



*Forum for East Asia-Latin America Cooperation*

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## **9<sup>th</sup> FEALAC FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING**

**Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic**

**November 9, 2019**

### **SANTO DOMINGO DECLARATION**

*- 20 years: New Actions for a Better Future -*

## **Introduction**

1. Recognizing the Forum for East Asia – Latin America Cooperation (FEALAC) as a unique intergovernmental multilateral consultation space between the countries of East Asia and Latin America, which, since its creation in September 1999, FEALAC has encouraged new partnerships, and new opportunities for intercontinental cooperation. We, the Foreign Ministers and Heads of Delegations of the member countries of the Forum for East Asia-Latin America Cooperation (FEALAC), met in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic on 09 November 2019, with a view to strengthen the relationship between the two regions.
2. The 9<sup>th</sup> FEALAC Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held under the co-chair of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, as the FEALAC Regional Coordinator for East Asia, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Dominican Republic, as FEALAC Regional Coordinator for Latin America.
3. We recognize the importance of the New FEALAC Action Plan to increase the effectiveness of FEALAC and the need to progressively review all activities that derive from them, in order to meet the development needs of the member countries.
4. Recalling the achievements of the eight previous Foreign Ministers' Meetings and recognizing the substantive discussion at the 9<sup>th</sup> FEALAC Foreign Ministers' Meeting, we adopt this Santo Domingo Declaration.
5. Therefore, in accordance with the priorities of member countries, in relation to the proposed measures and activities contained in the New FEALAC Action Plan, we decided to refer to the following aspects:



## **Revision and update of the "New FEALAC Action Plan"**

6. Since the adoption of the **"New FEALAC Action Plan"**, at the 8<sup>th</sup> Foreign Ministers' Meeting held on 31 August 2017, this document has served to give an integral and functional meaning to the mechanism through its three pillars: strengthening FEALAC's institutional framework, promoting Effectiveness of Working Groups and Projects, and enhancing partnership with Regional and International Organizations.
7. We acknowledge that the New FEALAC Action Plan is a living document that will continue to be reviewed and updated to reflect the newest developments of FEALAC. In this regard, we stress that changes in this plan should be done based on consensus among member countries, taking into account the 2030 Agenda and sustainable development.

## **Strengthening the Institutional Framework of FEALAC**

8. We reaffirm each member country's efforts and commitment to strengthening FEALAC's institutional framework, aiming at enhancing visibility of the forum and implementing activities within this mechanism under the guidelines of the New Action Plan adopted in Busan, Republic of Korea, on 31 August 2017.
9. We recognize the initiative of the Dominican Republic to develop the International Communication Plan to enhance the visibility of the FEALAC and to promote and strengthen the forum. The Plan should contain voluntary measures as well as specific strategies and actions that will contribute to FEALAC's more prominent positioning at the global level.
10. In this regard, we continue to support, from our respective Ministries of Foreign Affairs, the activities and actions aimed at advancing the International Communication Plan. We instruct our Senior Officials to prepare a draft of the International Communication Plan for our consideration.
11. In this context, Ministers take note of FEALAC Supporters Program initiated by Republic of Korea in 2019, which is a promotion activity to increase public awareness of FEALAC, and share the view that the Program would be a useful point of reference for advancing objectives of the International Communication Plan.



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12. We welcome the initiative for member countries to hold “FEALAC Day” – such as those that have been held by Cambodia, China, Costa Rica, Indonesia, Mongolia, Lao PDR and Thailand – as part of increasing the visibility of FEALAC to the public.
13. We take note of Thailand’s efforts in introducing FEALAC to the public in Thailand by creating “Discover Latin America” – a free-of-charge mobile phone application in the Thai language to provide general information about individual Latin American countries as well as regional groupings, including FEALAC. In addition, we recognize Thailand is hosting an event to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the establishment of FEALAC to promote a better understanding among people of the two regions.
14. We appreciate the invaluable contribution that the Cyber Secretariat, hosted by the Republic of Korea, has made to FEALAC. We renew the request to member countries to make continuous and active cooperation with the Cyber Secretariat.
15. Moreover, in light of the 20th anniversary, we recognize the importance of revitalizing the institutional framework, including, among other issues, the structure, aiming for a more dynamic cooperation and closer coordination amongst working groups to promote greater visibility of FEALAC. In this regard, we request to continue to discuss this matter at Senior Officials’ Meeting of 2020.

### **FEALAC Special Commemorative Summit**

16. We identify the need to promote greater dynamism, participation and proactivity of the member states. In this regard, we agree to explore the possible organization of a FEALAC Special Commemorative Summit, with the participation of our Heads of State/Government.

### **Regional Coordinators' rotation system**

17. We have recognized the importance of the early selection of Regional Coordinators to ensure a well-functioning leadership system in FEALAC in the latest meeting. In this regard, in case that there are no volunteers, we encourage introducing a voluntary alphabetical rotation system in the year 2021, starting with the letter A, with due regard to those who have served as regional coordinators or hosted Foreign Ministers / Senior Officials’ Meetings. We encourage Latin American and East Asian countries



to consider choosing their respective regional coordinators a few months ahead of FEALAC Foreign Ministers' Meetings.

