

EURO-LATIN AMERICAN PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY



Message to the Third European Union (EU) – Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) Summit

Brussels

17 and 18 July 2023

Monday, 3 July 2023 – Brussels

Message to the Third EU-CELAC Summit in Brussels on 17 and 18 July 2023

The Executive Bureau of the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly (EuroLat), the parliamentary institution of the Bi-Regional Strategic Partnership between the European Union (EU) and Latin America and Caribbean (LAC), in accordance with Article 17 of its Rules of Procedure, hereby submits to the Third EU-CELAC Summit the following recommendations and proposals for strengthening the Bi-Regional Strategic Partnership:

MESSAGE TO THE BRUSSELS SUMMIT

As regards the Bi-Regional Strategic Partnership and Latin American integration

1. Ratify the EuroLat Assembly's commitment to further promote and **strengthen the Bi-Regional Strategic Partnership** based on common principles, values and interests.
2. Reiterate the importance and value of **regular EU-CELAC summits** of heads of state and government in order to strengthen the Bi-Regional Strategic Partnership as regards shared topics and priorities to improve citizens' lives;
underline the key role played by the EuroLat Assembly as the parliamentary arm of the Bi-Regional Strategic Partnership since its creation and reiterate that, since 2015 – when the EU-CELAC summits of heads of state and government were suspended – EuroLat has continued to meet in order to maintain dialogue between the parties at bi-regional level and has adopted positions.
3. Reaffirm **support for the various regional integration processes** in Latin America and Europe as a basic principle of the Bi-Regional Strategic Partnership, and in this context:
 - a. Complete the ratification of the **EU-Central America Association Agreement** as soon as possible;
 - b. Conclude swiftly the work to modernise and update the **Association Agreements with Mexico and Chile** to ensure that both instruments are up-to-date, complete and capable of addressing the new shared challenges, with a view to ensuring the creation of opportunities for citizens and businesses as well as renewed cooperation between the two regions;
 - c. Begin as soon as possible the ratification of the **EU-Mercosur Association Agreement**, recalling that this agreement will cover 780 million people, consolidate a strategic political and economic partnership between the two regions, and create opportunities for sustainable growth while safeguarding consumers' interests.
4. Express, in the framework of the EU-Central America Association Agreement, the merit of establishing an **EU-Central America Joint Parliamentary Committee** as soon as possible.
5. Reaffirm that **trade relations** between the EU and LAC have made a vital contribution to the success of the bi-regional dimension and that there should thus be a commitment

to maintaining a trade relationship that focuses on improving the well-being and quality of life of all citizens.

6. Invest in policies that help to strengthen the Bi-Regional Strategic Partnership, based on **fair and inclusive sustainable development, including economic and social growth, and green and digital transitions** of our societies.
7. Promote the strengthening of bi-regional cultural ties so that cultural exchanges, existing programmes and **cultural dialogue** are strengthened and include closer exchanges between the two regions as a tool to reinforce the links in the bi-regional partnership.

As regards the rules-based international order

8. Emphasise the importance of **revitalising rules-based multilateralism** that promotes universal values and principles as a means of ensuring peace, respect for human rights and international security, and respect for nations' sovereignty and territorial integrity, and preventing the threat or use of force against any state or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations, as well as full respect for international law.
9. **Reiterate our unwavering commitment to using multilateralism, peace, dialogue and cooperation** to address the major global challenges; reject strongly any action that violates the national sovereignty of states, their territorial integrity and Chapter 2 of the United Nations Charter, in particular any action that involves the use of violence or force, especially against civilians.
10. Call for strict compliance with international law and respect for the resolutions of the UN General Assembly; call on the international community to **strengthen cooperation, dialogue, and the pursuit of shared peace and security**.
11. **Reiterate its absolute condemnation of the illegal, unprovoked and unjustified attack by the Russian Federation** and its proxies, its **solidarity with the Ukrainian people**, and, more than a year into the war, its support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders.
12. Call on the EU-CELAC countries to work together in international fora to adopt rules and measures **that contribute to peace, security, stability, respect for human rights and sustainable development**.
13. Urge both regions to unite in **defending and strengthening the multilateral institutions** so that they continue to be a robust forum for discussion and defence of democratic values and human rights; step up bi-regional dialogue and cooperation to strengthen the multilateral fora, notably the United Nations.
14. Call for a strong commitment to protect **representative democracy, respect for the rule of law, division and independence of powers**, as well as the defence and protection of human rights, and ensure that the respective civil societies play an active role.

