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**REPORT OF THE THIRD REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION FORUM
ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN LATIN AMERICA
AND THE CARIBBEAN**

La Antigua, Guatemala, 26-27 November 2009

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A. ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF THE WORK

Place and date of the meeting

1. The third Regional Implementation Forum on Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, which took place in La Antigua (Guatemala) on 26 and 27 November 2009, was convened by the Executive Secretary of ECLAC, in compliance with the mandate given by virtue of ECLAC resolution 602 (XXX), in which agreement was reached on the inclusion of a regional forum for the implementation of the decisions adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development within the framework of the activities of ECLAC, taking into consideration the two-year action-oriented implementation cycle of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) and in response to an invitation from CSD for the regional commissions to organize regional implementation meetings in order to structure the countries' contribution to the implementation.

Attendance

2. The Forum was attended by representatives of the following States members of ECLAC: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Belize, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, France, Guatemala, Jamaica, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay. Germany attended as an observer.

3. On behalf of the United Nations Secretariat, the meeting was attended by a representative of the Division for Sustainable Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

4. The Forum was also attended by officials of the Secretariat of ECLAC whose names appear in the list of participants in Annex 1.

5. Also attending were representatives of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

6. The Cleaner Production Programme of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) was in attendance through representatives of the National Cleaner Production Centres of Guatemala and Costa Rica.

7. The Central American Commission on Environment and Development (CCAD) also sent a representative.

8. The following non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council also attended: Consumers International, the International Council on Mining and Metals, the World Society for the Protection of Animals.

9. The World Federation of Engineering Organizations also took part.

10. Also in attendance were other non-government organizations, which are named in the list of participants.

Organization of the work

11. The Forum took place in plenary sessions at which there was in-depth consideration of the following substantive topics: The Ten-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns, mining, transport, chemicals and waste management.
12. Concurrent to the Forum, meetings of the major groups were held.

Election of officers

13. The officers elected to preside over the Forum were as follows:

Chair:	Guatemala
Vice-Chair:	Argentina
Second Vice-Chair:	Dominican Republic

B. AGENDA

14. The Forum adopted the following agenda:
 1. Election of officers
 2. Adoption of the agenda
 3. Ten-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns
 4. Mining
 5. Transport
 6. Chemicals
 7. Waste management
 8. Other matters

C. PROCEEDINGS

Opening session

15. At the opening session, statements were made by Joseluis Samaniego, Director, Sustainable Development and Human Settlements Division, ECLAC; Lars Pira, Deputy Foreign Minister of Guatemala; Luis Alberto Ferraté, Minister of Environment and Natural Resources of Guatemala and Chair of the Forum of the eighteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-18); and Álvaro Colom, President of Guatemala.

16. The Director of the Sustainable Development and Human Settlements Division of ECLAC, after welcoming the participants and thanking the Government of Guatemala for supporting the holding of the Forum, stressed the importance of the presence of President Álvaro Colom and of Guatemala's term as chair of the Forum of the eighteenth session of CSD (CSD-18). The Forum was being held as part of the process of CSD-18, which would take place in May 2010 at United Nations Headquarters, to monitor the commitments undertaken at the Earth Summit and through the Plan of Implementation for the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 2002). The speaker then referred to each topic of the corresponding work cycle of CSD, and summarized the main messages contained in the preliminary report prepared by ECLAC, "Transport, chemicals, waste management, mining and the ten-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production (SCP) patterns: the results, trends and challenges of sustainable development in Latin America and the Caribbean".¹

17. The Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Guatemala welcomed the participants, stressed the historical value of Antigua and thanked ECLAC, UNEP and CCAD for supporting the holding of the Forum. The Deputy Minister referred to the ECLAC document as the basis for debate and to the focus of the CSD in promoting and implementing sustainable development within the scope of the five topics to be discussed in the Forum. It was important to move in that direction in order to attain the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and guarantee respect for the fundamental human rights of health, education and housing. Lastly, the importance of regional integration and cooperation in that context needed to be stressed.

