



Sistema Económico
Latinoamericano y del Caribe

Latin American and Caribbean
Economic System

Sistema Económico
Latino-Americano e do Caribe

Système Economique
Latinoaméricain et Caribéen

Final Report of the XI Special Meeting Of the Latin American Council

*XI Special Meeting of the Latin American Council
Caracas, Venezuela
31 March 2008
SP/CL/XI.E/IF-08*

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RAPPORTEUR'S REPORT

1. The XI Special Meeting of the Latin American Council took place in the headquarters of the Permanent Secretariat on 31 March 2008, in compliance with the provisions set forth in Article 12 of the Panama Convention.

2. Participants in the meeting included delegations of the following Member States: Argentina, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Dominican Republic, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uruguay, as well as Ambassador Floria Caricote Lovera, Permanent Secretary of SELA, and officials of the Permanent Secretariat. The list of participants is included in Annex IV.

3. The Bureau was made up by His Excellency Mr. Gerónimo Cardozo, Ambassador of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay in Venezuela, as Chairman; His Excellency Mr. Iván Espinoza Farfán, Ambassador of the Republic of Guatemala in Venezuela, as First Vice-Chairman; His Excellency Mr. Keith Franklin, Ambassador of Barbados in Venezuela, as Second Vice-Chairman; and Honourable Mr. Marcos Nieto, Economic Advisor of the Embassy of Cuba in Venezuela, as Rapporteur.

4. The Meeting was opened by His Excellency Mr. Gerónimo Cardozo, Ambassador of the Republic of Uruguay in Venezuela and Chairman of the Latin American Council, who made sure that there was the necessary quorum and warmly welcomed participants. Cardozo made special mention of the participation of Ambassador Natalio Jamer, Director of Latin American Economic Integration of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Argentina; Honourable Mrs. Luz Maria de la Mora Sánchez, Head of the Unit for International Cooperation and Economic Relations and Representative of Mexico to the Latin American Council; His Excellency Mr. Rénaud Clérismé, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cult and Representative of Haiti to the Latin American Council; and His Excellency Mr. Hermann Aschentrupp Toledo, Minister and Deputy General Director, in charge of the General Direction for Regional and Multilateral Economic Organizations of the Secretariat for Foreign Affairs of Mexico. Cardozo pointed out that the meeting was being held in accordance with the agreements reached in the XXXIII Regular Meeting of the Latin American Council, held in November 2007, and that its agenda included the following items:

- a) Election of the Permanent Secretary for the period 2008-2012.
- b) Proposal for the regularization of the Member States' debt with the Permanent Secretariat.
- c) Update of the Regulations for Elections of SELA.

The agenda of the meeting is included in Annex III.

5. The Chairman requested the delegates to consider the first item: Election of the Permanent Secretary for the period 2008-2012, stressing that the only candidate for the position was Dr. José Rivera Banuet, nominated by the Government of Mexico. His Curriculum Vitae is included in Annex II. Afterwards, the Chairman asked the delegates to express their opinions in this regard.

6. Since the delegates made no objections, the Chairman declared that the nomination had been accepted and proclaimed the election, by consensus, of Dr. José Rivera Banuet as Permanent Secretary of SELA for the period 2008-2012.

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7. The delegation of Mexico, on behalf of the Government of Mexico, thanked all the Member States for their support to the nomination of Dr. Jose Rivera Banuet and his election as Permanent Secretary of the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System. Specifically, the delegation expressed its gratitude to the Government of Argentina for its fraternal attitude in contributing to the consensus reached. Afterwards, the head of the delegation delivered the following speech:

“During the month of March, two very significant facts have strengthened the position of Mexico in the region. On the one hand, my country took over the Pro-Tempore Secretariat of the Rio Group and, today, it has been honoured with the result of this election. I want to congratulate the Permanent Secretary Elect upon his election and I wish the greatest success to him in this important task that he will undertake to support the whole region.

