



Forum of the Countries
of Latin America and
the Caribbean on
**SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT**
Virtual meeting
15–18 March **2021**

2 March 2021

ORIGINAL: SPANISH

Fourth meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America
and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development

Virtual meeting, 15–18 March 2021

Concept note

Panel 2: Crisis, recovery and transformation in the decade of action for the Sustainable Development Goals

Wednesday, 17 March, 2–5 p.m. (Costa Rica time, GMT -6)

Introduction

Crises create spaces for discussing ideas and forging political agreements that form the basis for new development strategies. Nonetheless, the policy response to the crisis is not predetermined: there are competing theoretical visions, goals, interests and strategies. In this document, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) proposes a way out of the crisis that it has called a big push for sustainability, to combine an urgent response to lessen or reverse the effects on employment, poverty and growth with efforts to overcome structural problems that have repeatedly hindered the region's development.

Latin America and the Caribbean essentially faces three structural problems: high inequality, technological and productive lags (resulting in weak growth and high instability in finance and the real economy), and environmental degradation. These problems existed before the pandemic, but have generally been made worse by it.

ECLAC proposes a strategy of a transformative recovery, whereby short-term measures (income transfers to the poorest and most vulnerable, support for small and medium-sized enterprises, financing to reduce the external constraints of vulnerable countries) are geared towards strengthening the sectors and capacities needed for sustainable and inclusive growth in the long term. In economic and productive terms, these measures promote structural change towards less carbon-intensive sectors and processes, enabling diversification and a more sophisticated export pattern. Expansion of these sectors also creates higher-quality formal jobs, which, combined with redistributive policies and the construction of a welfare state, would lead to a marked reduction in inequality in the region. Social policies, the care economy and the fight

against all forms of discrimination must be part of construction of a welfare state and a rights agenda, which is long overdue in the region.

The big push for sustainability is a proposal of interlinked policies and investments to promote a new pattern of development and fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This path will require new social pacts that support productive transformation in democracy, and a new multilateralism in the international system, providing the public goods, policy space and cooperation needed for a sustainable development strategy.

Goals of the panel

- Discuss ways in which the urgent response to the crisis can be combined with the response to structural problems, notably by using industrial policies and public investment to attract new private sector investment in strategic sectors (such as health and the energy transition).
- Discuss the political alliances needed to sustain such a strategy, so that they represent the goals negotiated by public and private stakeholders, in a democratic context that overcomes inequality and the culture of privilege.
- Discuss the role of industrial policy in boosting the region's stagnant productivity, while promoting environmental innovations.
- Discuss possible synergies and interactions between different policy areas (social, industrial, technological, environmental), which can help to make policies viable, both politically and economically.
- Discuss the role of regional integration in promoting a new style of development, to achieve economies of scale and make investment more efficient.
- Discuss how the region can express itself more firmly and concertedly at the international level, in the discussion and definition of a new multilateralism, which goes beyond hyperglobalization.

Moderator: Mario Cimoli, Deputy Executive Secretary of ECLAC

Panellists

- Camillo Gonsalves, Minister of Finance, Economic Planning, Sustainable Development and Information Technology of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Chair of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC)
- André Lara Resende, Adjunct Senior Research Scholar at the School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA) of Columbia University
- José Francisco Pacheco, Member of the Board of Directors of the Central Bank of Costa Rica

- Cristina Gallach Figueras, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and for Ibero-America and the Caribbean of Spain
- Maurizio Bezzeccheri, Director for Latin America of Enel
- Laura Becerra, deputy focal point of the NGO networks, groupings, organizations and platforms group of the mechanism for civil society participation in the Sustainable Development Agenda and in the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development

Panel format

This multi-stakeholder panel will bring together experts and representatives from government, civil society, and the private and academic sectors in the region. The panel will be moderated by Mario Cimoli, Deputy Executive Secretary of ECLAC.

The moderator will invite the panellists to reflect on the goals of the panel, through an **eight-minute** introduction.

The panellists' presentations will be followed by a question-and-answer session with the audience connected to the session. Once the panellists have finished their presentations, the moderator will open the floor to the representatives of participating countries to address the theme of the panel, for up to three minutes each. After the representatives of the countries have spoken, the floor will be given back to the panellists for closing remarks of two minutes each.