18. The Minister of Environment and Natural Resources of Guatemala, in his capacity as Chair of the Forum, reiterated that the ECLAC document was a draft based on which a document that would serve as a contribution to CSD-18 would be prepared, for which purpose, the national reports, among other sources, would be taken into account.

19. The President of Guatemala also welcomed the Forum participants to the country and thanked ECLAC for holding the meeting in La Antigua. He referred to the evidence of environmental deterioration and of his country's vulnerability to climate change. He reiterated the need to give a central role to environmental policies and outlined the efforts of the Government of Guatemala to make changes and to place more emphasis on environmental matters—in among other areas, urban-transport management and reforestation.

20. The Chair of the Forum reported on the procedural rules and noted that the Forum was not a negotiating meeting but rather a body for the formation of a regional perspective on each topic to be addressed.

Overview of the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development

21. The representative of the Division for Sustainable Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations (DESA) gave a presentation on the work of the CSD, on the two-year implementation cycle that comprises CSD-18 and CSD-19, on the Forum's role in the preparations and on the recent developments in these processes. The developments she mentioned included efforts for greater collaboration with UNEP; the holding of meetings on topics related to the implementation cycle and an intergovernmental preparatory meeting; the institution of ministerial dialogue with the heads of the

¹ This document was distributed electronically to the participants before the meeting and was available for consultation on the ECLAC website. The final version of the document, which will incorporate the remarks made during this Forum, will be available on the ECLAC website.

governing boards of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, in order for the latter to implement the appropriate decisions in their work programmes; the participation of the Chair of the Forum in the meetings of the governing boards of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes; the establishment of sessions to analyze interregional perspectives, allowing the regional commissions to identify topics of common interest in order to form interregional collaboration associations and exchange information on best practices; the launch of a YouTube channel to present the messages of the ministers in charge of the thematic groups of the 2010-2011 cycle of the CSD; the holding of a series of training seminars for the delegates of the Second Committee of the General Assembly; the establishment of a multi-stakeholder dialogue; the participation of the current and the previous Bureau of the CSD in following up on agreed decisions, so as to establish a bridge between the two cycles; the invitation of the chair of the previous session to the opening of high-level sessions; and the promotion of public-outreach activities, through parallel events at intergovernmental conferences. Lastly, she stated that the CSD might consider appointing a goodwill ambassador.

Ten-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns (item 3 on the agenda)

22. The Chair of the Forum opened the session on the Ten-Year Framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns (“Ten-Year Framework”) and invited the Coordinator of Guatemala’s National Office on Clean Development and the Coordinator of the Desertification and Drought Unit of the Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources of Guatemala to join him at the table.

23. The coordinator of the National Office on Clean Development stressed the inadequacy of market mechanisms for ensuring sustainable development, noting that in Guatemala economic growth had not made it possible to reduce poverty and had caused environmental deterioration. He stressed the Government’s decision to actively participate in sustainable development and emphasized the importance of having a framework of suitable public policies so as to improve consumption and production patterns within a context of globalization and reliance on remittances from Guatemalan emigrants and on foreign capital.

24. The coordinator of the Desertification and Drought Unit of the Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources of Guatemala reported that, at the regional level, the sustainable production and consumption process had entailed challenges for the region, in which the predominant agricultural processes made an excessive, unsustainable use of environmental goods and services and whose inhabitants suffered from problems relating to poverty and extreme poverty. At the same time, some initiatives to promote sustainable consumption and production had enabled micro, small and medium-sized enterprises to implement some of the measures considered in the Marrakesh Process. Larger trade flows had brought benefits to the region but had also caused a loss of traditional consumption and production patterns and values, contributing to poverty. The region’s high vulnerability to climate change made it even more imperative to assume responsibility for the transgenerational effects of current consumption and production patterns.

