



COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Brussels, 31.10.2000
COM(2000) 670 final

**COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL AND THE
EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT**

FOLLOW-UP TO THE FIRST SUMMIT

BETWEEN

LATIN AMERICA, THE CARIBBEAN AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL AND THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

FOLLOW-UP TO THE FIRST SUMMIT

BETWEEN

LATIN AMERICA, THE CARIBBEAN AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

Preamble

The purpose of this Communication is to set out the general principles and actions that the Commission intends to take to contribute to meeting the priorities resulting from the June 1999 EU, Latin America and Caribbean Rio Summit. It aims to give impetus to the follow-up. The Communication takes into account the EU's general policy objectives in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as the Commission's own constraints. It should be stressed that the Commission does not propose in this Communication a new strategy for relations between the EU and Latin America/the Caribbean.

1. Introduction

The first summit of Heads of State and Government of the countries of Latin America, the Caribbean and the EU, with the participation of the President of the European Commission, was held in Rio on 28 and 29 June 1999.

The Summit highlighted some common principles and objectives, including the universality of human rights, the need to reverse environmental degradation and foster sustainable development. It reflected the desire to strengthen and diversify relations that are constantly progressing. Its main objective was to establish a strategic bi-regional partnership based upon three dimensions:

- greater political dialogue;
- sound economic and financial relations based on a comprehensive and balanced liberalisation of trade and capital flows; and
- dynamic co-operation in key sectors, especially in the educational, social and cultural fields and in scientific and technological development.

The Summit concluded with a Joint declaration and an Action Plan setting out a wide number of priorities covering numerous fields in each of the three dimensions (political dialogue, economic and financial relations and co-operation). Out of them, 11 key priorities were subsequently selected in Tuusula by a bi-regional group of high officials, with a view to give more focus to the overall process.

The conclusions of the Rio Summit apply equally to all the parties concerned: the partner countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, the Member States of the EU, and the Council, the European Parliament and the Commission in their respective areas of competence.

A second Summit was approved in principle at Rio and is to be held in Spain in 2002. Progress will need to have been made by then in implementing the Rio undertakings - a complex exercise given the sheer breadth of the fields concerned. All the partners must therefore decide:

- (1) who will take initiatives in implementing each of the priorities identified and who will participate in the proposed initiatives;
- (2) what are the actual activities proposed and under which modalities;
- (3) how the parties will effectively manage and co-ordinate their initiatives

The main focus of the present Communication, looking ahead to the second Summit, is to deal with the implementation of the Rio conclusions related to the co-operation priorities (covering the political, economic and social dimensions of the partnership); the political and economic dialogues will essentially continue within the existing bilateral and subregional framework.

2. The Rio Summit and the EU's strategy for Latin America and the Caribbean

The basic strategies in place will continue to apply.

In regard to Latin America, the guidelines laid down in the March 1999 Communication "On a new EU-Latin America partnership on the eve of the 21st century"¹ were to a large extent confirmed by the Rio Joint Declaration. Efforts to develop a dynamic relationship between the two parties can therefore continue along existing lines, taking due account of the disparate nature of the sub-continent and the need to gear dialogue and co-operation to differing situations while recognising the need to incorporate the regional dimension more fully into areas of common interest where an overall approach is warranted or would be more appropriate.

Relations with the Caribbean countries will henceforth be based primarily on the new partnership and co-operation agreement with the ACP countries, concluded on 3 February 2000 and signed in Cotonou on 23 June 2000. However, the new regional concept introduced in Rio will undoubtedly be useful in encouraging the regional integration of the Caribbean, including the countries of Caricom, Central America and the north of the sub-continent.

With respect to trade, above and beyond the bilateral and sub-regional agreements concluded or in negotiation, the strategy will be to strengthen our future dialogue with the countries in the region on the WTO and in particular on the question of a future WTO round. The Commission considers it is time to take this forward in more concrete terms through a more structured, concrete and regular dialogue at the appropriate level which would:

- a) seek to reach mutual understanding and agreement on the specifics of the negotiating objectives and agenda for a new round
- b) act as a forum for co-operation, co-ordination and exchange of views during the future negotiations ; and

¹ COM (1999) 105 final.

c) prepare and supplement ministerial level discussions on WTO which would continue to give overall direction to the dialogue.