In 1975, Mexico firmly promoted the creation of SELA, and today, once again, with an equally firm determination and conviction, we think that SELA must regain the relevant role for which it was established, as defined in the Panama Convention, which indicates that it is crucial to promote greater unity among the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, in order to ensure solidarity actions in the area of intraregional economic and social cooperation, so as to increase the bargaining power of the region and to ensure that Latin America and the Caribbean takes the position that it legitimately deserves in the international community. The Permanent Secretariat must promote the important tasks that it has been entrusted in order to strengthen the projection of the region; and to this end, it is fundamental that all of its Member States give it their broadest political and economic support. I wish to point out that we consider it essential and urgent to honour the financial commitments with this organization and to regularize the delays in the quotas payments. Such regularization should be in accordance with the unprecedented growth and stability of our economies in the last few years. It should be aimed at cancelling out the debt with the organization – a situation that has led to a vicious circle in which we do not pay SELA due to its poor results and SELA cannot carry out a work with a broader scope because it does not count with the resources to do so. Let us show our support to SELA, let us fulfil our commitments with it, and let us give it the support it requires for the benefit of all the countries of our region. We consider that in order to strengthen the presence of the organization at regional level it is necessary to hold several of its events in the Member States. For this reason, Mexico reiterates its offer to provide the venue for the next meeting of International Cooperation Directors in October. Similarly, we will duly consult with the Permanent Secretariat to analyze the possibility to hold the regular meeting of the Latin American Council for 2009 in our country. At present, we consider the results of this meeting as a proof of unity among our countries, which will be the driving force of our work and our solidarity. Congratulations to the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System, congratulations to the new Permanent Secretary of SELA, congratulations to the Permanent Secretariat, because we are sure that as of today it counts with an excellent professional, who is going to foster Latin American and Caribbean unity with dignity and take SELA to the position it deserves. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.”

8. The delegation of Guatemala congratulated the new Permanent Secretary on his nomination and his subsequent election by acclamation. It said that Mexico has made a good job with his nomination and has always complied with its commitments with SELA, and stressed that this has been a determining factor to strengthen the organization, based on the interests of the countries of the region. The delegation said that Guatemala is committed to strengthen SELA and made a special recognition to the work carried out by Ambassador Floria Caricote Lovera during a difficult period for the organization. It also considered that the consensus reached in this meeting will be very

helpful for the organization and, in this connection, it offered the support of its government to the new Permanent Secretary in his work.

9. The delegation of Chile congratulated the Chairman of the Council and the members of the Bureau for their work in this process. It also congratulated the Permanent Secretary Elect, wishing him the best of success in his work and offering the support of the Government of Chile. The delegation considered this decision to be very favourable and said that its government shares many of the concerns as regards the difficult situation and the challenges faced by the organization. Finally, the delegation congratulated Ambassador Floria Caricote Lovera for her work at the helm of the organization and wished her the greatest success in her new activities.

10. The delegation of Haiti congratulated the Permanent Secretary Elect and assured that its government will continue to support, as it has done thus far, the important work conducted by this institution, adding that it is aware of its financial problems. Similarly, the delegation considered it necessary to ensure a better functioning of the organization and, in this connection, its government will support the new Permanent Secretary and will always remain loyal to its commitment to favour solidarity and cooperation for integration among the nations of our region.

The delegation said that the very fact that Haiti recently assumed the chairmanship of the Council of Ministers of the Association of Caribbean States represents an example of the work carried out by the country within the context of what can be done in the region.

In addition, the delegation expressed its government's gratitude to all the Member States which have shown their solidarity with Haiti through the MINUSTAH mission, thanks to which the country counts on the necessary stability for its development and progress. It made emphasis on the agreement signed with Mexico last year for the creation of a mixed commission that will conduct activities aimed at fostering economic development in Haiti and the whole region, which will also serve as a platform to continue cooperating with SELA's work.

11. The delegation of Guyana delivered the following speech on behalf of the Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) that attended the meeting:

"First of all, I want to offer our congratulations to Mr. José Rivera Banuet on his election to this prestigious post as Permanent Secretary of this organization and we want to wish him very well and all successes in the years that lie ahead of him. We know that it is a very serious challenge for him but we also know at the same time that he is a very experienced person and based on the experience and his work on behalf of the Government of Mexico, we are sure that he will stand to the test of time and will produce what we ask him to do in the four years that lie ahead.

I want also on our behalf to thank the Government of Argentina for showing this statesmanship to enable cooperation and unity within this organization. Argentina is a very close friend of the CARICOM region and, as you know, Argentina has and is still playing a very essential role in a brother-CARICOM state, the State of Haiti, and we want to thank them not only for that, but as I mentioned earlier, for the role in giving cooperation and establishing unity within this organization. Also, we should not forget the role of our passer outgoing Permanent Secretary. She came in at a very challenging time for this organization and in less than a year, she has been able to lift this organization off its knees and place it back on its feet. So, we want to thank her very

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much for her efforts and also to wish her well in her future endeavours, after she leaves this organization.