25. Owing to the importance of the topic of green economies for the debate on SCP, the Chair gave the floor to the head of the Sustainable Consumption and Production Branch of the Division of Technology, Industry and Economics (DTIE) of UNEP. In his presentation, the UNEP representative emphasized the cross-cutting nature of the process, not only because of the window of opportunity represented by the preparation of the Ten-Year Framework, but also because of the multiple crises, which required an integration of the economy, the environment and natural resource use. He underscored the importance of bearing in mind, over the coming two years, that consumption and production patterns and green economies would be part of a single sustainable development process and that unsustainable growth

was taking a toll on basic needs for water and food, while international talks had not placed sufficient emphasis on demand-side management. Among the challenges for SCP, he stressed information barriers and the need to increase the capacity for innovation and to find mechanisms making it possible to replicate and more broadly apply already existing technologies. He also spoke of the Green Economy Initiative, of its link with SCP and of the benefits that were generated when economic growth was decoupled from environmental deterioration. He referred to the green economy's objectives of increasing investment and employment and the share of GDP in the green sectors. He referred to the fifth meeting of the Council of Government Experts on Sustainable Production and Consumption for Latin America and the Caribbean, held from 16 to 18 September 2009 in Cartagena (Colombia), and to the conclusions reached at it regarding regional priorities. The life cycle and supply chain management perspective needed to be the cornerstone of the Ten-Year Framework. The financial crisis, despite the damage that it had caused, was a good opportunity to encourage change towards producing more with less. The UNEP representative presented a conceptual diagram of the Ten-Year Framework and referred to a mapping tool to guide the proposed measures to promote SCP in the context of that Framework.

26. In the debate that followed the presentation, the participants requested that the ECLAC report include issues related to bioethics, ethics, morality, education and culture, and that mention be made of the role of traditional practices and knowledge and the importance of achieving a fair and balanced agreement on access to and distribution of benefits in the framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity at the negotiations that would culminate in Nagoya (Japan) in October 2010. Consideration should also be given to the role of the State in the SCP process as the regulator, through public procurement and the provision of sustainable alternatives to consumers. The participants highlighted the importance of the media and the advertising industry; developed countries' responsibility to exercise leadership regarding sustainable consumption and production patterns, which required greater technology transfer and cooperation efforts; the dangers of luxury consumption; the importance of innovation and of mechanisms to ensure access to existing technologies; the linkage between SCP and construction, human settlements and land use planning; and the new challenges to water and food consumption posed by climate change. They requested that more emphasis be placed on the different stages of the production chains of products and services and of the role of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The representative of Costa Rica stressed the importance of multistakeholder involvement in the formulation of policies for SCP, based on her country's recent experiences. The delegate of Antigua and Barbuda acknowledged that progress had been made in the subregional approach to the assessment made by ECLAC, as had been requested in previous regional forums. She termed as positive the mention of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, although she noted that this was not a regional document but a framework that was applied to all such States and asked that the respective reference in the ECLAC document be reviewed. Some participants referred to specific advances and priorities in their respective countries. A request was made that in the future countries be given access to the reference document further in advance. Some delegates referred to the support of their respective countries for the holding of a Rio+20 Conference.

27. The representative of the UNEP Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean noted that this office acted as the secretariat of the Council of Government Experts on SCP. She stressed the work of the government delegates to harmonize the regional priorities of the Ten-Year Framework and reported that a proposal from Latin America and the Caribbean for the SCP Ten-Year Framework had been drafted, on the basis of the work of the Council of Government Experts on Sustainable Production and Consumption and of the recommendation of priorities to be included in the Ten-Year framework of programmes for sustainable consumption and production presented at the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean that were agreed at the fifth meeting of the Regional

Council of Government Experts on Sustainable Production and Consumption, in Colombia, in September 2009. The regional Action Plan for Latin America and the Caribbean was based on four subregional plans, in which, in addition, there was the participation of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) representing the Caribbean region; of CCAD, representing Mesoamerica; of the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR); and of the Andean Community. The representative of DESA of the United Nations reported on the Department's work on SCP, which was to continue once the 2010-2011 cycle of the CSD had ended. The representative of the Cleaner Production Centres/UNIDO stressed the input of these centres to the progress of SCP in the region, which were detailed in a UNIDO document that would be sent to ECLAC.

