

**STATEMENT BY MR. FEDERICO MEYER, CHAIRPERSON OF THE ECLAC
SESSIONAL AD HOC COMMITTEE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

Report of the Chairperson (2004-2006)

Monday 20 March 2006

Mr. José Luis Machinea, Executive Secretary of ECLAC,

Ms. Marisela Padrón, Director of the Latin American and Caribbean Division of the United Nations Population Division,

Honourable Ministers,

Delegates,

Representatives of United Nations agencies, programmes and funds,

Representatives of intergovernmental and civil society networks,

Colleagues and friends,

At the thirtieth session of the Commission, held in San Juan, Puerto Rico, Brazil was chosen to chair the ECLAC sessional Ad Hoc Committee on Population and Development for the biennium now coming to an end. On behalf of my country, I wish to express my sincere thanks for the trust placed in me. It has been a great honour for me to chair this Committee and I should like to share with you this report, in which I have highlighted some of the most important activities carried out in compliance with the mandate contained in resolution 604(XXX).

Let me, at the outset, underscore three important developments that occurred during this period. First, the culmination of the 10-year review process of the International Conference on Population and Development in the publication in 2005 of the book *ICPD at Ten: The World Reaffirms Cairo. Official Outcomes of the ICPD at Ten Review*. This book, published by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), sets out the declarations, resolutions and agreements adopted by the regional and intergovernmental bodies during the period 2002-2004 in the mid-term appraisal process and is an assessment of the advances towards implementation of the goals and objectives contained in the 20-year Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the measures agreed on in the five-year review process.

Second, it will be recalled that in the World Summit Outcome 2005, the States Members of the United Nations recognized the importance of “achieving universal access to reproductive health by 2015, as set out at the International Conference on Population and Development, integrating this goal in strategies to attain the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, aimed at reducing maternal mortality, improving maternal health, reducing child mortality, promoting gender equality, combating HIV/AIDS and eradicating poverty”.

Lastly, I wish to underscore the importance of resolution 44/1 of the United Nations Commission for Social Development, entitled “Modalities for the first review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing”, setting out a strategy and a calendar for the review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing.

All these developments are vital at the global level and are the basis for all the activities being carried out in our region to implement the Millennium Development Goals and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development.

Since the meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee, held in Puerto Rico two years ago, I have monitored closely the activities conducted by the Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE)-Population Division of ECLAC in relation to the various issues that are crucial for the region, as defined in resolution 604(XXX). Pursuant to that resolution, CELADE and the Presiding Officers of the Ad Hoc Committee have attached the utmost importance to the set of activities mentioned below and which I am sure will be discussed more fully by the Director of CELADE.

In the area of international migration, CELADE has conducted activities that place it in a key position in regional and global forums on the issue. Towards the end of 2004, CELADE convened a meeting of eminent experts to address the relationship between migration, regional integration and human rights; organized a regional meeting of experts in conjunction with the Government of Mexico, the United Nations Population Division and UNFPA, in order to inform Governments of the region on the status of international migration in preparation for the high-level dialogue; and at the end of the year, initiated preparatory activities jointly with the International Organization for Migration with a view to the holding of an Ibero-American forum on migration.

I also took note of the numerous activities undertaken by CELADE in relation to ageing and, in particular, the follow-up to the Regional Strategy for the Implementation in Latin America and the Caribbean of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing. These include the meetings of experts convened by ECLAC, in particular, the Meeting of Experts on Ageing-Second Central American and Caribbean Forum on Policies for Older Persons, held in San Salvador from 9 to 12 November 2004; the Caribbean Symposium on Population Ageing, held in Port of Spain on 8 November 2004, and the Meeting of Governments and Experts on Ageing in South American countries, held in Buenos Aires from 14 to 16 November 2005.

Another source of satisfaction for me is the amount that has been done in relation to indigenous populations. First, the holding of the International Seminar -Indigenous and Afro-descendant Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean: Relevance and Pertinence of Socio-demographic Information for Policies and Programmes, organized jointly by CELADE and the Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean and sponsored by the Government of France together with the United Nations Population Fund and the collaboration of the French Centre for Population and Development. This seminar put forward recommendations for upgrading the instruments for the collection, processing, dissemination and use of cross-cultural information. In addition, three studies were produced that demonstrate the social divide between indigenous and non-indigenous populations.

A number of important contributions were made to support population censuses and their use for national and local planning purposes. These include: the support provided to the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) with the editing of the census data bases of most of Caribbean countries; cooperation with the Pan-American Health Organization in the organization of a meeting with the national directors of statistics and officials responsible for health statistics on 20 and 21 November 2005 in Buenos Aires; training workshops; advances in the configuration of the REDATAM software (Retrieval of data for small areas by microcomputer); the dissemination of population censuses for on-line processing; and the setting up or updating of databases, including those on internal and international migration in Latin America and the Caribbean (MIALC and IMILA). Another important activity in this area was the meeting of experts on sociodemographic inputs for local management and development, held in Santiago, Chile, on 27 and 28 October 2005.

Before concluding, I wish to stress the crucial need for human resource training in the fields of demography and population and development, which will require the prompt formulation of an operational strategy. A significant initiative in this regard was the meeting of experts on training and skills development in demographic analysis and population and development, organized by CELADE on 19 and 20 December 2005, on which the secretariat will report to us.

Lastly, on behalf of the countries serving as outgoing Presiding Officers, I wish to thank you for the support provided to us during our term. Indeed, we wish to express our appreciation to the entire ECLAC secretariat, through CELADE, as well as to the United Nations Population Fund.