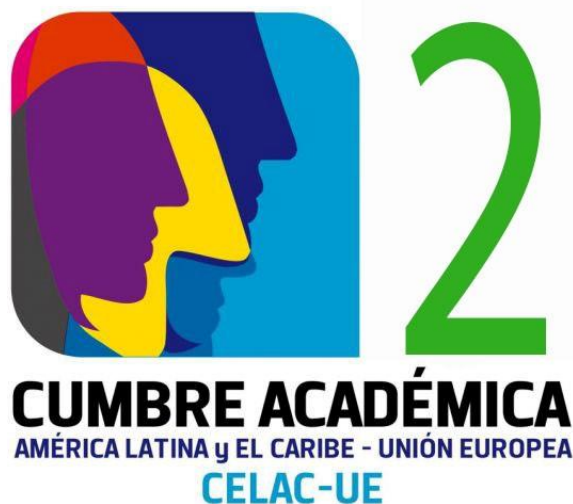


**SECOND ACADEMIC SUMMIT LATIN AMERICAN AND CARRIBEAN AND
THE EUROPEAN UNION CELAC-UE**



**“BUILDING THE COMMON SPACE FOR HIGHER
EDUCATION, SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND
INNOVATION FOR THE STRATEGIC BI-REGIONAL
ASSOCIATION”**

**BRUSSELS DECLARATION
AND
PROPOSALS TO THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT
OF THE CELAC-EU SUMMIT 2015**

The academics, professors, researchers, students, universities, research and study centers and other institutions of higher education in the countries of the Community of Latin America and the Caribbean States and the European Union, reunited in Brussels in the Second CELAC-EU Academic Summit,

Having attended the opening ceremony the Secretary of Higher Education, Science Technology and Innovation of Ecuador, René Ramírez, representing the pro-tempore presidency of CELAC (Group of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation); the co-chairman of the EuroLat Parliamentary Assembly, Euro-deputy Ramón Jáuregui representing the President of the European Parliament Martin Schulz; the European Commissioner for Science and Technology Carlos Moedas; the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (CEPAL), Alicia Bárcena; the president of the EU-LAC Foundation, Benita Ferrero-Waldner; the Secretary General of Flanders Department of Foreign Affairs, Koen Verlaeckt; the Rector of the College of Europe, Jörg Monar as honorary president of the Second CELAC-EU Academic Summit.

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT:

- The objectives of the bi-regional Strategic Partnership established by the Heads of State and Government at the Rio de Janeiro Summit in 1999 and later ones in Madrid, Guadalajara, Vienna, Lima, Madrid and Santiago de Chile.
- The strategic relevance of education, science, technology and innovation in the bi-regional agenda, particularly in the Madrid Plan of Action and Santiago de Chile.
- The inclusion of higher education as one of the chapters of the bi-regional Action Plan, which satisfies one of the aspirations of the First Academic Summit and which complements the axis of Research, Science, Technology and Innovation.
- The challenges shared by Latin America and the Caribbean and Europe in the current context of deep transformations of our societies, such as the fight against poverty, inequalities and climate change, the protection of decent work and the environment, global public goods, the knowledge society, the new international production structure and the governance of globalization.
- Our responsibility, as members of civil society, under the shared values in order to advance globally on the democratization and redistribution of knowledge, the access to universal intellectual production, the respect for cultural diversity and the creation of global governance based on human rights, solidarity, peace, inclusion and social cohesion.

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE DIALOGUES, STUDIES AND REFLEXIONES DEVELOPED BY THE ACADEMIC COMMUNITY DURING THIS PROCESS

We reaffirm our commitment to work and contribute, on common grounds, on a wide base of the academic world of both regions, through the convergence and the articulation of academics, researchers, institutions and networks, public and private, national and international, to a progressive formation of a “Euro – Latin American and Caribbean space of higher education, science, technology and innovation”

And we highlight:

1. With regard to the recognition and convergence of the **higher education systems**, the diversity of the actors who compose it and their heterogeneity is highlighted. It is emphasized the importance of strengthening intra-regional Latin American and Caribbean space in order to work towards convergence and to implement a framework of professional competences. To achieve this, further studies of the regional system and tools for comparison are needed.

