris*, 2015.

³²⁹ UN ECLAC, *Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean Follow-up to the United Nations Development Agenda Beyond 2015 and to Rio+20*, 2013, p. 76.

³³⁰ *Ibid.*

³³¹ *Ibid.*

³³² UN-Water, *Campaigns*, 2015.

natural disasters brought on by climate change.³³³ Likewise, UNEP works for improvement in this area, through disaster risk reduction and post-crisis environmental recovery programs.³³⁴

Another important regional body for Latin American development is the Organization of American States (OAS).³³⁵ This intergovernmental body includes all Latin American and Caribbean countries, with some members participating as interested stakeholders of progress in the region.³³⁶ OAS first started in 1890, and has since guided the work of the region with regard to development, including the sustainable use of natural resources.³³⁷ The body that guides most of the work on this topic in the OAS is the Inter-American Committee on Sustainable Development (CIDS).³³⁸ One treaty of the OAS that influences the regional framework for economic development is the *Economic Agreement of Bogotá*, which was agreed upon in 1948 by OAS Member States.³³⁹ Together, these frameworks shape the intergovernmental agenda on development in Latin America and the Caribbean.³⁴⁰

Since the international community began to recognize the importance of sustainable development following the 1992 Earth Summit, many actors started to work towards sustainability across multiple sectors.³⁴¹ Civil society organizations (CSOs) play a role in shaping sustainable development efforts, especially at local levels.³⁴² Another entity that seeks to promote open management of natural resources while strengthening government and corporate transparency of use of natural resources is the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI).³⁴³ Also, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) works at the local level to promote social and economic development in Latin America.³⁴⁴ One of the body's main focuses is the sustainable use of resources.³⁴⁵ Additionally, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) brings together more than 1,200 government, non-governmental organization, and civil society members from many countries, in order to address this topic.³⁴⁶

The Importance of Sustainability

The UN's focus on the sustainable use of natural resources is particularly relevant to Latin America and the Caribbean.³⁴⁷ Many countries in the region depend on export revenues from primary commodity goods, such as oil, minerals, and hydrocarbons, for much of their income.³⁴⁸ This means that Latin American and Caribbean Member States are intimately involved in the global debates about energy efficiency, and they must decide how to allocate these resources effectively.³⁴⁹ Though these regions only hold 8.6% of the world's population, they produce 12% of the world's oil and 9% of natural gas, meaning that their role in the international system is expanded beyond what their population might suggest.³⁵⁰ The region is also home to many rainforests, fresh water reserves, and other rare ecosystems that must be protected in order to ensure that they are used sustainably.³⁵¹ Beyond protecting these ecosystems, ECLAC countries must work to distribute resources evenly to diverse societies that include indigenous groups, city dwellers, and rural farmers.³⁵²

³³³ Ibid.

³³⁴ UNEP, *About*, 2015.

³³⁵ OAS, *Who We Are*, 2015.

³³⁶ Ibid.

³³⁷ Ibid.

³³⁸ OAS, *Inter-American Committees*, 2015.

³³⁹ OAS, *Economic Agreement of Bogotá*, 1948.

³⁴⁰ OAS, *Inter-American Committees*, 2015.

³⁴¹ UN DESA, *Sustainable Development from Brundtland to Rio 2012*, 2010, p. 8.

³⁴² Ibid., p. 6.

³⁴³ EITI, *About*, 2015.

³⁴⁴ IADB, *Sustainability Report 2014*, 2014, p. 7.

³⁴⁵ Ibid., pp. 9-11.

³⁴⁶ IUCN, *About IUCN*, 2015.

³⁴⁷ UN ECLAC, *Natural Resources and Infrastructure*, 2015.

³⁴⁸ UN ECLAC, *Natural Resources: Status and Trends Towards a Regional Development Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2013, p. 10.

³⁴⁹ Ibid.

³⁵⁰ UN ECLAC, *Sustainable Use of Energy Contributes to Overcoming Barriers to Development in the Region*, 2015.

³⁵¹ UN ECLAC, *Natural Resources: Status and Trends Towards a Regional Development Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2013, p. 63.

³⁵² Ibid.

