



POL/2006/18

CO-CHAIRS' STATEMENT

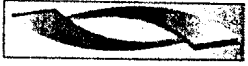
1. The Forum for East Asia-Latin America Cooperation (FEALAC) Fourth Political, Cultural and Education Working Group meeting was held in Bogotá, Colombia from 27-28 February 2006. The meeting examined existing projects, presented new projects, and furthered the work of the First, Second and Third Working Group meetings which were held in Singapore from 1-3 May 2002, in Chile from 8-9 May 2003 and in Singapore from 9-10 September 2004. The meeting was co-chaired by Mr Carlos Ospina, Director of Asia, Africa and Oceania, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Colombia and Mr Simon Wong, Director of the Americas Directorate, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Singapore.
2. The meeting was attended by delegates from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, México, Myanmar, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Uruguay, Venezuela and Vietnam. The list of delegates is at Annex A.
3. The co-chairs delivered welcome messages to the delegates. Outlining the purpose of the meeting, the co-chairs highlighted that this was the final Political, Cultural and Education Working Group meeting before the FEALAC Third Foreign Ministers Meeting (FMM III) hosted by Brazil. It was important to take stock of the Working Group's activities and agree on the future direction of the Working Group for the consideration of the FEALAC Eighth Senior Officials Meeting (SOM VIII) and the endorsement of FMM III.
4. The meeting adopted the proposed agenda (POL/2006/3). In presenting a report on the advances in the Political, Cultural and Education Working Group (POL/2006/4), the co-chairs welcomed the closer cooperation between East Asia and Latin America which the Working Group had facilitated. The various projects undertaken by the Working Group since its creation demonstrated that there was strong interest in increasing inter-regional linkages. Acknowledging that FEALAC was a multidimensional forum driven by FEALAC governments, the co-chairs welcomed the continued participation of academics, business representatives, parliamentarians and journalists, who had helped to broaden and deepen trans-pacific interaction.
5. The meeting comprehensively reviewed the proposed and ongoing political, cultural and education projects undertaken by the Working Group. Welcoming

the strong cooperation, the meeting encouraged FEALAC countries to continue developing projects which would benefit FEALAC as a whole. While national projects were good starting points, the meeting reaffirmed that FEALAC should aim to develop projects which all FEALAC members could participate. In line with the recommendations of the Manila Plan of Action, the meeting urged FEALAC countries to avoid duplicating existing efforts. The meeting welcomed the effort and contributions of countries which had implemented FEALAC projects. The meeting encouraged member countries to take note of resource constraints of some FEALAC countries, and, whenever possible, build in assistance packages. The meeting also recognised the role of regional financial institutions, such as the Inter-American Development Bank and the Asian Development Bank, in promoting bi-regional exchanges, and recommended that greater emphasis be placed on this subject at the next SOM and Ministerial Meetings. Emphasising the need to stay updated of developments, the meeting noted that information on FEALAC projects and activities should be regularly disseminated, including through electronic means like email and websites.

6. National reports and statements were presented by Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Indonesia, Mexico, New Zealand, and Peru. In acknowledging the reports and statements, the meeting welcomed the active and growing relationship between East Asia and Latin America. The meeting also noted that countries which had presented reports could disseminate copies of their reports to fellow FEALAC countries.
7. The following decisions were made regarding projects presented at the meeting:

Political Cooperation:

- ❖ *Jakarta Center for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Indonesia)*. The meeting welcomed Indonesia's proposal to hold a FEALAC workshop on "Counter-Terrorism: Lessons Learnt" at the Jakarta Centre for Law Enforcement Cooperation in Semarang, Indonesia, in September/October 2007.
- ❖ *Young Leaders Invitation Programme (Japan) (POL/2006/5)*. The meeting welcomed the success of this invitation programme, which had helped to foster bonds and promote dialogue among young leaders from FEALAC countries. Japan mentioned that it would continue this programme.
- ❖ *Young Parliamentarians Forum (Singapore) (POL/2006/6)*. The meeting expressed appreciation to Singapore for hosting the inaugural Young Parliamentarians Forum (YPF) from 22-24 August 2005. The meeting welcomed Mexico's commitment to work with outgoing East Asian host,



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Singapore, and incoming East Asian host, Malaysia, on the dates and agenda of the 2nd YPF, which will be held in Mexico in 2006.

