



INVITATION

VI Euro-Latin American Civil Society Forum

27-28 September 2012

Santiago de Chile

The MESA de Articulación de Asociaciones Nacionales y Redes Regionales de ONG de América Latina y el Caribe, together with the European Confederation of NGOs for Emergency and Development (CONCORD) with the support of the Chilean Association of NGOs (ACCION) and the European Commission, are pleased to convene the VI Euro-Latin American Civil Society Forum to be held in Santiago, Chile on 27 and 28 September 2012.

Background

In a context of political and economic crisis, civil society organisations have mobilised on a global level to generate proposals and solutions to the current model. For that reason, the VI Euro-Latin American Civil Society Forum **is a unique opportunity to define joint strategies between Latin American, the Caribbean and European civil society organisations with a view to influence public debate on the urgency of a more just relationship and greater solidarity between the two regions.**

We will work on issues of common concern to European and Latin American civil society organisations, within the thematic framework of the VII CELAC-EU Summit to be held in January 2013, where the central theme will be: "Alliance for Sustainable Development: Promoting Investments of Social and Environmental Quality". This space is an important intergovernmental political reference for our societies and, previously different sectors of civil society have met on several occasions to: assess the progress of relations between Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean; discuss proposals and coordinate actions; and to build dialogue with authorities from both regions.

What we are looking for?

The starting point for the VI Civil Society Forum will be a reflection on the current situation in both regions and the prospects of CELAC-EU relations from the perspective of civil society. The current systemic crisis together with the construction of sustainable development models aimed at reducing inequalities and the full exercise of citizenship imply that the set of policies pursued by EU-LAC governments must be complementary and mutually reinforcing.

The objective of the VI Forum in Santiago is as a space to exchange views between the various social sectors in the two regions:

- We will make progress in the agreement of approaches, perspectives and proposals from Latin American and European civil society, for the construction of a common agenda for integration and development given the current context of global crisis and probable paradigm shift.
- We will promote proposals that contribute to EU-LAC political dialogue from a perspective of policy coherence for development, and we will promote the mainstreaming of issues such as inclusion, equity, sustainability, fair trade, democratisation and the full exercise of human rights.

Topics of discussion:

Solutions to the current crisis; a new global financial architecture that protects human rights; coherence in bi-regional relations with the objectives of sustainable development and strengthening of

human rights and democracy; policy of differentiation and incorporation of environmental and social impact evaluation standards of investments as well as strengthening the role of states in regulation; strengthen bi-regional political dialogue; more and better official development cooperation, ensuring its stability and predictability.

The Forum will take place over **two days** and will be organised on the basis of introductory panels and **working groups** on specific topics, driven by organisations from both regions. The objective of the group work is to produce a document of **strategies and proposals** which will serve as an annex to the final **Forum Declaration**, and which will allow us to influence various spaces within the official EU-LAC dialogue. The draft of the Declaration of the Forum will also be discussed in the working groups.

In addition, on the eve of the Forum we will organise parallel events on the themes of: **MDGs; investments; future of European policies; coherence; and extractive industries. Some networks will hold their assemblies, release reports and have thematic meetings in the days prior or subsequent to the Forum's meetings.**

Participation and registration

Some 120 participants are expected to participate from Latin America, the Caribbean and Europe. Due to logistical constraints, priority will be given to participants who belong to networks and organisations that work on issues that the VI Forum will address, and according to when applications for registration are received. Registration is compulsory.

Those interested in participating should register, depending on their place of residence:

- **Europe: through the Web site:** <http://www.amiando.com/ForoLAC-EU2012.html> (using the password FOROLAC)
 - Latin America and the Caribbean: by sending an email to info@mesadearticulacion.org, with copy to gbernandez@alop.org.mx
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The deadline for registration is Friday, **31 August 2012**.

Venue:

The VI Forum will take place in Santiago de Chile, with the inaugural session in Santiago at the Senate of the Republic. The Forum has the organisational support of the Chilean Association of NGOs (ACCION) and the European Commission, and will integrate the agenda of the Santiago Presidential Summit's preparatory events.