28. The ECLAC representative, after thanking the speakers for their remarks and inviting the participants to continue providing input for the document, reflected on the importance of regional cooperation for making progress with the SCP agenda.

29. The representative of Consumers International noted the diversity of the participants who represented the major groups and who, nevertheless, were in agreement on three main points: in calling upon governments and international organizations to seek pathways of collaboration to incorporate the participation of major groups in this type of debate; in considering that a change in the fast-growth doctrine was essential; and in asking that the Governments make an effort to integrate the work of the various government organizations. The speaker referred also to the global report titled International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development. Other representatives of the major groups stressed the importance of this report for progress to be made on animal welfare, innovation and SCP patterns.

30. The Chair of the Forum adjourned the session with a reflection on the need to set priorities within the SCP process, and for these priorities to be reflected in the ECLAC document.

Mining (item 4 on the agenda)

31. The second session of the Forum was inaugurated by the Deputy Minister of Environmental Environment of the Environment Ministry of Peru, who stressed the importance of mining for the economies of several countries of the region, as well as the controversy surrounding its environmental impacts. Referring to the ECLAC document, she mentioned the challenges of small-scale informal mining as well as of industrial mining. Regarding small-scale mining, she highlighted labour regimes that were similar to slavery, the precarious environmental management and the contamination from the use of mercury in gold mining, among other points. The participants should reflect on the real limitations preventing small-scale informal mining from complying with social, environmental and legal obligations, given that it was carried out under the control of large landowners who maintain their employees in near slavery. There were alternatives that allowed for the achievement of greater sustainability in mining. Large-scale mining was a more closely regulated activity because of its strong environmental impact, but there was a need for a sustainable mining policy, because of, among other factors, the lack of coordination among the various government agencies responsible for issuing permits. There were two tools that, although important, were just beginning to be used: strategic environmental assessments and ecological economic planning. In addition, there was a need to ensure that mining revenue remain in the region and to minimize environmental liabilities and impacts once mines closed. The lack of progress in these issues had generated conflicts and contributed to strengthening an anti-mining backlash. In her final remarks, the Deputy Minister insisted on the need to make progress in formulating and enforcing comprehensive, eco-efficient management policies throughout the production process, with social responsibility and community involvement.

32. In the debate following the presentation, various Forum participants agreed on the need to seek a balance between benefits from mining (which, in the region, generated relatively low royalties) and its social and environmental costs. Some delegates called for an evaluation of whether, in light of the costs, it was desirable to continue permitting mining under the conditions in which it was carried out in some countries. Attention was drawn to the conflicts in the mining sector; to the dissatisfaction of indigenous peoples with the conditions under which mining was carried out in the region; and to the disapproval of mining among broad social sectors, mainly in Central America and the Caribbean. There was a need to reach a regional position on the issue of mining, by, for example, establishing parameters to require that investing companies make a commitment to the development of the territory, rather than mere token contributions to the social conditions of the localities where they operate. Reference was also made to the growing environmental strain from mining as the ore contents of minerals decreased and to the weakness of many of the States and Governments of the region with regard to companies with considerable power and resources. The delegate of Cuba shared her country's experience in regulating mining and foreign investment, which took place through joint ventures in which the State held an interest. The delegate of Canada said that his country's development had been closely linked to the discovery of natural resources and offered data on the benefits accruing from mining, as well as information about approaches to increasing aboriginal involvement and about research into green technologies for mining. Some participants referred to the need to find alternatives to the use of mercury in gold mining and to the negotiations set to begin in June 2010 in Stockholm on advancing towards a binding international regime for mercury. Some delegates acknowledged that the support of UNEP was important for the holding of a regional meeting in March 2010 in preparation for the beginning of these negotiations.