15. Emphasise the **fundamental role of a free press** – a keystone of democracy – and protection for journalists so that they can work freely and independently, and condemn threats and violence against journalists and communicators.
16. Recall the need to develop a broader political, trade and cooperation partnership founded on dialogue and mutual respect, in order to achieve common goals such as the protection of human rights, fundamental freedoms and the fight against climate change, as well as trade relations that are based on these principles and seek to achieve a more sustainable global economy.
17. Ensure that the EU and CELAC governments support a **structural reform of the WTO** with a view to making it more effective, transparent and capable of shaping an open, fair, equitable, inclusive and non-discriminatory world trade system that is based on rules that are shared and applied, that takes better account of the different levels of development, and that addresses the diverse situations of economic operators, taking into account the specific characteristics of SMEs and micro-enterprises in particular.
18. Call on the countries of the EU-CELAC area to promote the organisation of a meeting in the framework of the UN General Assembly with the aim of finding a solution to the numerous environmental crises facing the planet.
19. Highlight the alarming deterioration in the situation of LGBTIQ people, who face an upsurge in hate crimes and hate speech, as well as legal backsliding that is undermining the rights and freedoms they have only just won; call on the CELAC and EU governments to take all necessary measures to ensure the safety of LGBTIQ people and guarantee their most fundamental rights and freedoms; encourage the EU and CELAC governments to promote an international coalition that supports the universal decriminalisation of homosexuality within the international community through international instruments such as UN resolutions.
20. Demand equality before the law and non-discrimination on grounds of birth, race, sex, sexual orientation, language, religion, opinion or any other status, and protect vulnerable groups from violations of their human rights.

As regards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

21. Reiterate that achieving the SDGs requires close cooperation at multilateral level and that the Bi-Regional Strategic Partnership enables the parties to develop mechanisms for structured, balanced and democratic participation, allowing them to work together to achieve the SDGs.
22. Emphasise the need to implement **gender mainstreaming** in all bi-regional policies, increasing women's participation in all political, social and economic areas of society with equal rights, conditions and opportunities; commit to combating gender-based violence and femicide.
23. Step up dialogue on **employment and sustainable growth**, focusing in particular on youth employment, equal pay, social welfare systems and decent work.