This wide variety of resources provides ECLAC Member States with income in the short term.³⁵³ However, the region's dependence on natural resources means that it must think critically about how to use them sustainably: wealth from natural resources also has the potential to lead to long-term development problems.³⁵⁴ For example, countries that are rich in natural resources may become overly dependent upon revenues from these resources for the maintenance of their countries.³⁵⁵ Given the fluctuating boom and bust cycles of commodity prices, Member States experience financial difficulties in the wake of an economic downturn, which can damage economic and political stability.³⁵⁶ Resource wealth can lead countries to try to capitalize on profits from nonrenewable resources like oil and natural gas without concern for long-term sustainability.³⁵⁷ Problems with these practices include greenhouse gas emissions, loss of biodiversity, damage to rainforests or other natural terrains, and pollution of freshwater resources.³⁵⁸ Due to these negative externalities of natural resource dependence, ECLAC is focused on promoting the sustainable use of various types of natural resources while also promoting diversification of the region's economies.³⁵⁹

Given these two interrelated drawbacks to natural resource abundance in Latin America and the Caribbean, organizations like ECLAC now work to promote sustainability.³⁶⁰ Most recently, ECLAC published a report entitled "ECLAC: The Region Achieved Several Key Goals of the MDGs, the Starting Point for the 2030 Agenda," which established a regional agenda for work on sustainable development in the post-2015 world.³⁶¹ This general framework for sustainable development also includes efforts to diversify economies that are overly dependent upon natural resources, thus ensuring long-term stability and state capacity.³⁶² Additionally, ECLAC, the UN, and non-governmental bodies work to ensure that the use of natural resources is sustainable in the long term.³⁶³ Through research and reporting, ECLAC is able to promote sustainability across a wide variety of sectors. In general, this work falls into two main categories: energy efficiency and access to water.³⁶⁴

Energy Efficiency: Mining, Oil, Natural Gas, and Hydroelectric Power

Energy efficiency is a major component of the sustainable use of natural resources, especially in Latin America and the Caribbean, regions which are well-endowed with minerals, oil, natural gas, and hydroelectric power.³⁶⁵ In a recent seminar hosted by ECLAC, members highlighted the importance of promoting the sustainable use of energy resources for long-term development.³⁶⁶ According to Antonia Prado, a Deputy Executive Secretary of ECLAC, "the sustainable use of energy not only contributes to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions but also enables improvements in productivity within the region's economies, in social inclusion, well-being and governance."³⁶⁷ Prado argues that Latin American and Caribbean countries must learn how to balance windfall profits from energy resources with sustainable use patterns.³⁶⁸ Likewise, Latin American and Caribbean countries must focus on moving towards renewable energy resources such as wind, solar energy, and hydroelectric power.³⁶⁹

Excessive dependence on nonrenewable resources for energy or unsustainable uses of renewable resources can lead to environmental damage for citizens of Latin America and the Caribbean.³⁷⁰ For instance, unsustainable extraction policies have led to the damage of indigenous lands and lifestyles as national or multinational organizations disturb

³⁵³ Sinnott, et al., *Natural Resources in Latin America and the Caribbean: Beyond Booms and Busts?*, 2010, pp. 1-4.

³⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵⁵ Sinnott, et al., *Natural Resources in Latin America and the Caribbean: Beyond Booms and Busts?*, 2010, p. 13.

³⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

³⁵⁷ UN ECLAC, *Sustainable Use of Energy Contributes to Overcoming Barriers to Development in the Region*, 2015.

³⁵⁸ UN ECLAC, *Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean Follow-up to the United Nations Development Agenda Beyond 2015 and to Rio+20*, 2013, pp. 9-12.

³⁵⁹ UN ECLAC, *Sustainable Use of Energy Contributes to Overcoming Barriers to Development in the Region*, 2015.

³⁶⁰ UN ECLAC, *Natural Resources and Infrastructure*, 2015.

³⁶¹ UN ECLAC, *ECLAC: The Region Achieved Several Key Goals of the MDGs, the Starting Point for the 2030 Agenda*, 2015.

³⁶² UN ECLAC, *Natural Resources and Infrastructure*, 2015.

³⁶³ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁵ UN ECLAC, *Sustainable Use of Energy Contributes to Overcoming Barriers to Development in the Region*, 2015.

³⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

protected areas for the sake of extraction.³⁷¹ In Honduras, for example, recent attempts from Canadian multinational corporations to expand mining into indigenous land have resulted in the displacement of indigenous groups and a loss of biodiversity.³⁷² A similar problem can be found with the negative effects of deforestation, which can exacerbate the effects of climate change.³⁷³ In turn, climate change can alter ecosystems, thus harming biodiversity, and lead to extreme weather patterns, thus damaging agricultural patterns and rural societies.³⁷⁴

One way to work towards sustainability regarding the use of energy resources is for developed and developing countries to cooperate with one another.³⁷⁵ Developed countries also have a role to play in the progress of Latin American and Caribbean countries towards the goal of full sustainability of energy resources.³⁷⁶ However, developed countries generally use far more natural resources in their consumption patterns than do developing countries.³⁷⁷ For this reason, ECLAC has identified the importance of proportional involvement of developed countries, given their heavy extraction and consumption practices.³⁷⁸ Developed countries often have greater technological capacity, especially in the way of energy extraction technologies, that enable them to make full use of the resources they do withdraw from within their borders.³⁷⁹ Hence, partnerships between the developed and developing world are one way for Member States to work together towards the goal of long-term sustainability.³⁸⁰

Beyond partnering with other Member States, each individual Member State can adopt specific policies to promote energy efficiency.³⁸¹ One such strategy that Member States can use to promote sustainable energy use is the “avoid, shift, improve” strategy – disseminated by ECLAC – which proposes that countries avoid certain types of technologies and shift to clean energies while improving their management of transport services.³⁸² A success story that relates to this strategy can be found in Bogotá, Colombia.³⁸³ Since the early 2000s, the city of Bogotá has closed its roads every Sunday to promote cycling on more than 350 km of bike lanes that scatter the city.³⁸⁴ These days of *Ciclovía*, as it is called, promote the framework mentioned previously: Bogotá residents now avoid using cars and shift instead to improved transportation mechanisms.³⁸⁵

Access to Water

Another resource that Latin America and the Caribbean must use sustainably is water.³⁸⁶ LAC countries are affected by several water-related issues, including water scarcity, water pollution, and water privatization.³⁸⁷ Because fresh water is a scarce resource (water scarcity affects 40% of the world’s population), ECLAC countries must minimize water pollution and work to distribute water fairly.³⁸⁸ Latin American and Caribbean dependence on agriculture also means that they must minimize runoff pollution from agricultural products while promoting sustainable use of water to care for crops.³⁸⁹ Pollution from agricultural runoff occurs mainly due to a lack of infrastructure and a lack of monitoring policies, both of which could be improved upon through intergovernmental support and the sharing of

³⁷¹ Munoz, *Corrupted Idealism: Bolivia’s Compromise Between Development and the Environment*, 2015.

³⁷² Escalara-Flexhaug, *Canada’s Controversial Engagement in Honduras*, 2014.

³⁷³ Munoz, *Corrupted Idealism: Bolivia’s Compromise Between Development and the Environment*, 2015.

³⁷⁴ UN DESA, *Millennium Development Goals Report 2015*, 2015, p. 8.

³⁷⁵ UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, p. 26.

³⁷⁶ UN DPI, *Humanity’s Voracious Consumption of Natural Resources Unsustainable - UN Report*, 2011.

³⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁹ Kreuzer & Wilmsmeier, *Energy Efficiency and Mobility: A Roadmap Towards a Greener Economy in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2014, p. 39.

³⁸⁰ UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, p. 4.

³⁸¹ Kreuzer & Wilmsmeier, *Energy Efficiency and Mobility: A Roadmap Towards a Greener Economy in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2014, p. 21.

³⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 24.

³⁸³ Bain, *Reclaiming the Streets in Bogotá*, 2013.

³⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁶ Cashman, *Water Security and Services in the Caribbean*, 2013, p. 1.

³⁸⁷ Cashman, *Water Security and Services in the Caribbean*, 2013.

³⁸⁸ UN DESA, *Millennium Development Goals Report 2015*, 2015, p. 54.

³⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

best practices.³⁹⁰ This need is more urgent because such water pollution can have health effects for community members, especially indigenous communities who do not have access to alternative sources of water.³⁹¹

The issue of water as related to indigenous communities goes beyond the problem of pollution.³⁹² In Bolivia, for example, conflict over water resources between indigenous groups and the Bolivian government came to a particularly violent head in recent years.³⁹³ The Cochamba “Water Wars,” as they were called, exemplified this conflict between 2000 and 2001.³⁹⁴ At the time, the Bolivian government had privatized water resources and allowed international organizations to enter the market and sell water to the Bolivian people.³⁹⁵ Instead of promoting efficiency, however, this change led to outlandish prices and marginalization of indigenous groups in the area, who were unable to purchase water resources.³⁹⁶ Ultimately, the people demanded nationalized water sources and the next administration included the human right to water in the new Bolivian constitution.³⁹⁷ Nevertheless, lack of infrastructure and an inability to balance development with sustainability has proved a challenge for Bolivia.³⁹⁸ Thus, ensuring equal access to water remains an enduring issue in Bolivia and other Latin America and Caribbean countries.³⁹⁹ ECLAC certainly has a role to play in promoting practical strategies to improve the distribution and sustainability of water resources.⁴⁰⁰