3. Progress since Rio

The Summit adopted a two-pronged approach for promotion and implementation of the Action Plan. It reflected concern to avoid the creation of new structures, given that the existing institutional framework already comprises numerous forums.

Firstly, a bi-regional group (mentioned above) at senior official level was set up and will meet regularly (there is no stipulation as to how often) to monitor and work on implementing the priorities for action on the basis of existing mechanisms.

Secondly, there are Ministerial discussions between the EU and the countries and sub-regional groups of Latin America, and between the EU and the Caribbean countries. These discussions are to maintain their present format and frequency under the agreements in force. *Ad hoc* Ministerial meetings can also take place on certain topics of common interest: (education, research and science were specifically mentioned in the joint declaration).

What progress has been made since Rio on the basis of this approach?

Out of the Action Plan, the bi-regional group has drawn up a list of 11 key priorities². They encompass fields likely to give added value, rapid results and visibility to activities in progress or in preparation. However, few initiatives have yet been launched to give effect to these priorities. Nor has there has been significant progress with the establishment of co-ordination mechanisms.

The most recent institutionalised Ministerial meetings since Rio were held in Vilamoura in February 2000. Each of the bilateral and sub-regional meetings stressed the importance of the Rio Summit as signalling a new stage in relations between the regions. All the joint declarations and joint official statements reflected the commitment to implement the Rio Action Plan and support the bi-regional group's work. As expected, the Vilamoura Ministerial meetings confirmed the political impetus provided in Rio, while leaving it to the bi-regional group at this stage to translate the guidelines into specific initiatives.

In the context of these meetings the Commission stressed the need to achieve progress before the 2002 Summit. It called for a pragmatic approach and for focus on a small number of sectors likely to yield tangible results. Emphasis was placed on two *political* objectives: the promotion of human rights, and co-operation within international bodies (in particular the United Nations) through mechanisms for rapid consultation on the most important issues.

To give some concrete example of the implementation of the Rio Summit at this stage:

² The 11 priorities are set out in Annex 1. The list was drawn up in Tuusula at the first meeting of the bi-regional group in November 1999. The second meeting was held in Vilamoura alongside the EU-LA ministerial meetings in February.

- all the components of the EU-Latin America/Caribbean co-operation mechanism for combating drugs have been put in place since that time, in terms of both content and follow-up mechanisms. This has already led to Commission financing of a number of projects.
- in scientific and technological research, a bi-regional working party (WP) was set up at a meeting of senior officials in June 2000. The WP's remit is essentially to propose concrete priorities and implementing measures for discussion by ministers when they meet in 2001. A progress report will be submitted to heads of state and government at the summit scheduled for 2002. The execution/implementation details will reflect the various types of co-operation machinery (scientific and technological co-operation, economic co-operation and development co-operation) available to the Member States, the Commission and the LA/C countries and must also, naturally, take account of the scientific excellence of the proposed projects³.

The above account of the progress made since Rio shows the amount of work that remains to be done to give tangible expression, at the level of all the partners, to the new momentum that should result from the summits.

4. Follow-up to Rio: basis for Commission action

First it should be stressed that **the Commission is already active to a large extent in the 11 sectors assigned priority in Tuusula⁴**, as well as in most of the areas covered by the Rio Joint Declaration and Action Plan. The Summit's conclusions confirmed the broad aims pursued by the Commission in its policy for the region.

In the follow-up to Rio, **the Commission intends to act primarily at two levels:**

- 1) **In the immediate future**, in anticipation of the 2002 Summit, **the Commission proposes to step up its action in the following three priority areas: *the promotion and protection of human rights; the promotion of the information society; and the reduction of social imbalances.***

The particular emphasis on these areas seeks to cover the three dimensions of the strategic partnership (political, economic, social) and to respond to the main challenges of the region. The proposed initiatives in those three priority areas form a coherent package designed to meet a common objective : to place human development and the civil society at the heart of the relationship between the two regions. In this context ,the political initiative in the field of human rights and good governance cannot be dissociated from the social initiative seeking to reduce poverty and inequalities, both trying to allow the most vulnerable groups to play a more active role as citizens. At the same time the initiative in the economic field seeks to provide the civil society with modern tools of management and communication, with a view to facilitate its integration in the national and world economy.