In this sense, we propose the creation of regional and bi-regional independent agencies for evaluation and accreditation, taking into account, among others, the work done within the framework of the International Institute for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (IESALC) on the basis proposed by the Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Degrees and Diplomas in Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNESCO, 1974).

2. In regard to **promoting the convergence of research, technology and innovation systems**, it is reminded the importance of institutionalizing researchers' networks, creating a record of the main areas and research projects on regional and bi-regional level (VI EU-LAC Summit, Madrid, 2010). We propose creating a bi-regional agency of innovation management and the creation of a bi-regional fund that encourages joint research and mutual innovation projects.
3. Regarding the **cooperation between Higher Education Institutions (HEI) and its relations with the productive sector**, it is needed to expand the space for interactions between business and education sectors in both regions, in order to improve training programs and favour the match between the labour market and educational offer. It is also emphasized the need to foster entrepreneurial culture of

students as well as the research and innovative culture of enterprises, through mechanisms such as the financing of doctoral theses and other forms of integration of postgraduates in the correspondent structures. We also stress the contribution that HEI can bring to the development of platforms and tools for bi-regional cooperation and innovation among small and medium enterprises (SMEs), in order to enhance productivity, competitiveness and internationalization.

4. With regard to the relations of the **academic community with public policies**, the role of HEI as proactive actors in the process of analysis and formulation of public policies in the countries of the CELAC-EU area is highlighted. In this sense, it is required that the HEI also constitute themselves as "policy forums", as catalysts of participatory consensus for the design, implementation and evaluation of public action, especially in the education sector and in the fields of regional integration, sustainability and social inclusion. It also aims to reinforce synergies regarding strategies of international cooperation between university and public areas. Finally, it is required to provide adequate budget for the public policies that support the strategies of internationalization of HEI (mobility of students, professors and administrative staff) and incorporate experts on internationalization of higher education both in government and multilateral agencies responsible for the sector education as in the higher education institutions themselves.

In this area, there are valued specifically initiatives such as the "Sustainable Universities in the CELAC-EU area", the Latin American and Caribbean Higher Education (ENLACES), INFOACES, TUNING, SUMA, among others.

To advance these goals, the Permanent Academic Forum, its Executive Secretariat and the Academic Council, besides the Permanent Reflection Groups, will continue the work of this summit, in an open, comprehensive, systemic, inclusive framework, linked to society and public policy. In this regard, we express the unequivocal will of integration with other bi-regional initiatives with similar objectives. We highlight the continued support of the EU-LAC Foundation, and the commitment to carry out further preparatory meetings of the Third Academic Summit.

AND IN THIS CONTEXT,
WE PROPOSE TO THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT AND TO THE
INSTITUTIONS OF INTEGRATION REUNITED IN THE CELAC-EU SUMMIT

1. To recommend to the EU institutions and kindly ask the Ministers of Education, Science, Research and Technology of both regions the opening of a permanent space for dialogue with the Permanent Academic Forum of CELAC-EU Summit in order to advance the collaborative implementation of these proposals.
2. To create the normative and financial conditions in order to develop the Euro-Latin American and Caribbean space for higher education, science, technology and innovation on the basis of access and equity and to guarantee the democratization of knowledge, the access to information and the transfer of technology.
3. To enhance legally and financially the higher education systems of both regions, incorporating the mechanisms and actions that lead to bi-regional agencies of evaluation, accreditation and financing.
4. To promote the cooperation of the research, technology and innovation systems, through interregional programs that define the priority areas for social and productive development and defence of biodiversity of the CELAC-EU space and enhance the relation between the Academic Summit and the Joint Initiative for Research and Innovation (JIRI).
5. To favour the relation between the academic community and the public policies and the sustainable development, especially those related to the internationalization, with consideration to the strategic objectives of the bi-regional association.
6. To boost the collaboration of the higher education institutions with the society and the productive sector, especially the SMEs and the social economy based on solidarity.

BRUSSELS, 9th of June of 2015