- ❖ *Workshop for Drug Cooperation for FEALAC countries (Thailand).* The meeting viewed the workshop as timely and useful. The meeting affirmed that increased interdependence had brought certain advantages and also increased the vulnerability of countries to transnational threats, particularly drug trafficking. The meeting welcomed the continued exchange of experiences and best practices to enhance cooperation among FEALAC countries against drug trafficking.
- ❖ *Information Sharing Network Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs (POL/2006/7); and The Observatory of Drugs (POL/2006/8) (Colombia).* Following discussions at the FEALAC Third Political, Cultural and Education Working Group in Singapore, the meeting welcomed Colombia's presentations on the "Information Sharing Network Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs" and "The Observatory of Drugs". Thanking Colombia for the comprehensive presentation, the meeting noted that the projects were very relevant to the task of combating transnational crimes like drug trafficking, and would help strengthen inter-regional cooperation. Noting that the projects should not overlap with existing information sharing networks, the meeting agreed that Colombia could prepare detailed proposals which took into account the suggestions made by participants at the meeting. For these two proposals, the meeting also reaffirmed that shared responsibility and solidarity could be the guidelines for cooperation. Colombia will provide all FEALAC members with more detailed information, including technical requirements, on the projects.
- ❖ *9th Forum for Korea-Latin America and the Caribbean Cooperation (Korea).* The meeting noted the 9th Forum for Korea-Latin America and the Caribbean Cooperation and welcomed the continuation of this activity.
- ❖ *Report on Political and Cultural linkages between East Asia and Latin America (New Zealand and Paraguay).* The meeting noted that SOM VII had endorsed the report and welcomed New Zealand's intention to consider updating the report in the future.
- ❖ *Training Course for FEALAC Cooperation on Poverty Reduction; and FEALAC Buakaew International Roundtable for Foreign Officials (Thailand).* The meeting welcomed Thailand's initiative in organising these two courses, which were particularly relevant to officials from FEALAC countries. The meeting also took note of Thailand's intention to continue with these projects and suggested that these two projects could be presented under the Economy and Society Working Group.



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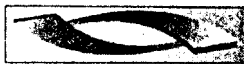
- ❖ *Bi-regional Energy Cooperation Workshop within the Framework of the New Multipolar World (Venezuela)*. Noting Venezuela's preliminary proposal, the meeting affirmed the importance of inter-regional energy cooperation. The meeting further suggested that the details of the project be presented at the next FEALAC Science and Technology or Economy and Society Working Group meeting. Venezuela will present fine-tuned documents to discuss which Working Group the project will be discussed at.

Cultural Cooperation:

- ❖ *6th Journalist Visit Programme (Singapore) (POL/2006/9)*. The meeting welcomed Singapore's commitment to extend the Journalist Visit Programme (JVP) to 2010. The meeting noted Singapore's offer for other East Asian countries to invite JVP participants to visit their countries before or after the programme in Singapore. Indonesia expressed its willingness to participate in the 2006 JVP and to work with Singapore to make the 2006 JVP a success.
- ❖ *Hue Festival (Vietnam) (POL/2006/10)*. The meeting noted Vietnam's briefing on the Hue Festival (3-11 June 2006) and acknowledged that Vietnam had appealed for participation from more FEALAC countries and would continue to report on the results of this ongoing project.
- ❖ *World Exposition of AICHI (Japan)*. The meeting noted Japan's briefing on this event in 2005. Japan appreciated FEALAC countries' participation in the event. The meeting noted the importance of FEALAC countries' participation in the exhibitions and trade fairs.
- ❖ *Reading Libraries Plans and Programme (Colombia) (POL/2006/20)*. The meeting welcomed Colombia's proposal to set up a virtual forum on reading policies. This would help to foster closer cultural ties through the sharing of experiences and best practices. Noting the importance of learning from best practices, the meeting agreed that it would be useful to exchange translated works in order to increase inter-regional cultural awareness. The meeting noted that Colombia would be preparing a detailed English proposal for the Working Group's consideration.

Education Cooperation:

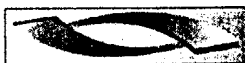
- ❖ *Staff and Student Exchange Programs between Latin American Tertiary Institutions and Burapha University; and Thai International Postgraduate Program (Thailand)*. The meeting welcomed Thailand's plan to implement the staff and student exchange program of the Burapha University, including inviting Latin American academics to provide Spanish language training and



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encouraging academic exchanges. The meeting also welcomed Thailand's offer of post-graduate scholarship to Latin American students.

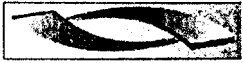
- ❖ *Report of FEALAC Academic Network (Chile and Singapore).* The meeting noted that the FEALAC Academic Network (FAN) had completed the first phase of its work by launching an online database of academic institutions in East Asia and Latin America. The meeting agreed that FEALAC members could encourage their academic institutions to support the project.
- ❖ *Philippine Consortium for Latin American studies (Philippines).* The meeting welcomed the continuation of the activities of the Philippine Consortium for Latin American studies (PACLAS) and recognized the effort of Philippines to foster closer education ties between Latin America and East Asia.
- ❖ *The First Forum for East Asia-Latin America University Presidents (China) (POL/2006/11).* Welcoming China's project to be held from 16-18 October 2006 in Beijing, the meeting reaffirmed the Manila Plan of Action's statement that education was FEALAC's best means of empowering our people and promoting sustainable development. China had provided a contact point in paragraph 15 of the project document so that interested countries could liaise with the appropriate authority in China.
- ❖ *Staff and students exchange program (Panama).* The meeting welcomed Panama's proposal to foster staff and students exchange programs through the University of Panama.
- ❖ *Centre of Theoretical/Practical Studies for the Development of SME (Ecuador) (POL/2006/12).* Noting the importance of SMEs in the creation of jobs and economic growth, Ecuador briefed the meeting on the proposal and requested that FEALAC countries provide feedback on the project. The meeting welcomed the project and suggested that Ecuador raise the proposal at the Economy and Society Working Group. Noting that it was open to discussing the project at the Economy and Society Working Group, Ecuador explained that it had raised the project in the Political, Cultural and Education Working Group as it wanted to bring a multi-layered perspective to the project.
- ❖ *Scholarship programme for Young Graduates from FEALAC Member Countries by the Diplomatic Academy of Peru (Peru).* Peru briefed the meeting on the scholarship, which was targeted at young graduates from FEALAC countries who are diplomats or plan to become members of the Foreign Service. Welcoming the project, the meeting noted that many East Asian diplomats were keen to learn Spanish and would be pleased to have