³ The INCO Programme can act as a catalyst for mobilising resources in the Member States and fostering participation by LA/C scientists in the Fifth Framework Programme.

⁴ The tables in Annex 2 illustrate this.

It should be stressed that, in addition to the three new initiatives, the Tuusula priority areas will continue to be dealt with through existing co-operation instruments, including decentralised horizontal programmes⁵. The latter will be evaluated in the light of the priorities and the Commission's other political aims in order to measure their efficacy, their compliance with the principles of Commission reform and the likelihood that they can yield tangible, measurable results. It is also essential that they should work in synergy with other programmes. These instruments should also help to support dialogue with civil society, which was another key priority identified at the Rio Summit.

- 2) **in the longer term, the Commission will ensure that the priorities identified in the Rio Action Plan and fine-tuned in Tuusula** are incorporated into the bilateral and sub-regional dialogues established. In principle, this does not require any special initiative, but rather a continuous and systematic approach covering all the three areas of the strategic partnership.

The Commission will make sure that it does not look at each dimension in isolation. The three dimensions should reinforce one another. We shall seek to ensure consistency and synergy between political, economic and co-operation dialogue, notably in the pursuit of common goals such as promotion of environmental protection and sustainable development.

The success of the Commission's overall action will depend to a large extent on its compliance with certain **basic principles**, and in particular:

- the exercise of *subsidiarity*, leaving Member States and partner countries with full financial and operational responsibility for the measures they wish to undertake. This will require appropriate *co-ordination and complementarity* of activities;
- maintaining a *balance* between our general relationship with the region as a whole and the sub-regional strategies which still apply. The priorities for each sub-region will be implemented in the framework of bilateral and sub-regional co-operation;
- *realism*: the Commission has to match its ambitions to its means when implementing the Rio conclusions. It is therefore essential to concentrate on key political objectives.

In accordance with above criteria and principles, measures will be developed both for the region as a whole and for each sub-region.

5. Stepping up the Commission action in the region as a whole: new specific measures in the 3 chosen priority areas

5.1 ***In the political field***, the Commission proposes taking further action in the priority area of the *promotion and protection of human rights*, a key component of the EU's external policy and the cornerstone of the special relationship between the two regions. Indeed, the Commission has played an active and visible role in this field

⁵ In particular the ALINVEST, ALURE, ALFA and URBAL programmes. With the exception of ALURE, they will aim to integrate the cultural dimension into eligible activities.

through political dialogue as well as co-operation activities such as support to peace processes, help with the restoration of democracy, and aid to refugees – especially in Central America.

In general, the situation in the region has improved. But despite the progress made, respect for human rights, the rule of law and democracy remains fragile in some countries and must be strengthened. In some cases, unfortunately, there has been a deterioration since the Rio Summit. The EU has expressed its position on those cases in the appropriate forums. To give concrete expression to the strong commitment made at the Rio Summit, new "positive" measures must be taken to strengthen respect for human rights, the rule of law and democratic political systems.

Against this background, and building on its past activities, the Commission proposes to step up its action regarding:

1. Promotion of respect for human rights, in particular civil and political rights, with three particular groups:
 - (a) independent institutions at regional level, including the Latin-American and Caribbean ombudsmen;
 - (b) local organisations (whether national, regional or international, including NGOs) specialising in particular in contributing to forums for dialogue between civil society and governments, especially in countries where there is a national plan for human rights;
 - (c) regional and sub-regional organisations and institutions specialising in justice.
2. Support for democratic political systems, contributing in particular to the consolidation and modernisation of the rule of law, through support for the media and press freedom.
3. The promotion and protection of economic and social rights, in particular by assisting organisations and bodies responsible for defending the rights of employees in companies and the economic and social rights of vulnerable sections of the population.

On this basis and taking account of the positive experience gained in Central America⁶, the Commission proposes an EU-Latin America/Caribbean discussion forum for the promotion and protection of human rights.

