



**Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly
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EURO-LATIN AMERICAN PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

PRESS RELEASE

EUROLAT: The Executive Bureau and the Working Group on Migration finalise their recommendations for the EU-LAC Summit in Madrid

In both of the successive sessions in Buenos Aires, held on 30 and 31 March, the Executive Bureau and the Working Group on Migration of the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly (EuroLat) discussed their proposals for the EU-LAC Summit to be held on 18 May in Madrid.

The Executive Bureau, chaired by Mr José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (European Parliament) and Mr Luis Fernando Duque García (Parlandino), also discussed the recent earthquake in Chile, which affected 80% of the population, causing death and destruction in an area stretching over 900 km. The Bureau's press release reiterated its solidarity with the people of Chile and the victims of the disaster.

The members of the Executive Bureau condemned the attack yesterday in Moscow, which resulted in dozens of people being killed or injured, and expressed their solidarity with the Russian people and government.

They condemned, too, the recent attack in Buenaventura, Colombia, in which 8 people died and 40 people were injured.

The members of the Working Group on Migration, created within the framework of the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly (EuroLat), discussed the recommendation on future policies in the area of EU-LA migration. The recommendation will be presented at the EU-LAC Summit to be held on 18 May 2010 in Madrid. The parliamentarians proposed the creation of a migration monitoring centre, integrated in the future EU-LAC Foundation, which would be responsible for monitoring issues relating to migratory flows between the regions and would be the primary source of information for the future development of bi-regional dialogue between Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean.

Mr Cesar Garcia Alvarez, Acting Head of the European Union Delegation to Argentina, representing the European Commissioner Cecilia Malmström, outlined the key principles on which the European Union's migratory policy is based, such as the principle of shared responsibility, controlled management of migratory flows focusing on the mutual benefits for the societies in each region, and full respect for human rights, which will be further enhanced with the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon as it incorporates the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. In this context, he emphasised the important economic, social and cultural contribution of emigrants to their host countries.

The 2008 European Pact on Immigration and Asylum, whose principles were reasserted on several occasions, highlights the need to offer additional opportunities for legal migration, taking into account the priorities, needs and reception capacities of each Member State. The five basic commitments laid down in the Pact include combating illegal immigration, making border controls more effective, creating a Europe of asylum, and establishing comprehensive collaboration between the countries of origin and countries of transit.

Mr Javier Elorza, Secretary-General for Consular and Migratory Affairs of the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, who participated in the meeting as a representative of the current Presidency of the European Union, outlined the main points of the Euro-Latin American Structured Dialogue on Migration established in June 2009 to provide a platform for regular exchange of best practice and information concerning various aspects of migration, including circular migration, human trafficking, the sexual exploitation of migrants and protection of vulnerable migrants, and a common agenda. In this respect, he highlighted the proposal to create a migration monitoring centre, which could be a reliable source of information on migratory flows.

The discussion on integration in the countries of destination and ties with the countries of origin also focused on the issue of family reunification, which is a very important issue but one on which there is no clear consensus as the situation in the different countries varies considerably. In the course of this year the European Commission will present a Green Paper on this topic, which should lead to a legislative proposal in 2012.

Finally, Mr Jorge Martínez, CELADE-Population Division, ECLAC, presented the topic of international migration and development in the agenda between Latin America and the Caribbean and the European Union, stressing the growing proportion of women involved in migration and the consequences of this phenomenon, as well as the growing violations of migrants' human rights during their crossings, their integration in the host societies and the repatriation process.

On the question of remittances and the decrease in remittances because of the global economic crisis, he stated that the situation varied a great deal from country to country but that, in general, some of those receiving the remittances depended on them and the money enabled them to escape poverty. Nevertheless, since this was a relatively small proportion, the impact of the decrease in remittances on poverty growth was not overly significant.

Proposal for a recommendation on migration in EU-LAC relations for the Madrid Summit

The final draft recommendation contains numerous concrete measures that the members of the Working Group on Migration believe should be adopted, and its basic principle is that the most efficient rules in the fight against illegal immigration are closely linked to the promotion of legal immigration, in accordance with the needs of the labour markets and integration. The parliamentarians recall the historical reciprocity that has always existed between Europe and Latin America, which in recent decades welcomed hundreds of thousands of European immigrants.

They suggest that the association agreements should automatically include provisions on migration, notably a clause on non-discrimination, and provisions on the mobility of unskilled and semi-skilled workers as well as highly-skilled workers.

As far as remittances are concerned, the parliamentarians recognise the role they play and therefore call on the Madrid Summit to come up with initiatives aimed at guaranteeing that they can be transferred efficiently, securely and cheaply.

They also stress that they fully support the creation of the migration monitoring centre, which must be given responsibility for the issues relating to migratory flows between Europe and Latin America.

As regards legal migration, they point out that the countries of the Strategic Partnership must adopt policies and instruments that promote legal migration, speed up the recognition of academic and professional qualifications and diplomas and issuing of work permits, and facilitate temporary and circular migration. They also consider that the European Union should adopt a flexible common visa policy and ensure that third-country immigrants have the right to move within the EU.

Integration, illegal migration and the fight against human trafficking

The recommendation also includes a section on the integration of migrants, who, according to the parliamentarians, must enjoy the same rights and obligations as citizens when it comes to education, vocational training and the recognition of diplomas, certificates and other professional qualifications, among other things. The countries must also ensure that illegal immigrants have access to essential services so as to guarantee respect for their fundamental rights. Moreover, the members stress that the repatriation of illegal immigrants must respect the principle of *non-refoulement* and uphold the fundamental rights and dignity of those being repatriated, paying special attention to vulnerable migrants (women, children).

Finally, they underline that the Partnership countries must protect and assist the victims of human trafficking, notably by providing them with residence permits.

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