

Lima Business Declaration

From the II EU-LAC Business Summit

Message to the Heads of State and Government participating in the V EU-LAC Summit

Two years after the First European Union, Latin America and Caribbean Business Summit held in Vienna, business leaders from both regions of the world meet again in Lima. This is further proof of the willingness to continue strengthening ties between institutions and the business community on both sides of the Atlantic, as well as their commitment to reflect on particularly significant aspects of the bi-regional and global agenda in the following years.

In this context, business leaders concur with the purpose of promoting a “Strategic Bi-Regional Association”, successively proclaimed since the First EU-LAC Summit of Heads of State and Government held in Rio de Janeiro in 1999, which seeks to establish a privileged relationship between these two regions of the world through further sharing of common interests and values. This implies actively involving business sectors in these efforts and focusing public and private actions on this goal through the establishment of concrete objectives in priority areas.

Based on this conviction, and with the purpose of contributing ideas that express the perspective of these business leaders on the main points on which the Heads of State and Government of the European Union, Latin America and the Caribbean will focus in the V EU-LAC Summit, the II EU-LAC Business Summit raises subjects of great importance that are summarized in the title “Investment to Achieve Well-Being, Sustainable Development and Inclusion”.

In this manner, the best contribution we may make is to generate economic prosperity, the fundamental pillar of sustainable development and, in turn, the means to achieve social and environmental objectives. At the same time, the importance of both public and private investment is stressed as an essential instrument to reach the goal of more equitable and integrated societies in a context of environmentally-responsible sustainable development. This includes matters as relevant as the reduction of poverty and inequality, as well as environmental protection and the urgency of confronting the effects of climate change, with an awareness of the magnitude of these challenges, but with hope and optimism about what may be achieved when efforts and wills come together within each society and between two regions that share many values and interests.

Along these lines, the Second EU-LAC Business Summit continues with the initiative born in Vienna and, at the same time, consolidates the creation of a space for joint action by business leaders from both regions. In fact, among the results of this Summit is the “Commitment of Business to Promote Education and Innovation”, as well as a mechanism to facilitate coordination and dialogue among business institutions in order to follow-up on the proposed objectives and foster initiatives that will lead to increased trade and investment levels.



Equity, Shared Responsibility and Social Inclusion

The notion of equity is associated with equality and fairness in the access to goods and opportunities. Shared responsibility must be understood in terms of an active commitment by the various sectors of society in Latin America, the Caribbean and the European Union to face their main challenges and progressively achieve the goal of sustainable development with inclusion. Within this approach, the business sector participates in various social initiatives that seek to contribute to the achievement of this objective. For that reason, such actions and the spirit that guides them should be highlighted. However, attention must also be called to the need to consolidate and drive business efforts consistent with this purpose.

The Latin America and Caribbean region is one of the most diversified and with the highest levels of inequality. In this context, social policies focused on achieving greater equity and inclusion have become increasingly important in public agendas, even though a continuous assessment is required to determine the efficiency and transparency of program management and the quality of services, and to ensure that benefits actually reach those who need them.

One fundamental consideration is that any effective social model must give priority to growth and employment, given the direct relationship between higher employment rates and the greater availability of resources for investment and social protection. At the same time, with no intention of divesting workers of their labor rights or of implying that governments should stop regulating the matter, labor markets must be more flexible in order to strike a balance between social protection, on the one hand, and the ability to adapt to change, on the other. The concept of “flexicurity” should be mentioned in this context. Major efforts are being deployed in Europe to combine better social protection and economic flexibility and these can be used as a means of encouragement and as an example for action in Latin America and the Caribbean. In this scenario, creating better conditions for access to decent jobs, particularly for young people, women and people with disabilities, is a top priority.

In order to promote investment and trade as effective means of improving the standard of living in the societies of both regions, these business leaders insist on the need to strengthen institutions, to maintain stability and legal certainty, to treat domestic and foreign investors fairly and equitably, and to make systems for public safety and the administration of justice more efficient, in addition to dealing with all forms of corruption.

Likewise, these business leaders promote and encourage new Association Agreements (with the three-fold component of political dialogue, trade and cooperation) between the European Union and Latin American and Caribbean states and integration organizations. Under this framework of business organizations we encourage the negotiators of the Partnership Agreement to continue in their discussions concerning the pursuance of said agreement. Moreover, we ask our governments to act in favor of the ambitious and balanced conclusion of the Doha Round multi-lateral trade negotiations under the framework of the World Trade Organization (WTO). The bilateral and multilateral negotiations are particularly important in connection to promoting increased trade and investment flows that will drive the creation of more jobs, the generation of production chains that incorporate added value to exports.