The main tasks of the discussion forum will be:

- (1) To set in motion a general discussion in the three areas set out above with a view to identifying more accurately the specific difficulties of the region and possible responses;

⁶ Meetings of the committee of independent experts under the existing multiannual human rights programme in Central America, set up under the San José Dialogue.

- (2) To encourage the pooling of experience among interested countries and bodies on the most effective policies in the three fields in question;
- (3) To seek, if necessary, new approaches to the long-term development of co-operation methods between the EU and Latin America/the Caribbean that are better tailored to the needs of the region;
- (4) To submit a report with conclusions and proposals for action to the 2002 Summit.

The forum will be made up of representatives of the interested partner countries of Latin America/the Caribbean, and the Member States. International, regional or local organisations and development agencies working in the region, including the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank, will also be invited to participate.

It is also proposed that there should be an *ad hoc* group of experts whose mandate will be set by a special group of senior officials which will then endorse the results of the work⁷. The exercise should be carried out in the course of 2001, culminating in the presentation of conclusions and proposals for action to be approved by the 2002 Summit.

Co-operation programmes could subsequently be devised and programmed on the basis of conclusions adopted at the 2002 Summit.

5.2 *In the economic field*, the Commission proposes a specific measure on the promotion of the *information society*.

Around the world, the new opportunities and challenges brought about by Information and Communication Technology are now recognised and the need to address the consequential, rapidly changing economic and social structures of this new Information Society has become a political priority. The need for new policies and regulatory measures to guide these developments to the advantage of economic actors and civil society is a challenge for developing, emerging and developed countries alike, albeit in different forms and with different objectives. The increasing need for co-ordinated and compatible international approaches to these questions has been recognised at the EU-Latin America Rio Summit, the recently held Latin-American Summit in Brasilia, and the European Councils in Lisbon and Feira which adopted the *eEurope* initiative with a specific reference to the need for addressing this at international level.

Public policies will play a key role with the development of appropriate regulatory frameworks aiming at development of communications infrastructure, the emergence of high-quality communications services and applications, and the facilitation of e-commerce. The role of the private sector is two-fold: the main investment in, and development of, these infrastructures and services, as well as an increasing role in the development of co-regulatory approaches, together with governments. Beyond the policy role of governments, they play an important role in the development of social services, education, health, etc as well as in fighting poverty and urbanisation, and in

⁷ The group and its mandate should be finalised in the second half of the year.

improving the economic position of local communities, each area of which can draw substantial benefit from the use of ICT.

It will be important for governments to ensure that their countries are fully participating in the new global economy and in the resulting dialogues and exchanges. The EU has therefore much to gain from a full partnership at economic, cultural, social, and political level with Latin-America on Information Society matters.

The growth of the telecommunications infrastructure in Latin America and the Caribbean is striking. The number of telephone lines per inhabitant is increasing on average by 15-20% per year throughout the sub-continent. The number of internet servers increased by 140% in 1999. Local authorities are implementing ambitious programmes to link schools to the internet. Demonstration projects could feasibly be carried out in such a context.

The European Commission is already supporting the dialogue, notably through the São Paulo EU-Latin America meetings on the information society, referred to in the Rio Declaration. It has also contributed to studies undertaken by information and telecommunications society operators; and it has contributed through flanking measures to RTD programmes for information society technologies.

Against this background, the Commission proposes to put forward a programme called ALIS⁸ to promote, on the basis of specific cases, the benefits of using information society technologies.

This programme will:

- Propose measures to adapt the *regulatory environment* and related policies to improve investment in, and service offering of, the communications infrastructure thereby offering broader access to opportunities offered by the Information Society. Address the requirements for regulatory and policy capacity at national level and in the context of the Latin-American regional co-operation and integration process.
- Foster the *training and education* of human resources, as well as capacity building, in the area of use and management of ICT, in particular in the areas of education, health, transport infrastructure, government services etc.
- Provide support to *demonstration projects* in priority areas such as tele-education, health, urban transport, ecommerce, development of SME's.
- Increase the *interconnection capacity* between Latin-American, Caribbean, and European education and research communities.

