

EU-CELAC ministerial meeting: Santo Domingo Declaration

1. We, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) and of the European Union and the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, met on the occasion of our first Inter-Summit meeting, held in the Dominican Republic on the 25th and 26th of October 2016.
2. We underscore the importance of our partnership and reiterate our commitment to all the bi-regional declarations adopted in the Summits of our Heads of State and Government since Rio de Janeiro in 1999. These declarations reflect our common vision on important matters.
3. We recall the mandate received from the Heads of State and Government in their Political Declaration “A partnership for the next generation” adopted in June 2015, to commit to a comprehensive and inclusive exercise of reflection on the future of the bi-regional relationship in order to deepen our long-standing strategic, bi-regional partnership based on historical, cultural and human ties, international law, full respect for all the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, all human rights and territorial integrity as well as on common values and principles, and mutual respect and interests. We reiterate our rejection of coercive measures of unilateral character with extraterritorial effect that are contrary to international law and we reaffirm our commitment to the peaceful settlement of disputes.
4. We endorse the conclusions and recommendations emanating from the “Assessment of programmes and actions adopted by the Summits”, which have constituted an important input in our reflection. This evaluation has proven to be a positive contribution in the identification of successful bi-regional initiatives, areas of our relationship where more efforts need to be made and suggested changes in our working methods, which will lead to more concrete and valuable results. These recommendations should be considered in the further implementation and development of the CELAC-EU Action Plan. We also agree to enhance coordination between the cooperation programmes and the CELAC-EU Action Plan.
5. We agree to build on the conclusions of our discussions on the assessment of the programmes and actions adopted by the Summits, strengthening the bi-regional dialogue and deepening mutual relations, financing for development and climate change, during this first Inter-Summit meeting to consolidate a more ambitious, strategic and balanced association on the basis of clearly identified common interests, which shall be the framework of our future bi-regional relationship.
6. We are convinced that together we can play an important political role to jointly address ongoing and new global challenges. We commit ourselves to a reinvigorated and more frequent political dialogue based on common bi-regional objectives. We commend the bi-regional dialogue in the lead up to the major international conferences, summits and special sessions on issues of global concern, in particular the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit (2015), which adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the 21st Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP 21), the UN General Assembly Special Session on the World Drug Problem (UNGASS 2016) and the UNGA High Level Meeting on Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants (2016). We commit to further working together, as applicable, to achieve our common goals in the multilateral fora, including in the UNFCCC COP 22 to be held in Marrakech in November 2016 and the Open Government Partnership Summit to be held in Paris in December 2016.
7. We welcome the dynamism of our long-lasting economic ties, while acknowledging the need to give new impetus to our economic partnership. We recall our earlier commitments in Santiago de Chile and Brussels, to promote sustainable development and inclusive economic growth in our respective regions, including through increased and diversified investments. We recognize that economic growth within a policy framework of environmental and social responsibility is essential to achieve sustained and inclusive development. Our countries share the common challenge of enhancing productivity growth and would gain from cooperating more closely in this field. We propose to create an enabling environment encompassing all aspects of bi-regional relations related to productivity, as defined in paragraphs 45 to 49 of the EU-CELAC Brussels Declaration adopted in 2015. Therefore, we mandate the CELAC-EU Senior Officials to carry out consultations at different levels with the business sector and other relevant stakeholders to identify objectives and modalities for a possible CELAC-EU partnership in this field and report to the next Summit.

8. We acknowledge the need for open, constructive dialogue and closer collaboration in tax matters, recognizing the need to address tax evasion, base erosion and profit shifting (BEPS). We also acknowledge that this dialogue should be reinforced between all parties and we take note that some countries have already undertaken commitments in accordance with standards monitored and assessed by the Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes (Global Forum).
9. We stress the need to enhance bi-regional cooperation, using all available instruments in an integrated manner. The new challenges linked to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda should be taken into account in the design and implementation of the CELAC-EU Action Plan. We therefore mandate the CELAC-EU Senior Officials to conduct a reflection and consultation process on this issue with all relevant partners and to present initial results before the end of 2016 with a view to submitting its outcome to the Summit in 2017. Given the importance of ODA as a lever for effective implementation of the SDGs, this reflection should include the issue of graduation in order to properly reflect the realities and challenges of the populations of Latin American and Caribbean States and its potential side effects in our bi-regional cooperation.
10. We recognize the need to promote broad participation of all sectors of society and relevant organisations and engagement in the advancement of the bi-regional relationship. We also wish to ensure the adequate representation of youth and women, and to identify ways of making our partnership more effective, visible, participatory and inclusive with a view to enhancing the achievement of our common strategic objectives.
11. We welcome the signature of the Agreement establishing the EU-LAC Foundation as an international organization of intergovernmental nature as an important instrument of our bi-regional relationship. We recognize the voluntary basis of financial contributions reflected in the Agreement and encourage all countries to promote financial, legal and political support for the EU-LAC Foundation in fulfilling its mandate.
12. We welcome the results of this first Inter-Summit meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs which contributes to boosting the strategic partnership. As decided by our Heads of State and Government at the 2015 EU-CELAC Summit, we will hold regular Inter-Summit Ministerial meetings with the aim of ensuring a comprehensive follow-up of Summit decisions and sustain regular high level dialogue between our two regions.
13. We commend the Dominican Republic for the organization of this Ministerial Meeting, which enriched the bi-regional agenda and was instrumental in achieving substantial progress, paving the way for the next CELAC-EU Summit to be held in the second semester of 2017 in El Salvador.

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