33. The head of the Sustainable Consumption and Production Branch of DTIE of the UNEP, stressed the importance and sensitivity of the sector and referred to the work on the international panel on sustainable resource management; to the possibility of developing a global initiative for sustainable mining, such as that which existed for the construction sector; and to the development of a plan for industrial accidents in this sector. An ECLAC representative spoke of the new context of higher demand owing to the growth of emerging countries, to the fact that the production linkages of mining in the region were weak and must be strengthened, and to the contrast between mining as actually practised and the ideal of green economies. Lastly, she stated that the participants' input would be included in the final version of the ECLAC document.

34. The representatives of the major groups agreed that the academic sector could contribute to efforts to evaluate the costs and benefits of mining and stressed the importance of strengthening the State and increasing the proportion of benefits from mining that reached the host communities and countries. One representative expressed concern that commitments to social and environmental responsibility were frequently limited to policy matters, whereas at the local level, there were human rights violations and environmental damage, not only in informal mining but also in large-scale mining. It was also noted that mining posed challenges to biodiversity and to subsistence livestock and farming practices. The representative of the International Council on Mining and Metals emphasized some progress in the mining industry regarding mining-closure practices as well as the orientation towards good practices. She recognized, nevertheless, that mining continued to pose considerable environmental and social challenges, and she referred to the need for cooperation among governments, civil society and the private sector.

Transportation (item 5 on the agenda)

35. The head of Environmental Policies and Strategies of the Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources of Guatemala gave a presentation in which he emphasized the commitments assumed by the countries in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and referred to the main topics covered in

the ECLAC document, including the complexity of the transportation sector, its importance for the global economy, for regional development, and for the fight to overcome poverty. He also referred to energy consumption and its role in the emission of greenhouse gases and particulate matter as well as the effects on health. Despite the sector's environmental impact, the environment had still not been taken into account for transportation-related policies in the region. He referred to the need to establish comprehensive infrastructure, transportation and logistics policies and mentioned the weakness of Guatemala's public institutions in relation to the social needs in this area. He discussed the relationship between transport and climate change, and the importance of technological innovation and the development of more efficient fuels. Although the region had made progress in introducing technological solutions to reduce transportation-related pollution, these solutions, in and of themselves, were insufficient and should be complemented with a change in behaviour and a restructuring of current transportation models and with a comprehensive vision of how to sustainably transport persons and goods, in a dignified, efficient and environmentally responsible manner. The delegate of Guatemala also stressed the more intense use of air transport in North America and Europe in comparison with developing countries, and called for a reflection on the region's approach to transportation.

36. Some delegates expressed concern with the fact that Latin America and the Caribbean had adopted the United States and Canadian model of transportation development and urban land use, and they stressed the need to integrate transportation policies into land use planning. The debate also covered fuel quality; the technology used in automobiles in the region and the importation of used vehicles; the conversion of vehicles to gas; the importance of technical inspections; the possibility of implementing regional air quality and emissions standards; the importance of working with large auto manufacturers and dealers; and the importance of offering safe, reliable and clean public transportation so as to give consumers sustainable alternatives. The possibility of the prices of products marketed internationally reflecting their environmental footprint was also discussed. Regarding the latter point, some delegates expressed concern that standards for green labelling defined in other countries might represent a trade barrier and maintained that trade issues should be addressed in the relevant forums, in particular, at the World Trade Organization. Some delegates referred to advances in the transport sector of their respective countries. The Minister of the Environment and Natural Resources of Guatemala referred to the impact of climate change on maritime navigation in the region, given that the warming of arctic regions had made it possible to open a northern shipping lane for an increasing number of days each year. There had also been epidemiological changes (higher incidence of Venezuelan equine encephalitis and foot-and-mouth disease) as a result of greater integration of transportation infrastructure. The delegate of Brazil referred to his country's experience with biofuels and their advantages in terms of the environment and the distribution of production and economic benefits. He expressed concern over other countries' positions against biofuels and in favour of technology from developed countries, which concentrated subsidized industries based on technology with environmental problems of its own, such as the disposal of electric-car batteries. He called for a regional dialogue on the issue. The delegate of Costa Rica stressed the importance of information on regional strategies and international cooperation based on Latin American and Caribbean priorities and on South-South cooperation.