Another problem related to the sustainable use of water in the region is the increased privatization of water resources.⁴⁰¹ Though this strategy may result in greater profits for those selling water, the practice of privatizing water runs counter the goals of the UN.⁴⁰² Rather than reserving water resources for only those who can afford them, the UN as a whole asserts that each Member State’s peoples should share water resources with all who need such resources.⁴⁰³ This emphasis on the right to water is foundational for the goals of sustainable development, which seeks to provide equal access to necessary resources to all people.⁴⁰⁴

Conclusion

ECLAC Member States are uniquely positioned as participants in the development of a region that is extremely rich in natural resources.⁴⁰⁵ An abundance of natural resources can have positive effects, by providing Latin American and Caribbean countries with the revenue they need to sustain social programs and long-term development strategies.⁴⁰⁶ However, this access also demands responsibility from ECLAC Member States, to use their nonrenewable resources – like energy resources and clean water – sustainably.⁴⁰⁷ This is especially true given that natural resource dependence can also be accompanied by negative ramifications for the environment, when unsustainable use policies lead to deforestation, greenhouse gas emissions, and the loss of biodiversity.⁴⁰⁸ Organizations such as ECLAC are able to work to provide LAC countries with research and information about these phenomena to inform their policy decisions.⁴⁰⁹ Similarly, support within the UN system allows Member States to

³⁹⁰ Greaney, *Water Quality is Impaired by Agricultural Runoff in Panama and the United States*, 2015.

³⁹¹ Dávila, *Water and Sustainable Development: Opportunities and Challenges in the ECLAC Region*, 2015, p. 1.

³⁹² Mehta, et al., *Global Environmental Justice and the Right to Water: The Case of Peri-Urban Cochabamba and Delhi*.

³⁹³ Mehta, et al., *Global Environmental Justice and the Right to Water: The Case of Peri-Urban Cochabamba and Delhi*, 2013, p. 160.

³⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 161.

³⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰⁰ UN ECLAC, *Natural Resources and Infrastructure*, 2015.

⁴⁰¹ Mehta et al., *Global Environmental Justice and the Right to Water: The Case of Peri-Urban Cochabamba and Delhi*, 2013, p. 161.

⁴⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 159.

⁴⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 160.

⁴⁰⁴ UN Water, *About UN-Water*, 2015.

⁴⁰⁵ Ocampo, *The History and Challenges of Latin American Development*, 2013, p. 15.

⁴⁰⁶ Lederman & Maloney, *Natural Resources: Neither Curse nor Destiny*, 2007, p. 183.

⁴⁰⁷ Sinnott et al., *Natural Resources in Latin America and the Caribbean: Beyond Booms and Busts?*, 2010, p. 51.

⁴⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰⁹ UN ECLAC, *Natural Resources and Infrastructure*, 2015.

collaborate with one another and share best practices.⁴¹⁰ The SDGs will also guide the work of ECLAC and other bodies towards a more sustainable use of the finite resources on our planet.⁴¹¹

This year, ECLAC will carefully integrate the SDGs into their work and consider how they apply to the unique needs of Latin American and Caribbean countries. Among these points of focus are the issues of energy efficiency and equal access to water. With regards to energy, LAC countries should look for unique ways to transition away from dependence on non-renewable resources and look for creative ways to incorporate renewable energy sources into their cities and economies. ECLAC should also emphasize the right to water and promote ways to use this precious resource sustainably while promoting equal access to water. Beyond these two specific sectors, ECLAC can consider ways to promote diversified economies, allowing Latin American and Caribbean countries to move away from resource dependence and towards truly sustainable development.