Mr. Chairman, the Government of Mexico is a very close friend of the CARICOM countries. We have had a great deal of cooperation over the years and currently Guyana, my own country, is also part of the Troika of the Rio Group and naturally there will be very close cooperation between my country and Mexico over the next year as they work within the Rio Group, and naturally that cooperation will be extended here at SELA because we have a delegation of Guyana being part of SELA and of course, the new Permanent Secretary is a representative of the Government of Mexico. So surely that cooperation which is extended from the area of the Rio Group will be passed on to work within here in SELA. Having mentioned all of these things, I want to again assure our new Permanent Secretary that he can receive all the cooperation that he needs from the CARICOM delegations here. And I am sure that he, in his work plan will be looking forward to, very early and very eagerly, consult with the Governments of our region to ensure that we have the fullest cooperation for his activities here in SELA, and to ensure that the work of the outgoing Permanent Secretary will be continued with as much vigour as we have seen over the past years.

12. The delegation of Colombia said it was pleased with the unanimous consensus reached, which opens new spaces and prospects for the organization. It congratulated the new Permanent Secretary on his election and offered the unrestricted support of the Government of Colombia to his work. Finally, the delegation congratulated Ambassador Caricote Lovera for the work she made during her mandate, and particularly for her diligent efforts to keep Member States duly informed.

13. The delegation of Cuba joined the other delegations in congratulating Dr. José Rivera Banuet on his election to lead SELA during the next four years. It made a special recognition to the distinguished delegation of Argentina for having promoted a space for consensus and facilitating the work of the organization. The delegation considered that the consensus reached in the meeting will give new impulse to the institution. Finally, it thanked Ambassador Caricote Lovera for having assumed the conduction of the organization at a critical moment, congratulating her for her work and wishing her great success in the new endeavours that her government may assign her.

14. Dr. José Rivera Banuet, Permanent Secretary Elect, thanked the representatives of the Member States for the trust they expressed to him by electing him to conduct the work of the Permanent Secretariat – a position that he will assume with the commitment to serve with responsibility and dedication for the benefit of the 26 countries that make up the organization. He delivered the following speech:

“Being elected to assume this responsibility is the greatest distinction that I have won in my life and, I can possibly say, it is also my greatest professional challenge and commitment. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the government of my country for the honour of nominating me for the position of Permanent Secretary. I also wish to express to Dr. Floria Caricote, my dear friend, my most sincere recognition for the work she made in such difficult times and my best wishes for success in her future activities. I am convinced that SELA has done an outstanding service to Latin America and the Caribbean over the last three decades and that its contributions have been an example of organization for other regions and for all of the developing countries. Based on this conviction, I will make efforts to strengthen, give more relevance and regain trust in SELA, which will allow all the governments to undertake through the organization an effective work for the benefit of all of our countries. To this end, I will start a dialogue with

the Member States as soon as possible, so as to deal with this issue in a frank and realistic way.

Initially, I will hold talks with the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, host country of our organization, which in addition to having been one of its founders, has always expressed its everlasting interest and firm support to the organization. In the next few days, I will have the opportunity to submit for consideration of the Member States the guidelines for action that will be followed for the future work, which can be summarized in the objective of making of SELA an organization that is able to fully comply with its goals.

I wish to conclude by telling my friends and workmates of the Permanent Secretariat, for whom I feel deep respect, that as of today I am joining them with solidarity and enthusiasm in the commendable efforts they make each and every day to promote SELA. Once again, thank you very much."

15. Ambassador Floria Caricote Lovera, Permanent Secretary of SELA, underscored the importance of the consensus reached with the election of Dr. José Rivera Banuet for the future of the organization. In her speech, she expressed her gratitude for the attendance of His Excellency, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Haiti, and Their Excellencies, Ambassadors, as well as all of their representatives, for the firm support they have expressed to SELA at all times during her short mandate at the helm of the organization. She also thanked SELA's staff for their work, saying that without their collaboration it would not have been possible to carry out many of SELA's activities to full potential. She also said that the institution requires the support of all the Member States, and for this reason she urged the representatives to serve as mediators with their governments so that they will offer the organization the financial and political support that it requires to comply with its activities. Finally, she congratulated Dr. José Rivera Banuet on his election as Permanent Secretary and wished him success with his work, saying she was at his disposal for the necessary transition.

