

CO-CHAIRS' OFFICIAL STATEMENT

Forum for East Asia -Latin America Cooperation (FEALAC) Secound Meeting of the Political-Cultural Working Group

Santiago, Chile, 8-9 May 2003

1. second meeting of the Political-Cultural Working Group of the Forum for East-Asia ~ Latin America Cooperation (FEALAC) was held in Santiago, Chile from 8-9 May, 2003. The meeting was held to further the work of the first Working Group meeting in Singapore from 1-3 May 2002. The meeting was co-chaired by Ambassador Adolfo Carafi Melero, Director of Asia Pacific, Ministry of Foreign Relations of Chile and by Ms. Foo Chi Hsia, Deputy Director of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Singapore.

2. The meeting was attend by delegates from Argentina, Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Chile, China, Colombia, Korea, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Myanmar, New Zealand, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Uruguay, Venezuela and Vietnam. The doucument in the Annex includes a complete list of delegates.

3. Upon the adoption of the Agenda (doc..), the delegations made a detailed review of the various national projects in the political and cultural fields implemented by the corresponding countries within the framework of FEALAC.

4. The representatives highlighted the importance of the state of cooperation and the existing political relations between the countries in the Fast Asia and Latin American regions, at the bilateral, regional and multilateral levels.

5. National reports and statements were made by the following delegations: Argentina, Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Cambodia, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Paraguay, Philippines, Peru, , Singapore and Thailand.

6. It Was agreed that the delegations of Paraguay for Latin America and New Zealand for East Asia should make a report summarizing the most important political and diplomatic activities between members of FEALAC. All participants are requested to provide these reports and their translations no later than a month to Paraguay and New Zealand.

7. In considering the National Reports, the meeting recognized the following

- The increasing diplomatic links between East Asia and Latin American countries, through its resident or concurrent embassies and consulates.
- The numerous exchanges of high-level official visits, including Heads of States, Heads of Government, Ministers of Foreign Affairs and other Government Officials that took place in the previous year has strengthened not only the political relations but also the mutual understanding among the people of both regions. These exchanges have been useful on account of the inclusion in the delegations of the private sector and members of civil society.

- The validity and importance of Bilateral Mechanisms of Cooperation and Consultation such as the exemption of visas for Diplomatic and Official Passports, Cooperation Agreement, tourism, as well as those aimed at facilitating jobs for young students on vacations. All of these encourage people-to-people exchanges and promote better bilateral relations between States.

- The special importance and benefits of the various national programmes that provide scholarships, and promote the exchange of visits of young diplomats.

8. Delegations from East Asia emphasized the linkages on cooperation and dialogue established with the Organization of American States, the Rio Group, the Latin American Association for Integration, the Andean Community of Nations, the MERCOSUR and many other regional and sub-regional organizations with the aim of strengthening the development of programmes that bring nations together. Likewise, Latin American delegations acknowledged the importance of closer linkages and achievements made to promote mutual understanding with ASEAN and members of FEALAC.

9. The meeting established as its first important priority the political and cultural activities between Member States. Special emphasis was given to the strengthening of political, diplomatic and cultural links which promote the development of commercial and trade relations between both regions.

10. It was agreed that the development of projects in FEALAC must be oriented to the strengthening of the principles that have guided FEALAC since its inception as well as promote multi-dimensional relations between both regions and Member States.

Decisions made on specific project

a) The meeting welcomed the continuation of the Journalists Visit Programme (JVP) by the delegation of Singapore, which has been held in conjunction with other East Asian partners. The meeting encouraged the principle of reciprocity for invitations to East Asian journalists to visit Latin America.

b) The meeting agreed to recommend to the next Senior Officials Meeting the initiative proposed by Singapore, namely the “Young Parliamentarians Forum”.

c) It was agreed that the Thai delegation will submit to the next Senior Officials Meeting specific guidelines on its proposed project on the exchange of information and experience relating to the Drugs problem, and the possible sources of funding for this proposed project.

d) The Chilean Pacific Foundation, on behalf of the Chilean delegation, made a presentation on the proposed FEALAC Academic Network (FAN). This was complemented by a presentation made by a representative of the Inter-American Development Bank.

- It was agreed that this project could be presented for the consideration of the next Senior Officials Meeting.

- The delegation of Costa Rica proposed an initiative on the preservation of historical and cultural heritage, which could be included in the FAN

- The delegation of Ecuador also proposed for inclusion in the FAN analyses of a political and cultural nature such as the strengthening of democracy, human rights, environmental protection, the protection and promotion of the rights of the indigenous people, migration and the preservation of cultural heritage.

- The FAN network could also include scholarships, language teaching centres and academic activities that promote the learning of Spanish, Portuguese and the East Asian languages.

e) The delegation of Costa Rica proposed that an International Arts festival could be held alongside the Ministerial Meetings of FEALAC. It was agreed that this initiative deserves the special attention of Senior Officials. The delegations of Costa Rica and Philippines agreed to coordinate this project.

f) The delegation of Malaysia proposed five projects related to cultural exchanges. Special acknowledgment was given to this initiative and the Malaysian delegation was requested to submit a proposal on these projects at the next meeting of Senior Officials.

g) The meeting welcomed the continuation of the Japanese programme of “Young Leaders Symposium” as a FEALAC-wide project. At the same time, the Japanese delegation proposed a “FEALAC Week” to develop specific joint cultural activities in each country in order to promote mutual understanding between countries of both regions.

11. The meeting noted the importance of financial assistance to specific projects that could be provided by international financial institutions such as the Inter-American Development Bank and the Asian Development Bank.