Public and private investment in education, cooperation with universities and research centers, and increased access to new knowledge and information technologies are crucial aspects of a comprehensive strategy focused on sustainable development with inclusion. Therefore, strong investment in pre-school and elementary education, the improvement of secondary education, support of quality college education, job creation for young people, the dissemination of new technologies and the promotion of innovation for new business opportunities are all to be encouraged. Business sectors should assume a role as active as possible in the progressive achievement of these objectives.

Actions to Face Climate Change and Promote Environmentally-Responsible Sustainable Development

These business leaders also stress the need to pay utmost attention to the climate change phenomenon and its serious effects. By exercising their responsibility companies are deploying efforts and taking the necessary measures, however, without a global agreement that includes the main emitter countries, this problem will not be solved.

In this respect, a significant reduction of greenhouse gas emissions—responsible for global warming—must be sought by promoting concrete actions such as the use of clean and renewable energy and the overall use of energy efficiency in all sectors of the economy.

Protection of the biological diversity and prevention of natural disasters are extremely important, especially in the Latin American and Caribbean region, where countries are enormously diverse and have. If timely and appropriate measures are not taken, subsistence farmers and marginal urban populations will be particularly vulnerable to the effects of this phenomenon.

Efforts must be pooled to confront the international scenario as best as possible. In the context of negotiations under the framework of the United Nations Convention on Climate Change, Latin America, Caribbean and European Union countries must work together in order to secure international agreements that help to reduce emissions. Aside from this, increased levels of cooperation from the European Union are necessary for Latin American and Caribbean countries to achieve greater energy efficiency and strengthen their technical and public management capabilities, as well as their adaptation to technology. At the same time, public and private initiatives should be fostered to take better advantage of traditional knowledge and to leverage water resources by reusing them, building water reservoirs and using irrigation methods that reduce water consumption.

An alternative to be considered in all of its potential by business sectors is that of projects involving clean development and application of pioneering experiences, such as carbon funds. Alternative markets for products, development of clean technologies and use of alternative energies other than oil, as well as BioTrade and ecotourism, should also be promoted. The Clean Development Mechanism must be fine tuned and guaranteed for the long term.



As to achieving sustainable development, it is enormously important to build infrastructures that, in an environmentally responsible manner, strengthen connectivity and integration in the Latin American and Caribbean region. This will have favorable effects in terms of highway and rail corridors communicating the Atlantic with the Pacific, offering interesting possibilities for truly strengthening the EU-LAC bi-regional relationship, as well as promising perspectives that may also extend to other areas of great economic drive in the world.

Looking to the Future Seeking Well-being

These business leaders agree on the importance of education as a means to promote social inclusion, raise awareness about environmental protection in the population, and contribute to the main objective of achieving prosperity, well-being and sustainable development. In this sense, in order to resolutely support educational initiatives focused on low-income sectors, promote greater access to new information and communication technologies, support technological innovation and research efforts in universities and specialized centers, analyze the effects of climate change and the most appropriate response to such effects, and promote greater knowledge of the various cultural realities present in Latin America, the Caribbean and the European Union, these business leaders undertake the Commitment to Promote Education and Innovation.

In order to give concrete form to the Commitment to Promote Education and Innovation, business leaders will make efforts to comprehend, according to the circumstances, the possibilities for deepening, sharing and mutual cooperation in connection with presently existing experiences involving participation and contribution by business sectors, as well as development of new initiatives in their respective countries or at a broader scale.

In order to facilitate dialogue between business organizations, it is necessary to follow-up on the proposed objectives and foster initiatives resulting in increased trade and investment levels. For this purpose, business organization leaders of Latin America, the Caribbean and the European Union have decided to set up a coordination mechanism from the end of the EU LAC Business Summit and up to the next summit in order to follow up the economic, social and business relationships between the European Union – Latin America and the Caribbean.

The existence of a mechanism such as the one described above will also allow for concerted actions in response to specific situations and greater coordination in the future between the discussion processes undertaken by the business leaders and those by the European Union, Latin American and Caribbean Heads of State and Government. This will ultimately advance a true strengthening of the “Bi-Regional Strategic Association”.

