



Fifth Plenary Meeting

Bogotá, Colombia, November 19–21, 2006

FINAL REPORT

Working Group No. 1: Trade and Integration

The Working Group on Trade and Integration met in the National Capitol Building of the Republic of Colombia on November 19 and 20, 2006, with participation from Antigua and Barbuda, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago, all FIPA member countries.

Canadian Member of Parliament James Bezan presided over the group. Mr. Paolo Giordano, an expert and representative of the Integration and Regional Programmes Department at the Inter-American Development Bank gave a presentation entitled *“The Pressure of Globalization on Trade and Integration Policies: Challenges and Opportunities for Latin America”*.

The objective of the workshop was to provide a general perspective on some of the key trends that will shape the worldwide competition facing countries of the Americas the immediate future, focusing on the following aspects:

- Repercussions of the emergence of China and India on Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Regional and worldwide integration of Latin America at the start of the 21st century.
- Winners and losers in trade and integration: the role of complementary policies.
- Aid for trade: development cooperation for the transition to freer trade.
- The role of international institutions in providing aid for trade.
- Conclusion and policy recommendations.

In the debates that ensued, the following positions were voiced by the different countries:

- The commercial challenge posed by China and India should be regarded not as a threat, but as an opportunity.
- There is concern about the external effects, such as depreciation of the dollar.
- There is great concern about the security policy in the United States with regard to construction of the wall along the border with Mexico.
- The importance and need for integration in order to emerge from underdevelopment.

- The importance of the integration agenda of the Americas was emphasized.
- The importance of regional agreements was noted, but fundamentally the integration of the American and Caribbean countries.
- Trade integration is a way to achieve equity and reduce poverty.
- Adapting the European integration model to the needs of the Americas and the Caribbean
- There is great concern about the energy and fuel crisis — prices, lack of prevention, and failure to comply with the rules of the game.
- In a world of treaties, those who stand still fall behind.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Adopted by the Plenary Assembly of FIPA on November 21, 2006

1. It is important to continue to pursue the integration agenda of the Americas, urging FIPA member countries to reach a hemispheric agreement in which all bilateral agreements converge.
2. WTO members are urged to resume multilateral trade negotiations to conclude the Doha Development Round, particularly regarding opening up agricultural markets.
3. All barriers to international trade must be eliminated, including tariffs or subsidies that distort international commerce. At the same time, the capacity of countries to support the most sensitive sectors must be preserved.
4. In the search for further integration, all barriers among FIPA member countries that violate human rights and deny people freedom of movement must be brought down.
5. Complementary domestic policies intended to take advantage of opportunities for international insertion should be encouraged, particularly policies on infrastructure, education, State modernization, rural, agricultural and fishery development, and science and technology.
6. Policies that favour energy integration should be created, taking into account the challenges related to non-renewable resources and the opportunities offered by renewable resources such as bio-energy, wind energy and other sources.
7. Mechanisms should be created to protect intellectual property, free competition and abolish counterfeiting.
8. Work is needed on sustainable development programmes, and programmes to alleviate poverty and improve living conditions should be created.
9. FIPA member countries are urged to consider that the emergence of China and India means policies to deal with global competition must be formulated without delay. FIPA members are requested to organize a dialogue with these countries on this issue.
10. A fund with enough resources to facilitate the transition to a freer system of trade and further integration should be established for the countries of the Americas and the Caribbean, particularly to facilitate connectivity in the region, infrastructure development

(air, land and maritime transport), and the promotion of small and medium-sized businesses, in line with the WTO “Aid for Trade” initiative.

11. Continuous dialogue should be sought between FIPA members and the United States, encouraging that country's active participation in FIPA.
12. It is recommended that social issues be debated to achieve the wellbeing of our peoples.
13. It is recommended that FIPA members submit these recommendations to their respective parliaments and executive branches, that they work together with their own FIPA national executive representatives to ensure specific progress towards their implementation, and that the chairpersons of each FIPA national chapter report on the progress achieved by their countries at the next FIPA Plenary Meeting.

Mr. James Bezan

Canadian Member of Parliament
Chair of Working Group No. 1

Ms. Sandra Ovalle García

Rapporteur