Further Research

Like all UN Member States, Latin American and Caribbean countries still have work to do in order to achieve sustainable development. It is worth considering how ECLAC can ground its work in the normative focus of the SDGs. Though access to water and energy efficiency are certainly at the forefront of the post-2015 development agenda, other issues also stand out. Delegates can consider: How do unique ecosystems like forests and freshwater habitats play a role in the sustainable use of natural resources? Can such ecosystems be considered natural resources? If so, how can ECLAC promote their sustainable use? Additionally, the topic of energy efficiency raises the related issue of energy resources and resource dependency. How can Latin American and Caribbean countries integrate their efforts to diversify their economies with their work to promote the sustainable use of natural resources? Finally, ECLAC must consider the social consequences of this environmental and economic issue. How are the citizens of Latin America and the Caribbean negatively impacted by unsustainable use patterns? What can ECLAC do to mitigate these externalities and promote long-term sustainability?

⁴¹⁰ UN DESA, *Sustainable Development from Brundtland to Rio 2012*, 2010, p. 14.

⁴¹¹ UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015, p. 4.

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Inter-American Development Bank. (2014). *Sustainability Report 2014*. Retrieved 19 July 2015 from: <http://publications.iadb.org/bitstream/handle/11319/6848/Inter-American-Development-Bank-Sustainability-Report-2014.pdf>

The Inter-American Development Bank, an international organization that provides research and financing for development in Latin America and the Caribbean, released its most recent annual report in 2014. The overview describes projects related to climate change, sustainable cities, and clean energy in the region that the Bank has funded. It also provides country-specific examples of projects related to sustainable development. Delegates should consult this resource to get an idea of feasible projects that have already been completed in the field of sustainable development by one of the UN's non-governmental regional partners. By considering what has been done previously to utilize the region's natural resources in a sustainable way, delegates will be inspired to make their own innovative proposals.

Kreuzer, F. & Wilmsmeier, G. (2014). *Energy Efficiency and Mobility: A Roadmap Towards a Greener Economy in Latin America and the Caribbean*. United Nations, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. Retrieved 19 July 2015 from:

http://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/37148/S1420579_en.pdf?sequence=1

Authors F.B. Kreuzer and G. Wilmsmeier wrote this report under the guidance of ECLAC in 2014. The authors begin with an introduction of the importance of energy efficiency on the individual and local levels, and then move to the effects of these policies on national, regional, and global sustainability. This transition from small-scale to large-scale practices and effects will help delegates consider the topic on multiple levels of analysis. The authors also place special focus on the "avoid-shift-improve" strategy, which has been used as an effective policy to transition towards more sustainable energy use. Because of this focus on specific policies, the report will help delegates understand this facet of sustainable development in a more practical sense. Delegates should pay special attention to the country case studies on Argentina, Uruguay, and Colombia, which provide concrete examples of best practices.

Lederman, D. and W. Maloney. (2007). *Natural Resources: Neither Curse nor Destiny*. The World Bank & Stanford University Press. Retrieved 19 July 2015 from:

<http://publications.iadb.org/bitstream/handle/11319/350/9780821365458.pdf?sequence=1>

This 2007 report was published as a joint effort between Stanford University and the World Bank as a concise blend of theory and policy related to the historical dependence on natural resources in Latin America and the Caribbean. The report considers theoretical arguments regarding the negative consequences of natural resource-dependence, analyzing whether such theories have played out in reality through extensive econometric analysis. By and large, the report argues that resource-rich countries need not be "cursed" to underdevelopment as conventional wisdom may suggest. Delegates looking for a discussion of the more theoretical economic debates on this topic, and an insightful counterargument to the conventional wisdom, should consult this resource before drafting their recommendations.

Ocampo, J. (2013). *The History and Challenges of Latin American Development*. United Nations, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. Retrieved 19 July 2015 from:

http://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/3183/LCI3546eng_en.pdf?sequence=1

This report is based off a lecture given by Dr. Ocampo to the Latin American and Caribbean Institute for Economic and Social Planning (ILPES) in 2013. The author outlines the major growth strategies utilized by Latin American and Caribbean countries since the founding of ECLAC in the mid-20th century, which include state-led industrialization, commodity-export-led growth, and trade influenced by the process of globalization. The author also provides country-specific examples to ground his analysis in specific experiences. Delegates should consult this guide for a broad overview of development strategies both historically and in the modern era. Delegates should consider the importance of general development and growth strategies based on this resource as they focus on development surrounding natural resources for this specific topic.