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an opportunity to learn Spanish in Latin American countries. Peru noted that the age criterion was flexible and assured the meeting that the Masters Degree awarded by the Diplomatic Academy of Peru was nationally recognised.

- ❖ *Research on Actual Situation of Academic Exchange between East Asia and Latin America (Japan) (POL/2006/13).* Japan briefed the meeting on the research project and requested that members fill and return the forms to Japan before the end of March 2006. Japan also noted that it planned to put in the research into the FEALAC Academic Network and also intended to contribute to the China project. The meeting noted that this project complemented the PACLAS project.
 - ❖ *A LAEBA Seminar (Japan) (POL/2006/14).* Japan briefed the meeting on the seminar on "Strengthening Partnerships between East Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean: The Role of FEALAC", which will be held in March 2006 on the occasion of the Third Core Group meeting and noted that it was the first joint project of the IADB and ADB.
 - ❖ *Education Projects for FEALAC (Cuba).* Cuba informed the meeting that two Cuban scholarships for undergraduate studies for sport and physical education would be offered to East Asian FEALAC countries in Havana in September 2006. The scholarship consists of a six-year programme that includes a one-year Spanish language course. Cuba would be providing more information at a later date. Cuba also gave a short briefing on an illiteracy eradication initiative which Cuba planned to introduce to FEALAC in the near future.
8. The meeting welcomed Indonesia's candidacy for the position of East Asian co-chair of the Political, Cultural and Education Working Group after FMM III. The meeting agreed that Indonesia's candidature would be submitted for consideration at SOM VIII. Colombia noted that it was willing to continue as Latin American co-chair of the Political, Cultural and Education Working Group. However, if another Latin American country wished to present its candidacy as Latin American co-chair before SOM VIII, consultations with the FEALAC Latin American countries would be arranged.
 9. Brazil will host SOM VIII and FMM III meetings, which will be held in Brasilia. The dates will be provided at the Third Core Group meeting. To facilitate preparations for the meeting, Japan informed the meeting about the Third Core Group meeting which will be held from 29-30 March 2006 in Tokyo. All FEALAC members, including the FEALAC Regional Coordinators, Deputy Regional Coordinators, and respective Working Group co-chairs, were invited



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to attend the meeting. Japan requested that FEALAC countries return the accreditation forms for the Core Group meeting by 9 March 2006.

10. Pending the endorsement of SOM VIII and FMM III, Indonesia proposed that the Fifth Political, Cultural and Education Working Group meeting be held back-to-back with the Workshop on Counter-Terrorism in September/October 2007 in Semarang, Indonesia. Japan informed the meeting that the Fourth Economy and Society Working Group Meeting will be held from 7-8 June 2006 in Tokyo. Thailand informed the meeting that the Fourth Science and Technology Working Group Meeting will be held from 29-30 June 2006 in Bangkok, preceded by The Workshop on Alternative Energy Cooperation on 28 June 2006.
11. Japan informed the meeting about the modalities of future Working Group and SOM meetings (POL/2006/17). The alternative formulations would be submitted for SOM VIII's consideration. Japan requested that FEALAC countries reply with their views by 15 March 2006 so that they could be discussed at the Third Core Group meeting and SOM VIII. Japan also noted the importance of efforts to promote awareness of FEALAC and its activities through brochures and seminars with other governmental and non-governmental groups in member countries. Japan briefed the meeting that one possible source of funding was the Human Security Fund which Japan had set up within the UN context.
12. Reiterating the Manila Plan of Action's call to broaden FEALAC dialogue to promote inter-faith and inter-cultural understanding, the meeting agreed that interested FEALAC countries could follow up by initiating an inter-faith dialogue in FEALAC. The meeting noted the importance of working within the umbrella framework of the Manila Plan of Action and agreed that the project proposals could be submitted for the Fifth Political, Cultural and Education Working Group's consideration.
13. The meeting expressed its profound appreciation to the Government of Colombia for the excellent arrangements and warm hospitality accorded to all the delegations.