18. To allow the timely definition of the Regional Coordinators, consultations within the Latin America and East Asian groups on their respective candidates could be made via virtual means, followed by a silence procedure in order to verify consensus within both regions. The consensus on the regional coordination for each region should be achieved on a previously agreed date before FEALAC Foreign Ministers' Meetings.

### **Promoting the effectiveness and efficiency of working groups and projects**

19. We recognize the necessity of adopting a 'Guideline for FEALAC Cooperation Projects' that prescribes, among others, the form, purpose, principle and procedure, etc., of all FEALAC Cooperation Projects in order that these may be implemented in a more systematic manner. In this regard, we recognize the need to hold a discussion on the draft 'Guideline for FEALAC Cooperation Projects', which contains prescribed project procedures from project preparation to completion with a view to its referendum approval prior to or at the next Senior Officials' Meeting.

### **Strengthening bi-regional educational, cultural, tourism and socio-political relations**

20. We are committed to further promoting links and solidarity between all FEALAC member countries through public and cultural diplomacy, people-to-people exchange. In this regard, we consider the identification of inter-regional cooperation projects of voluntary participation, especially under the Working Group of Culture, Youth, Gender and Sports, to generate further dialogue, mutual knowledge, and cultural exchanges among the people of both regions.
21. In this regard, we recognize the importance of Expo 2023 Buenos Aires, Argentina, that will seek the development of "Creative Industries in the Digital Convergence", and we encourage the participation of the FEALAC countries and companies in the field in order to contribute with ideas and experience.
22. We recognize the need to strengthen tourism cooperation among the countries of the two regions by expediting tourism promotion and marketing activities and enhance connectivity among the tourism destinations and products aimed at boosting tourism growth between the two regions.



23. We are in favor of empowering women in different areas, such as social, foreign policy, employment and financial, and are committed to supporting projects which target the improvement of quality of life of women in both regions.
24. We take note of the proposal of creating the "FEALAC Games" or the "FEALAC Sports Festival" and look forward to its further detailing.
25. In essence, of promoting sports festival, we take into consideration that Panama will host the Central American and Caribbean Games 2022 and promote members of FEALAC to participate.

### **Boosting partnerships with regional and international organizations**

26. We favor the strengthening of the relations between FEALAC and other international organizations, in line with the matters of the Forum Action Plan, and take note of the efforts of the Dominican Republic that have allowed the presence of representatives of international agencies accredited to its government, in the recently concluded meetings.

### **Achievements of the FEALAC Multi-Donor Trust Fund**

27. We acknowledge the value of the FEALAC Multi-Donor Trust Fund, which was established at the 8<sup>th</sup> Foreign Ministers' Meeting to support projects of inter-regional scope, and serves as the most effective channel in enhancing mutual understanding between East Asia and Latin America. We recommend member countries' continued support and cooperation in the FEALAC Fund to bring tangible benefits.
28. In this regard, we take note of FEALAC wide projects, "Reducing inequality in FEALAC member countries innovative policy-making that leaves no one behind" and "Value Chain Development for deeper integration of East Asia and Latin America" led by UN ESCAP and ECLAC, which are funded by the FEALAC Multi-Donor Trust Fund. We share the view that these projects can be catalysts for bringing FEALAC together in a harmonious way.



## **FEALAC and Global Issues**

29. We reaffirmed our strong support for multilateralism and regionalism with the UN as its center, as well as for the rules –based international order based on the principle of international law, mutual interests and mutual respect.

Also, in recognition of the importance of maintaining and promoting peace, stability, security and freedom of navigation and over-flight, we affirm our strong commitment to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and universally recognized principles of international law.

## **Trade**

30. We recognize that trade expansion among FEALAC member countries serves not only to promote the prosperity of each country but also to help strengthen ties between the two regions. In the midst of global economic slowdown, we emphasize the need for all countries to promote free trade and remove non-tariff barriers and continue to promote projects of cooperation under the working group of Trade, Investment, Tourism and MSMEs.
31. We believe that FEALAC is an important international forum to promote cross-cutting actions for both region. We, thus, reinforce our determination to enhance regional and sub-regional cooperation as well as deeper economic integration.
32. We welcome that the G20 Trade Ministers in Tsukuba delivered a robust message with a view to realizing a free, open, rules-based, fair, non-discriminatory, transparent, predictable and stable trade and confirm their willingness to work constructively with other World Trade Organization (WTO) Members to implement necessary WTO reform with a sense of urgency.
33. In this regard, we take note of 2019 FEALAC Seminar on Trade and SMEs, which was co-hosted by Republic of Korea and Argentina on September 18, 2019 under the theme of FEALAC's trade facilitation in the context of the Digital Economy.
34. We support the implementation of the Feasibility Project for the Establishment of a Virtual Bi-regional Centre for Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Development, approved by the 6th Meeting of Foreign Ministers (Bali, 13-14 June



2013), which is in the restructuring and refinement phase and we reiterate our disposition for it to be implemented in a timely manner.