The arrangements for implementing this priority action are described in Annex 3.

5.3 ***In the co-operation field, support for the most vulnerable sectors of society*** is one of the 11 Tuusula priorities. The Commission has also made the fight against poverty a key priority of development co-operation⁹.

⁸ Alliance for the Information Society.

In the past, the Commission's financial and technical co-operation with Latin America and the Caribbean focused on conventional projects with social aims such as rural development, support for refugees and training measures. In the 1990s and following the formulation of new co-operation strategies for the countries in the region (Country Strategy Papers), poverty alleviation was given greater priority. New emphasis was placed on support for the social sector, in particular through activities in the education and health fields; and on institution building.

Recently the Commission, with other main donors, has become involved in the fight against poverty by assisting the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) programme. In Latin America, Honduras, Nicaragua and Bolivia benefit from this initiative by undertaking to draw up comprehensive strategies for fighting poverty (Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers). This practice could be adopted by other countries in the region even if they do not benefit from debt relief programmes.

The Commission intends to reinforce this new comprehensive approach to poverty alleviation in the follow-up to the Rio summit.

Despite the efforts of Latin American/Caribbean countries and the support of the international community in combating poverty in the region, serious social imbalances remain in most of the countries. Although many of the countries have experienced significant growth rates and have succeeded in re-establishing a degree of macro-economic equilibrium as a result of the adjustment policies implemented in recent years, and despite financial crises, Latin America and the Caribbean remains the region with the most unequal distribution of income.

Against this background, the Commission proposes:

opening up a new avenue in development co-operation by setting up an EU-Latin America/Caribbean “Social Initiative” in order to share experiences and best practices for the reduction of social imbalances and assistance for the most vulnerable groups.

The main task of the Initiative will be:

- (a) To set in motion a general discussion on the various aspects of reducing social imbalances in order to target specific difficulties of the region and to devise possible responses;
- (b) To encourage the pooling of experience among interested countries and bodies on the most effective policies to correct social imbalances;
- (c) To seek, if necessary, new approaches to the long-term development of EU-Latin America/Caribbean co-operation methods better tailored to the needs of the region (e.g. strengthening economic and social rights);
- (d) To submit a report with conclusions and proposals for action to the 2002 Summit.

The Initiative will consist of a series of meetings bringing together representatives of different groups of social agents: business leaders¹⁰, government officials, academics, trade unions and NGOs. Participants will come from the interested partner countries of Latin America/the Caribbean and the Member States. Development agencies working in the region, including the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank, will also be invited to participate.

This exercise should be carried out in 2001 culminating in the presentation of conclusions and proposals for action to be approved by the 2002 Summit

Co-operation programmes could subsequently be devised and programmed on the basis of the conclusions of the 2002 Summit.

6. Actions at sub-regional level

The Commission proposes separate sub-regional priorities for which specific measures could be worked out under existing institutional agreements.

For the *Mercosur - Chile* area

The main priority is the conclusion of the Association Agreement which will cover the three dimensions of the strategic partnership. In addition, in keeping with the Rio priorities, the Commission also intends:

- to introduce mechanisms for increased co-operation in international fora on strategic issues and other themes of common interest;
- to establish a structured dialogue and increased co-operation in the macro-economic field; the aim is to contribute to the financial stability of the region and to promote regional integration in the economic and monetary fields;
- to promote dialogue and co-operation with civil society and economic operators through trade and business fora like the Mercosur-Europe business forum, in addition to similar activities at regional level but avoiding any duplication in this field.

For the *Andean Community*

The main priorities will be those already agreed with our partners within the framework of our political dialogue with this region:

- at *political level*, strengthening democratic institutions and rule of law, especially in those countries for which the EU has recently expressed concerns. The political support shown by the EU for the peace process in Colombia will also have to be translated into operational terms.

¹⁰ The EU/ALC Business Summit to take place in Madrid in November 2000, if successful, could be used as a first experience in this sense.

- in the *trade field*, the follow-up to the Vilamoura decisions. This requires a study on the state of exchanges between the EU and the Andean Community and their future prospects, with a view to a possible “post-GSP” trade scheme;
- in terms of *co-operation*, the key issues to be addressed are the fight against drugs and the prevention of natural disasters.