37. The ECLAC representative spoke of the importance of considering the future situation of countries that now depend on natural resource exports as one of their main sources of foreign currency, noting that they relied on expensive transportation networks that would be difficult to maintain without the foreign currency earned from these natural resources. He stressed the importance of a strategic outlook with macroeconomic and technological implications linked to the transport sector and urban governance and he referred to the need to tax fuels so as to send the right signal to the economy and encourage efficiency and the sustainable use of space. There should be a discussion on intermodality and the linkages between public and private transport in urban systems. Regarding the remarks made by some

delegates, he stressed that the countries of the region had the potential to utilize cooperation to step up integration, introduce regulations, conduct monitoring and share experiences.

38. During the session, representatives of major groups and country delegates participated and the topic of biofuels was once again addressed. Although some participants asked that consideration be given to the environmental impact of the production of biofuels, their inability to fully meet demand and the fact that biofuels led to competition for land used for food production, the delegate of Brazil once again stressed his country's positive experience with biofuels and said that a distinction must be drawn between maize-based and sugar-based biofuel production. Specific facts, rather than myths, should be considered, and some instances of South-South cooperation on this issue should be taken into account. Some participants referred to the linkage between transportation and sustainable consumption and production patterns. The ECLAC document should include a reference to the automobile industry and the market. A warning was also made of the misuse of public funds for public transport, the insufficient investment in system maintenance and security and the importance of land use planning. In reference to the debate on biofuels, the representative of ECLAC asked the participants to consult the publication prepared by ECLAC, the Food and Agriculture Organization and the Government of Brazil, as it dispelled many of the myths that had been referred to.

39. The Chair of the Forum ended the session with a reflection on advertising, values and ethics as related to consumption patterns.

Chemicals (item 6 on the agenda)

40. The Director of Projects and Enforcement, Environmental Management Division, Ministry of Land and Environment of Jamaica presented a regional assessment of sound chemicals management and referred to the cross-cutting nature of chemicals-related topics for the remaining tasks in this CSD work cycle. She referred to the international and regional commitments on sound chemicals management and to the progress in fulfilling the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants. In terms of accession to the agreements, the region had performed well, although technical and financial constraints had delayed the implementation of those agreements. Some important topics for the region were the illegal trafficking of hazardous substances, training, public awareness, improving legislative and regulatory frameworks and the development of infrastructure for toxic-waste management. She offered a brief overview of the international progress of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (Strategic Approach, or SAICM) in the region and of projects that had been conducted with financing from the Quick Start Programme. There was a need to extend this programme or to find a programme to replace it once it ended. She reported on the recent work of the Regional Coordination Committee of SAICM, of which she was the coordinator, and she referred to the agenda at international meetings on this topic scheduled for 2010. In future negotiations on mercury, the key topics for the region would be sources (mining, cement plants, chlorine, alkali), the respective alternatives to its use, as well as mercury waste and contaminated sites. The region needed to prepare for international negotiations on this issue. Lastly, the priority topics for the region were having an integral approach to chemicals management among national, subregional and regional agencies, and coordination between national focal points of the CSD and the Strategic Approach; greater involvement of subregional integration agencies in programme development and implementation; emphasis on the incorporation of sound chemicals management in national sustainable development programmes; an increase in the regional donor base to finance initiatives related to chemicals management; and greater involvement of regional agencies, especially in training. The countries would have to consider the emerging issues for SAICM identified by the Second International Conference on

Chemicals Management, and the countries that had not yet done so should develop national plans to implement their strategic approach. The regional plan would be discussed in March 2010.

41. In the ensuing debate, several representatives noted that, despite having ratified the international conventions, the countries of the region had substantial constraints in terms of staff, finances and infrastructure for the implementation of the obligations that they had undertaken. They also referred to the importance of North-South and South-South cooperation and of interagency coordination, due to the cross-cutting nature of the topic. Some delegates spoke of progress in chemicals management in their respective countries and referred to the meeting to be held in Bali in 2010 to explore the synergies among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions. One delegate emphasized the need for the countries of the region to coordinate their efforts regarding these negotiations as well as those on an international regime on mercury, for which he requested that the appropriate international agencies provide support.

