

EUROLAT ASSEMBLY

FOR A GENUINE STRATEGIC ASSOCIATION WITH LATIN AMERICA



PSE

Socialist Group in the
European Parliament

EUROLAT, AN ASSEMBLY FOR THE FUTURE

The Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly was created at the Vienna Summit (May 2006), but has its origins in the important work carried out since 1974 at the 17 biennial interparliamentary conferences. Even so, it is still in its infancy and needs continued support in order to develop fully the role for which it was created.

This pamphlet aims to contribute to that goal, providing an instructive presentation of EuroLat's background, what it wants to achieve, what are its goals, how it is made up and what have been its early activities, reports and papers.

The task of negotiating agreements and treaties between the EU and the regions and sub-regions of Latin America and the Caribbean belongs, as is only to be expected, to the EU Executive Committee, and major decisions on strategy are taken at the Summits of Heads of State and Governments of the sixty countries of Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, but it is the EuroLat Assembly which has the immense task of energising this relationship, influencing government

departments, making heard the voice of the citizens whom we represent, the opinion of civil society and laying the foundations of an ever richer and more serious relationship between both regions which are called on to play an increasingly important role in a globalised world.

A similarity in values, perceptions, history, culture, languages and conception of society, democracy and liberty, and in the international relations of both continents, despite differences in development, leads us to be optimistic about the possibilities for the future of a bi-regional Strategic Partnership, which will bring together more than one billion people for their mutual benefit and that of the world.

Luis Yáñez-Barnuevo García

Socialist Coordinator in EuroLat



TOGETHER FACED WITH THE CHALLENGES OF GLOBALISATION

One of the biggest opportunities created by the setting up of the EuroLat Assembly is having a forum where both sides of the Atlantic can work together on common challenges (such as climate change, multilateral solutions to international conflicts, economic cooperation and management of financial markets.)

We are stronger when we come together. Close association with the countries of Latin America, with which we have strong cultural and historic links, is our main starting point at a very important moment where, in Latin America, the process of democratisation has been consolidated by social democratic and socially progressive governments. We European socialists are their natural allies in strengthening the partnership between the EU and Latin America.

A common policy agenda is worth working for and in this sense the EuroLat Assembly can be one of the essential instruments by which, together, we can face up to the challenges of globalisation.

Martin Schulz

President, Socialist Group, European Parliament



WHAT IS EUROLAT?

The Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly (EuroLat) is the parliamentary institution of the bi-regional Strategic Partnership between the European Union (EU) and Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). The Assembly is a parliamentary forum for debating, supervising and monitoring all questions relating to the bi-regional EU–LAC Strategic Partnership.

The Assembly aims to contribute to the strengthening, development and visibility of the Strategic Partnership, to promote transparency and parliamentary scrutiny in the process and bring it closer to the interests and expectations of their citizens.

“The launch of the Assembly (which will gradually incorporate all the member parliaments, the Congresses of Latin America and the Caribbean, and the European Parliament) demonstrates the benefits which, in terms of mutual dialogue, knowledge and understanding and as regards the adoption of joint decisions and positions, may be bestowed on the citizens represented. It also provides added value for the Strategic Partnership, the full legitimacy and influence of which are to be found in the work of ministers and of the Summit itself, in the work of the Assembly as the parliamentary branch of the Partnership and in the work of a civil society which must play an ever-greater role in achieving the Strategic Partnership objectives”.

Extract from 'Message of the EuroLat Assembly addressed to the EU-Latin America and Caribbean Summit, Lima, 16-17 May 2008'

HOW DOES EUROLAT WORK?

The Assembly adopts *resolutions* and *recommendations* addressed to the EU-LAC Summit, and the institutions, bodies, groups and ministerial conferences devoted to developing the partnership. The Assembly is also responsible for drawing up *reports* and *proposals* for the adoption of specific measures related to the various spheres of activity of the Partnership, at the request of the Summit or the ministerial conferences.

COMPOSITION OF EUROLAT

EuroLat is a Joint Assembly and comprises 150 members divided up as follows:
75 members of the EP and 75 members of the Latin-American component.

STRUCTURE

EuroLat consists of a plenary, an executive bureau presided over by a European co-president and a Latin-American co-president. The Assembly has 14 co-vice-presidents chosen on the basis of parity between the two continents.

The Assembly meets in plenary session twice a year and the associated work (resolutions, recommendations and reports) are prepared by three permanent committees: political; economic and social.

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT delegation follows the schema of the political groups in the EP. The Socialist Group has 21 representatives who maintain a close and permanent collaboration with Latin American parties from the same political family and with all those who promote the aims of the socialists.



COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES

Committee on Political Affairs, Security and Human Rights

This committee is responsible for political dialogue and foreign and security policy, peace-building policies, conflict prevention and resolution, combating drug trafficking and organised crime, relations with Euro-Latin American integration bodies (including the EU-LAC Summit, ministerial conferences, the Río Group, the San José Process,

the Council of Ministers and the European Commission), United Nations agencies and bodies, the SEGIB, and other international organisations; democratic principles, good governance and the role of political parties; respect, promotion and defence of human rights.