16. In his capacity as Chairman of the Latin American Council and Representative of the Republic of Uruguay in Venezuela, Ambassador Cardozo expressed his satisfaction with this decision, which he considered to be the best one. He said that SELA requires a deep revitalization which depends heavily on the Member States' understanding of the potential that the organization has as a generator of common policies which can help the region to achieve a better position vis-à-vis the blocs that have emerged in the wake of the globalization, and to overcome the asymmetries and the huge inequalities prevailing in the region. He presented his compliments and congratulated Ambassador Caricote Lovera and the staff of the Permanent Secretariat for the efforts they have made, saying they deserved due recognition. Referring to the two following items of the Agenda, he proposed that, in view of their importance, the Permanent Secretariat should make a deeper analysis of them and insist on the compliance with the commitments entered into by the Member States. He reiterated his satisfaction with the decision made by unanimity and acclamation, and expressed his conviction that Dr. Rivera Banuet – as did Ambassador Caricote Lovera – will conduct an excellent work with the support of all the staff of the Permanent Secretariat. Finally, he offered his support in his capacity as Chairman of the Latin American Council to accomplish such goal.

17. The Council unanimously approved Decision N° 492, "Election of the Permanent Secretary", by which it elected, by acclamation, Dr. José Rivera Banuet, a Mexican citizen, as Permanent Secretary of SELA for a four-year term beginning on 2 April 2008. The text of the Decision is included in Annex I.

18. The Chairman thanked the delegations and the Permanent Secretariat for the work carried out and adjourned the meeting.

DECISION N° 492
ELECTION OF THE PERMANENT SECRETARY

DECISION N° 492
ELECTION OF THE PERMANENT SECRETARY

THE LATIN AMERICAN COUNCIL,

HAVING SEEN:

Paragraph 2 of Article 15 and Article 28 of the Panama Convention; and

The document "Election of the Permanent Secretary" (SP/CL/XI.E/DT N° 3-08);

DECIDES:

Article 1° To elect, by acclamation, Dr. José Rivera Banuet, a national of Mexico, as Permanent Secretary for a four-year term, beginning on 2 April 2008.

Article 2° The Latin American Council thanked Ambassador Floria Caricote Lovera for her efforts and dedication during her successful management at the helm of the organization.

**CURRICULUM VITAE OF DR. JOSE RIVERA BANUET,
PERMANENT SECRETARY ELECT**

JOSÉ RIVERA BANUET



Biography

José Rivera Banuet

Born on May 27th, 1946, in Mexico City, Mexico.
Married; two children.
Mexican nationality.
Current residence in Montevideo, Uruguay.

Education

Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México (ITAM).
B.A. Degree in Economics, graduated with honours.
Various economics, business and management courses.

Professional career

- Since 2005 Undersecretary-General of the Latin-American Integration Association (ALADI), Montevideo, Uruguay, elected by the 12 Member States of ALADI.
- 2002 – 2005 Director of the Global Programme on Globalization, Liberalization and Sustainable Human Development (UNDP-UNCTAD). Previously, Inter-Regional Advisor at the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). Geneva, Switzerland.
- 2000 -2002 Director-General for Energy Policy, Ministry of Energy of Mexico.
- 1995 -2000 Ministry of Economy of Mexico:
Director-General for International Trade Promotion.

Director-General for Mining Promotion.
Advisor to the Minister.
- 1993-1994 General Manager for Liquefied Petroleum Gas Marketing, Mexican Oil Company (PEMEX).
- 1988 – 1993 Latin American Economic System (SELA)

Special Advisor.
Deputy-Director and Interim Director for Economic Relations.
Head of Projects.
Caracas, Venezuela.

Previous Years:

Senior Economist, Organization of American States (OAS). Washington, D.C., and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Economic Counsellor, Mexican Mission to the International Organizations of the United Nations headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.

Director of Multilateral Economic Affairs in the Ministry of Finance and Public Credit of Mexico.

Deputy Director of International Economic Cooperation in the Ministry of Industry and Commerce of Mexico.

Publications

Co-author of the book "El Orden Mundial Emergente: México en el Siglo XXI" (The Emerging World Order: Mexico in the 21st Century) published by the Mexican National Council for Culture and Arts.

Numerous publications, lectures and academic events.

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October 2, 2007.

A N N E X I I I

AGENDA

A G E N D A

- Election of the Permanent Secretary for the period 2008-2012.
- Proposal for the regularization of the Member States' debt with the Permanent Secretariat.
- Update of the Regulations for Elections of SELA.

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LIST OF DOCUMENTS

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SP/CL/XI.RE/DT N° 1	Proposal for the regularization of the Member States' debt with the Permanent Secretariat
SP/CL/XI.RE/DT N° 2	Draft Regulations for Elections of SELA at the Latin American Council
SP/CL/XI.RE/DT N° 3	Election of the Permanent Secretary