24. Recommend that governments take the necessary steps to gradually increase public investment in education, establish **quality, inclusive and accessible education systems and promote continuous learning in the workplace**, which should significantly reduce the rate of early drop-outs from schools and vocational training; improve education in this regard by facilitating access to, and making greater use of, new technologies so that they can be used to help promote and guarantee the right to education.
25. Increase investment in **bi-regional programmes that promote exchanges and mobility of students, teachers, educational workers, education providers and youth workers** between Latin America and the Caribbean and the European Union, bearing in mind that quality investment in education yields a high return; set up a bi-regional university accreditation system to facilitate the implementation of efficient and affordable processes for the recognition and accreditation of university qualifications with regional, bilateral and multilateral validity.
26. Call on the governments of the EU-CELAC countries to act swiftly and take **specific and appropriate measures in the short, medium and long term to counter climate change, pollution, environmental degradation and biodiversity loss**.
27. Ask the governments of the EU-CELAC countries to promote the establishment of a **dedicated funding mechanism under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)** to address the immediate and insurmountable losses and damages caused by the increase in the global average temperature.
28. Call on the governments of the EU-CELAC countries to assume a leadership role in setting up a mechanism that provides incentives for countries to scale up their Nationally Determined Contributions and to comply efficiently with their greenhouse gas emission reduction targets.
29. Support and ensure public and private investment in **research supporting the innovation, development and deployment of new green technologies**, which can help to mitigate climate change, foster sustainable economic growth and improve countries' competitiveness.
30. Increase exchanges of best practices and cooperation on the **protection of citizens' health** in order to establish pandemic prevention strategies and rapid reaction mechanisms that protect and guarantee public health, adhering strictly to the applicable legal frameworks and paying particular attention to respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms, democratic principles and parliamentary oversight and control mechanisms for the rule of law.
31. Call for the COVID-19 vaccine and vaccines against potential future pandemics to be accessible, universal and free of charge for all, and for them to be distributed and deployed by the states and competent international organisations.
32. Call on the EU-CELAC countries to invest in **digital policies and actions to develop human-centric information and communication technologies** that contribute to the development of robust, modern and accessible infrastructures for all, and effectively combat the digital divide and the socio-economic exclusion of vulnerable social groups.

33. Highlight the relevance and achievements of the **EU-CELAC Common Research Area** since its creation in 2015, and call for additional funding for this initiative, bearing in mind that joint research can boost growth and job creation and that this initiative represents a framework for enhanced political cooperation at EU-CELAC level.
34. Increase regional cooperation to step up the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing by using sustainable fisheries partnership agreements (SFPAs) as key tools for local development; seek a formal commitment to ensure that imports of fishery products comply with the necessary traceability rules, including on the origin of products, with accurate information on tariff quotas to facilitate the fight against IUU fishing.

As regards the recovery from the crises of recent years

35. Stress that the recent **inflation, food, health, migration and energy crises** have exacerbated the problems of poverty and extreme poverty, hampered long-term sustainable economic and social development, and created greater inequalities; point out that these crises have had an **impact on the quality of democracy** in some countries and served as a pretext for reducing public freedoms.
36. Step up governments' efforts to **recover from these crises** in a way that helps to establish the conditions for a fair and inclusive, green and digital social transition that makes societies more sustainable and equitable.
37. Support the UN initiatives on **debt restructuring** in order to mitigate the social difficulties caused by debt repayment, which, as a result of the recent crises, is becoming a serious problem for some countries, with devastating effects on their populations; note that these initiatives could include debt cancellation, exchange and restructuring strategies that are tied to these resources being invested in policies on education, health, industrial recovery, social cohesion, environmental conservation and the strengthening of the business sector, among others.
38. Emphasise that **energy security and supply must be one of the partnership's fundamental priorities**, which calls for greater energy efficiency and diversification of energy suppliers and sources.
39. Call on the EU-CELAC countries to address the repercussions of the serious **energy crisis from all perspectives**:
 - a. **as regards the economy**, by drawing up plans and strategies to support vulnerable sectors and provide financial assistance to SMEs;
 - b. **as regards the labour market**, by providing support to workers who are temporarily in 'technical unemployment';
 - c. **as regards investment**, by backing more efficient and diversified energy sources.
40. Call on the EU and CELAC governments to establish frameworks with adequate legal security and sufficient funding in order to develop **circular models** adapted to the public and private sectors, given that a circular economy can become a key industrial policy strategy for economic recovery, with the triple benefit of generating quality jobs and

new businesses, improving environmental protection, and mitigating the effects of climate change.