35. We value the role of Chile as Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) host economy, as well as the four pillars presented as Chair to guide APEC 2019: Digital Society, Integration 4.0, Women and Inclusive Development, and Sustainable Growth. Particularly, we value the initiatives in favor of SMEs.

## **Innovation**

36. In order to generate inclusive and sustainable economic growth, contribute to poverty reduction and strengthen trade relations between the two regions, we acknowledge the importance of the first FEALAC Business Forum held in Bogota, Colombia, in 2012 and thereafter was subsequently supported by the 2<sup>nd</sup> FEALAC Business Forum in Bangkok, Thailand, in 2014 and the 3<sup>rd</sup> FEALAC Business Forum in Seoul, Republic of Korea, in 2017.
37. We commend the Dominican Republic for hosting the 4<sup>th</sup> FEALAC Business Innovation Forum on the margins of the 9<sup>th</sup> FEALAC Foreign Ministers' Meeting and 20<sup>th</sup> Senior Officials' Meeting which has created opportunities for business people from the two regions to exchange experience and knowledge about the use of technology and innovation to increase value for the business. We believe that this information-sharing session will pave the way for higher economic growth, thereby improving the welfare of the populations of both regions.
38. In this regard, we highlight the active participation of the private sectors and academia of the member countries should be emphasized for stronger connectivity and cooperation within FEALAC. We recognize the importance of interregional trade for promoting prosperity within FEALAC.
39. As digitalization is transforming every aspect of our economies and societies, we recognize the critical role played by the effective use of data, as an enabler of economic growth, development, innovation and social well-being. In this regard, we welcome the intention of the G20 leaders to promote international policy discussions to harness the full potential of data and digital economy to foster innovation as well as the launch of the "Osaka Track" to promote international policy discussions, inter alia, international rule-making on trade-related aspects of electronic commerce at the WTO.





## **Environmental issues**

40. We acknowledge the importance of multilateral cooperation to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Paris Agreement.
41. We emphasize that measures to address marine litter, especially marine plastic litter and micro plastics need to be taken nationally and internationally by all countries in partnership with relevant stakeholders, when appropriate, to promote sustainable use and management of land, forest, marine and water resources. In this regard, we welcome and share the “Osaka Blue Ocean Vision”.
42. We congratulate Panama on hosting the Our Ocean Conference 2021 and encourage the participation of FEALAC countries.
43. We know that global issues that concern Latin America and East Asian countries, such as migration and climate change, are taken into consideration in current efforts such as the Comprehensive Development Plan with Central America (PDI), which has garnered bi-regional support.
44. We value Ecuador's initiative "Intercollegiate Bioregional Competition for the Construction of Maritime Consciousness, through the prevention, dissipation, reuse and recycling of maritime waste", which should be formulated in order for experts in the collection of maritime to participate.
45. We also agree to give highest priority to projects and discussions on the issues of comprehensive disaster, risk management, environment and climate change, within the works of the existing “Socio-Political Cooperation and Sustainable Development Working Group”. In this regard, we decided to change the name of this working group to “Socio-Political Cooperation, Sustainable Development and Climate Change Working Group”.
46. We commend the Association of the Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) for the Bangkok Declaration on Combating Marine Debris in the ASEAN Region, adopted in June 2019 and the efforts of the 2019 “APEC Roadmap on Marine Debris”. We are also concerned about the increasing level of marine debris, especially marine plastic litter and micro plastics, and recognize that it is necessary for all countries to tackle this problem nationally and internationally.





47. We recognize Costa Rica for the success obtained in the Pre COP 25 held in San Jose From October 8 to October 10, 2019 and we value Chile's decision to chair COP25, as well as its leadership on working together for successful outcome of the Conference, and inter alia, for the promotion of our oceans.

### **Sustainable and Inclusive Growth**

48. We reaffirm our commitment to build sustainable, balanced and inclusive growth, and acknowledge our continuing efforts to build and implement effective economic measures to facilitate the sustainable and inclusive economy. We note that FEALAC, a unique platform that facilitates regional cooperation between East Asia and Latin America, can promote further efforts on North-South, South-South and triangular co-operations as a means to promote sustainable and inclusive growth.
49. We reaffirm our commitment to contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA).
50. We also reaffirmed the need to promote high quality infrastructure in accordance with broadly accepted international principles to realize inclusive, sustainable and resilient economic growth.

### **Closing**

51. The next Foreign Ministers' Meeting will be held in 2021, and the Senior Officials' Meeting, in 2020, at a date determined by consensus.
52. We express our appreciation to the Dominican Republic, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the Republic of Guatemala for having assumed the role of Regional Coordinators for the term 2017-2019 in an efficient manner.
53. Dominican Republic and Lao People's Democratic Republic will become interim Regional Coordinators for Latin America and East Asia, until the member countries select their next Regional Coordinators.