Sinnott, E., et al. (2010). *Natural Resources in Latin America and the Caribbean: Beyond Booms and Busts?*. The World Bank. Retrieved 21 July 2015 from: <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/2482/555500PUB0Natu1EPI1991501801PUBLIC1.pdf?sequence=1>

This 2010 World Bank report takes a slightly critical position on the topic of natural resource dependence in Latin America and the Caribbean. The authors focus mainly on commodity dependence in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis, a discussion that is extremely relevant to delegates, considering long-term economic trends both regionally and globally in relation to this topic. In the wake of the economic downturn at the time, the authors also provide several recommendations based on best practices that they believed would keep Latin America and the Caribbean well-positioned to maintain growth. Delegates should consider how these recommendations are still relevant today and how both UN and country-specific policies have incorporated such recommendations. Also, delegates should consider how they might build upon these recommendations to generate innovative ideas.

United Nations, Department of Social and Economic Affairs. (2015). *Global Sustainable Development Report*. Retrieved 19 July 2015 from: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/1758GSDR%202015%20Advance%20Unedited%20Version.pdf>

This 2015 document is an annual report released by the UN Department of Social and Economic Affairs on global trends with regard to sustainable development. Most relevant to this topic is Chapter 5: “Economic Growth, Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development and Sustainable Consumption and Production,” but delegates should consult the whole document to familiarize themselves with the latest progress towards sustainable development and the post-2015 development agenda on the macro level. Of special importance are the discussions responding to the Rio+20 mandates, particularly with regard to the relationship between the scientific and policymaking community. Delegates should consider the policies recommended in this document and how these general strategies could relate to the topic of the sustainable use of natural resources more specifically.

United Nations, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. (2013). *Natural Resources: Status and Trends Towards a Regional Development Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean* [Report]. Retrieved 19 July 2015 from: http://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/35892/S2013808_en.pdf?sequence=1

Released in 2013, this report is the most recent of ECLAC’s publications on the sustainable use of natural resources. An important aspect of the report is the separate discussions for each of the three main types of natural resource sectors: mining, oil and natural gas, and hydroelectric and water. When crafting their recommendations, delegates should pay attention to these different subcategories and how their suggestions could apply separately or concurrently to each. The report also provides a breakdown of tax revenue from natural resources by country, which will help delegates compare their own country to others in the region. As the report outlines both ECLAC’s own work on the topic and general trends in the region and subregions, it should be considered an important starting point for delegates’ topical research.

United Nations, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. (2013). *Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean Follow-up to the United Nations Development Agenda Beyond 2015 and to Rio+20* [Report]. Retrieved 19 July 2015 from: http://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/3184/S2013412_en.pdf?sequence=1

This report was published in 2013 by ECLAC as a macro-level overview of regional progress towards sustainable development. The text makes repeated reference to the region’s historical dependence on primary exports, and the way this dependence has impacted both social and economic development. Thus, though the discussion of natural resources is not always explicit, delegates should keep in mind that any discussion of long-term development in Latin America implies a consideration of the use of natural resources. What is valuable in this report, then, is its focus on this mainly economic issue—the use of natural resources—in the context of social issues such as income inequality, education, and poverty. Delegates should use this document to

familiarize themselves with the broad importance of the topic for the post-2015 development agenda in the region.

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-sixth session. (2012). *The Future We Want (A/RES/66/288)* [Outcome Document]. Retrieved 21 July 2015 from: <http://undocs.org/A/RES/66/288>

This resolution was the outcome document adopted following the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in 2012. This conference marked the largest UN conference on sustainable development and set the tone for the post-2015 development agenda conversation and the eventual adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals. The document focuses on two main themes: how to build a green economy, and how to reduce poverty by ensuring equality across and within countries. More specifically, The Future We Want outlines strategies for the sustainable use of energy, oceans and seas, terrestrial ecosystems, and minerals, all of which are relevant for work on this topic. Delegates should familiarize themselves with this pivotal document to gain a contextual understanding of the newly adopted Sustainable Development Goals.

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventieth session. (2015). *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*. Retrieved 21 October 2015 from: <http://undocs.org/A/RES/70/1>

The Sustainable Development Goals, adopted in September 2015, replace the Millennium Development Goals as the guiding principles for development between 2016 and 2030. Of note, the goals focus particularly on the sustainable use of natural resources, and assert that a guiding principle for the agenda will be to ensure the sustainability of the planet. Delegates should pay particular attention to Goals 6 (sustainable management of water), 7 (affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy), 12 (sustainable consumption and production), 14 (conservation and sustainable use of oceans, seas, and marine resources), and 15 (protection, restoration, and sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems). Delegates should become familiar with this document, as it presents a macro-level framework for the work of the United Nations system for the next 15 years with regard to development.

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