41. Urge governments to safeguard the right of developing countries to food sovereignty as a means of achieving nutritional security, a reduction in poverty, inclusive, sustainable and fair global supply chains that protect small producers in particular, and more sustainable food systems.
42. Reiterate the need to set up **reserves and banks of healthy foods and seeds** to fight hunger and malnutrition and prevent food waste, and adopt an approach to global food security that is based on promotion of family, peasant and community-based farming, empowerment of communities, technical development of agricultural processes, and economic, social and environmental sustainability.
43. Call on the governments of the EU-CELAC countries to react strongly to the **inflation** of recent years, exacerbated by the war, in order to ensure the stability of the markets; call for actions aimed at transforming our food systems by supporting agricultural diversity, quality production and processing; take measures to address structural poverty and persistent inequalities as underlying causes of food insecurity.
44. Encourage the **establishment of rapid reaction mechanisms** that respect fundamental rights and the rule of law to cope with future crises of a different nature, including natural disasters and pandemics, based on the principles of solidarity, cooperation and mutual assistance.
45. Call on governments and the international community to establish appropriate coordinated, multifaceted and regional response mechanisms for **migration crises**, which can respond effectively while ensuring respect for fundamental rights and migrants' access to social security systems and jobs, developing voluntary, timely and effective return plans, if the situation in the countries of origin lends itself to this, and increasing financial and material assistance to countries of origin, transit and destination.
46. Emphasise the need to establish, at G20 level, an **international tax system** to put an end to tax evasion and avoidance, corruption and tax fraud, and work towards fair and efficient tax harmonisation at international level.
47. Call on the governments of the EU-CELAC countries to support the **creation of an inter-parliamentary network for multilevel implementation of the SDGs**, which could draw up proposals for legislative harmonisation and parliamentary initiatives for interinstitutional policies, plans, programmes and projects based on more effective and coherent cooperation.

As regards the fight against drug trafficking and organised crime

48. Recognise that the **scourge of drug trafficking and organised crime threatens security and sustainable development, the life and health of vulnerable populations, the environment and biodiversity, the economy and finances, as well as institutional structures, governance and the rule of law** in both regions; underline that it is therefore essential to **step up bi-regional cooperation in order to implement specific**

actions, investing in the development of new capabilities, not only in the military and police, but also in research, intelligence, courts and prisons, and other sectors such as the international private sector, academia, international bodies and organised civil society, in line with the principle of common and shared responsibility.

49. Make progress at bi-regional level on the establishment of mutual assistance agreements in criminal matters; welcome the inclusion of chapters on cooperation in this area in the EU's association agreements with LAC countries and regions.
50. Stress the importance of international cooperation in adequately tackling the scourge of corruption that does not respect borders and, therefore, strengthening judicial cooperation mechanisms, particularly in the area of extradition and asset recovery.
51. Call on governments to **draw up strict common rules on information relating to the source of assets** and to adopt laws criminalising all types of money laundering.
52. Underline the need to promote a political and parliamentary debate on cases of co-optation by organised crime in the various sectors of society in both regions.
53. Call for the **establishment of the Latin American and Caribbean Criminal Court against Transnational Organized Crime** as an advanced institutional response to consolidate the fight against organised crime in the region.

Other matters of bi-regional interest

54. Urge the governments of the EU and CELAC countries to strengthen the legal and institutional capacity of parliaments and the judiciary to effectively **fight impunity**, with a view to consolidating quality democracies, the protection of human rights, the fight against violence and impunity, and the eradication of corruption.
55. Encourage dialogue and the establishment of a bi-regional centre for parliamentary studies for security, defence and peace to generate expertise for parliamentary technical assistance, training and capacity-building to help develop technical and legal capacities to effectively combat all organised crime structures, and to build resilience to asymmetric and hybrid threats and new phenomena, such as disinformation and foreign interference, that seek to attack democratic legitimacy and destabilise countries.
56. Stress that dialogue must take place at government level to achieve a peaceful, just and lasting solution to the sovereignty dispute relating to the question of the Falkland Islands, within the framework of the relevant UN resolutions (including Resolution 2065 (XX)) and under the purview of the UN Special Committee on Decolonization, in line with the declarations of the EuroLat Assembly in 2013, 2018 and 2022.