“The Euro-Latin American Charter for Peace and Security should enable the joint preparation of proposals of a political, strategic and security-oriented nature, on a wide range of issues and challenges of mutual interest. These will be examined below: the shared objective is to reinforce political and social stability and governance in both Europe and Latin America, and, therefore, peace and security at world level”.

Extract from working document: “A Euro-Latin American Charter for Peace and Security.”

Véronique De Keyser (Belgian member, PSE). Lima, Plenary May 2008.

Committee on Economic, Financial and Commercial Affairs

This committee is responsible for promoting and monitoring economic, financial and commercial relations between the partners, with third countries, with international organisations (especially the World Trade Organisation), regional integration and trade, as well as technical harmonisation or standardisation measures.

“A successful conclusion of the Doha Round will be the robust stabilizing factor needed by a world increasingly worried about financial and economic crises. A successful conclusion, providing for genuine further market opening and stronger multilateral rules, could be an important parameter in stimulating worldwide economic growth, development and employment and effectively contribute to the Millennium Development Goals and to the integration of developing countries into the world economy”.

Extract from working document on “The Doha negotiations.”

Erika Mann (German member, PSE)

Brussels, Plenary, December 2007





Committee on Social Affairs, Human Exchanges, Environment, Education and Culture

This committee is responsible for social and human development, social infrastructures and services (including health issues); migration and human exchanges; development cooperation between Euro-Lat countries; cooperation in the fields of culture and education; young people

and gender equality; indigenous people and minorities; sustainable development, natural resources, global warming and energy policy; research and technological development.

“The European Union should help and encourage the development of environmental policies in Latin American countries; cooperation and the level of best practice should be strengthened and this should also be reflected in EU funding and in aid policy; furthermore European policies should not lead to the lowering of the environmental performance, including the loss of biodiversity in non-EU countries”.

Contribution of Hungarian PSE member, Gyula Hegyi on the resolution on “Sustainable and environmentally balanced development”.

Brussels, Plenary, December 2007



SOCIALIST OBJECTIVES FOR EUROLAT

The policy priorities of the parliamentary work of the European socialists and their Latin-American partners in the EuroLat Assembly are:

- to increase social cohesion and reduce poverty, inequality and marginalisation, and to build democratic, fair and inclusive societies;
- to establish a systematic bi-regional dialogue on migration;
- to draw up joint initiatives in areas such as climate change, desertification, energy (especially renewable energy and bio fuels), water, biodiversity, forest and chemical management;
- to strengthen and support multilateralism in world politics;
- to support, promote and consolidate in practical terms the EU-ALC bi-regional Strategic Partnership.



ANNEX: SHORT CHRONOLOGY SINCE THE CREATION OF EUROLAT

Since 1974, 17 EU-Latin American Parliamentary Summits have taken place between the European Parliament (EP) and the PARLATINO (the Latin American Parliament), the PARLANDINO (the Andean Parliament), the PARLACEN (the Central American Parliament) and the MERCOSUR Parliamentary Committee (Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay and Paraguay). In recent decades, political relations between the two continents have become stronger.

- 1999** Summit of Río de Janeiro.
- 2002** Summit of Madrid.
- 2004** Summit of Guadalajara.
- 2006** In April, Interparliamentary Declaration of Bregenz (Austria).
In the first meeting the two regions committed themselves to a stronger and more effective multilateral system on the basis of shared fundamental principles and values.
- 2006** 12 May, IV EU-ALC Summit in Vienna (Austria).
Heads of State and Governments took note of the proposal of the XVII EU-LAC Interparliamentary Conference (Lima, Peru, 14-17 June 2005) to establish a Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly (EuroLat).

- 2006** 5 August: Meeting in Cartagena de Indias (Colombia).
Heads of State and Governments reiterated the commitment to further promote and strengthen the bi-regional Strategic Partnership.
- 2006** 8 November, the Constituent Act of EuroLat was finally signed in Brussels (Belgium).
- 2007** 18 to 20 December, First Ordinary Plenary Session of EuroLat in the European Parliament in Brussels (Belgium).
- 2008** 29 April to 1 May, Second Ordinary Plenary Session of EuroLat in Lima (Peru).

USEFUL LINKS

EUROLAT

www.europarl.europa.eu/intcoop/eurolat/default_en.htm

EU INSTITUTIONS

www.europarl.europa.eu/intcoop/eurolat

http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/la/index.htm

http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/mercosur/intro/index.htm

LATIN AMERICA INSTITUTIONS

<http://www.parlatino.org>

<http://www.parlamentoandino.org>

<http://www.parlacen.org.gt>

<http://www.mercosur.int/msweb>

www.socialistgroup.eu