42. Some delegates mentioned the importance of making progress on a Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) and of avoiding a merely partial adoption of such a system, which would cause trade distortions. Regarding financing, reference was made to the need for a mechanism to replace the Quick Start Programme when it came to an end and to the possibility of making room for the issue of chemicals within the Global Environment Facility (GEF). One delegate underscored the importance of establishing a regional organization to address the topic of chemicals, to be financed with business contributions. Some delegates mentioned the links between chemicals, traditional knowledge and the intellectual property rights of indigenous peoples. The delegate of Jamaica mentioned the importance of establishing priorities in connection with chemicals, and suggested that the implementation of the GHS and the resolution of the issue of mercury would be two priority topics. Although there were isolated initiatives, a life cycle perspective and better hazardous waste management and disposal were needed. In addition, although in Europe there were waste management mechanisms that held companies responsible near the end of a product's life cycle, these mechanisms were insufficient to ensure that companies address the environmental impact of products that were exported to the countries of the region, which was an especially important topic in the case of electric or electronic products.

43. The ECLAC representative stated that ECLAC would study the request for support to coordinate a regional position on the topics that had been discussed.

44. The representative of the Chemicals Section of the UNEP regional office noted that the UNEP would help the countries hold a regional meeting prior to the initiation of negotiations on mercury, the venue of which still needed to be determined. The UNEP representative, in his capacity as the representative of the SAICM Secretariat, of the UNEP, referred to a document on the Strategic Approach process and the structure of the Secretariat. He noted that the region was very active in the process, referred to the structure of the secretariat and reported that a second meeting of the regional coordination committee, to be held in March 2010, would include a forum for coordination on the topic of mercury.

45. The DESA representative reported that there was a Working Group on Chemicals in the Department that focused on capacity building in developing countries, and she reported that in December a workshop on chemicals would be held in Geneva, Switzerland. Work would be carried out with ECLAC to determine how to contribute to furthering the topic in the region.

46. The representative of Colectivo Ecologista de Jalisco expressed concern over the progress in the implementation plans of the Strategic Approach in the region, among other challenges faced by the chemicals sector, and over the fact that in some places doctors continued to recommend banned products to treat lice and to prevent dengue fever. The representative of Consumers International called on the

Governments to seek alternatives for collaboration with civil society organizations on the issue of chemicals, as had been done in some countries, in particular regarding monitoring.

47. The Chair of the Forum concluded the session with a comment on the use of chemicals throughout the food chain and their health impact.

Waste management (item 7 on the agenda)

48. The Chair of the Forum opened the session with a consideration on the distinction between the Spanish words “residuos” and “desechos” and asked that this difference be reflected in the ECLAC document.

49. The representative of the Department of the Environment of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment of Cuba gave a presentation on waste management in the region and stressed the shortcomings in the basic stages: collection and disposal. She underscored the challenges of a growing population as well as deficiencies in the capacity of local governments, which in many countries had been assigned total responsibility for waste collection and disposal although they had not been allocated the resources they needed to carry out these tasks. She mentioned some more specific issues that frequently arise in the region, such as the unsuitability of incinerators for hospital waste. She referred to the ECLAC document, and gave some examples of the use of methane through projects for the clean development mechanism and the issue of population groups living in trash dumps and the risks that this entailed for the persons in question, most of whom did not have any type of protective gear. She also spoke of waste left in the wake of hurricanes, particularly in Central America and the Caribbean, which entailed serious hygiene-health problems and increased the risk of forest fires because of the destruction of vegetation.

50. The Chair of the Forum opened the debate in his capacity as a representative of Guatemala. He referred to natural phenomena and made a call to not use, in the Forum discussions, the terms “natural pollution” or “natural disasters”, since these were naturally occurring phenomena. He maintained the importance of relating waste with sustainable consumption and production patterns and of considering the bioethics of the approach to waste in the analysis.

51. Some participants referred to the need to hold companies responsible for the waste that they generated and to ensure that they be involved in waste management. Others mentioned the need to involve civil society organizations. The role of informal recyclers in recycling in the region was also stressed, as were the efforts to make this a formal activity. The Minister of Environment and Natural Resources of Guatemala suggested incorporating in the ECLAC document a reference to education and bioethics with regard to waste management.

52. Some delegates drew a connection between the topic of waste and that of consumption and production patterns. They referred in particular to plastics and the electronics industry. Regarding the electronics industry, consumers replaced devices quickly, owing to producers' policies and advertising, which generated high volumes of waste. The delegate of Jamaica stated that some international agreements on the elimination of hazardous substances had not been accompanied by policies to deal with the existence of these products once they had been banned.

53. Some participants referred to progress in waste management in their respective countries, but they also expressed concern regarding the generally precarious state of waste management systems in the countries of the region and the inability of local government agencies to deal with this issue. Some delegates referred to the use of economic instruments in waste management and to the great potential to expand the use of these instruments for this purpose in the region.

54. Several delegates referred to illegal waste trade and gave specific examples of acts of this type and of the measures taken to prevent them. The delegate of Antigua and Barbuda said that there was an opportunity to create and improve regional partnerships to prevent the transport of nuclear and other types of hazardous waste through the Caribbean Sea, which was a sensitive topic for small island countries that relied heavily on tourism. The delegate of France noted the low degree of ratification of the Amendment to the Basel Convention, which banned trafficking of waste from developed countries to developing countries. The delegate of Jamaica replied that this was a sensitive aspect of the Basel Convention and that it would be discussed in May 2010. The delegate of Jamaica also said that the challenge for the Basel Convention was implementation.

55. The delegates of France and Brazil referred to a joint initiative of the two countries regarding climate change and to their support for strengthening the financial structure of UNEP and its transformation into a global environmental organization.

56. The delegate of Brazil referred to the problem of satellite congestion in space, caused mainly by developed countries, which prevented countries that were just beginning to develop this technology from putting it into practice.

57. The representative of the UNEP regional office referred to private sector participation in waste management, and to initiatives taken from the European Union to unify standards for electronic products so as to reduce the replacement of devices. Regarding illegal trafficking in waste, she mentioned the importance of controlling port entries and departures and of training customs officials.

58. The representative of the Colectivo Ecologista de Jalisco expressed concern over the inertia of authorities regarding waste management and noted that, under certain concession models, high volumes of waste served the interest of the concession holders. She referred to the importance of public policy on this issue. The representative of the World Federation of Engineering Organizations offered to make the Federation's technical staff available to address the issues of waste. The representative of the World Society for the Protection of Animals referred to methane emissions in livestock raising and expressed concern regarding intensive animal production. She referred to some experiences with model farms, and offered the Society's technical support.

59. The delegate of Mexico suggested that the report should address cross-cutting topics and provide information on regional actions, which might include actions to reduce the environmental impact of advertising and other market issues as well as a common, coherent regional response to the large industrial groups of the mining, chemicals and automobile industries.

Closing session

60. At the closing session, the Director of the Sustainable Development and Human Settlements Division of ECLAC and the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources of Guatemala, in his capacity as Chair of the Forum, took the floor. The ECLAC representative thanked Guatemala for its support and in particular for the presence of its President. After expressing satisfaction with the results of the meeting and with the broad participation that was achieved, he thanked the participants and reported that ECLAC would receive input for the new version of the ECLAC document through 11 December 2009. The Chair of the Forum adjourned the session by expressing his satisfaction with the results of the meeting and mentioned the number of hours of presentations and debate (10.3) and the number of statements (128). Lastly, he thanked ECLAC, CCAD, UNEP, the participants, the staff of the Government of Guatemala and other professionals who took part in organizing the event.

Annex 1

**LISTA DE PARTICIPANTES
LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

**A. Estados miembros de la Comisión
Member States of the Commission**

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- Lars Pira, Viceministro de Relaciones Exteriores, Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de Guatemala
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MÉXICO/MEXICO

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