For *Central America*

The key priority for **Mexico** is the implementation of our global agreement with this country. The Tuusula priorities that will be given particular attention in co-operation between the two parties are: reform of the international financial architecture and stability of financial systems, and the promotion of trade and investment. For **other countries in the region** we should maintain current priorities (the rule of law/human rights, support for social policies, and support for integration into the world economy) in the medium term, avoiding any duplication with measures planned at regional level. In addition, two Tuusula priorities should take on special importance in our co-operation relations: the environment and natural disaster prevention/management, and consolidation of the regional integration process. Both remain a major challenge for the economic and political development of the sub-region.

For the *Caribbean*

At *political* level, the Commission will include the Caribbean countries fully in the dialogue in the institutions provided for by the new ACP-EU partnership, especially to focus on particular problems in the area of human rights, democratisation and good governance. It will also maintain Cariforum's annual meeting with the Commission. This meeting currently centres mainly on co-operation issues. The Commission will consider extending this focus to more political fields, such as the fight against drugs, security, and conflict prevention.

With regard to *commercial and economic co-operation*, the Commission's first priority in the Caribbean region will be regional economic integration. The eventual goal is a Partnership Agreement which could include a free-trade area similar to that provided for in the new ACP-EU agreement. But this is something for the relatively distant future (negotiations are to begin in 2003). In the meantime the Commission wants to help with preparation, which could involve support in the following areas:

- Capacity building on trade policy and trade-related issues;
- assistance in the formulation of tax reform measures;
- transitional budgetary support;
- institution building of regional organisations;
- programmes to assist the restructuring of the private sector.

In regard to *development co-operation*, aid programming for the new agreement must be concluded for all Caribbean countries before the end of June 2001. It will take the form of national indicative programmes and an indicative programme for the region as a whole. It is in the regional programme, which by its nature addresses matters of

common interest, that the Rio priorities will be most easily reflected, particularly through institutional support for Caricom; programmes for economic development and regional competitiveness; and programmes in the area of justice and home affairs.

The promotion and protection of human rights, the promotion of gender equality and a proactive attitude to conflict prevention will be cross-cutting issues in the dialogue with the region and in all co-operation activities. The underlying objective will be reduction of poverty.

7. Management of follow-up

At present, overall *management* and the co-ordination of follow-up action are primarily the responsibility of the bi-regional group of senior officials. The latter has met twice since Rio, with the results described above. There is no set frequency for meetings, but activity could increase as the second Summit approaches.

Ad hoc sectoral mechanisms involving senior officials and specialised working parties might also be set up at ministerial level. The research and scientific co-operation sector is the first to have followed in this direction. Others will follow soon. New activities proposed by the Commission will rely to a large extent on these sectoral mechanisms.

In that context, it has to be mentioned in particular the ministerial Conference on higher education co-operation between Europe, Latin America and Caribbean organised at the initiative of the French Presidency, with the support of the Commission¹¹. The contribution of the Commission to that Conference will be substantial and focus on the enhancement of the existing education co-operation programmes, namely ALFA, in particular in the field of continuing education with a view towards life long learning. This is a typical sector which will be highly supportive for the three priorities defined in this communication. Continuing education along the life is a crucial support for human rights (democracy) information Society (new technologies are a first priority of this type of education programmes) and reduction of social imbalances.

In general there has been a deliberate choice of lightweight and flexible structures, an approach warranted by the informal nature of the process, the existence of numerous forums for dialogue at bilateral and sub-regional level, the desire to see partners take on responsibility for initiatives proposed by them, and limited administrative resources in most of the countries and institutions in question, including the Commission.

In regard to *co-ordination*, the Commission intends to make its contribution within the structures provided for by the Rio Summit. The success of the three new measures proposed will depend to a large extent on broad and active participation by the partner countries and consequently on efficient co-ordination. The latter will require the involvement of the bi-regional group and the setting up of various groups of specialised senior officials and *ad hoc* experts. The Commission will play an

¹¹ Conference organised in Paris (November 2000)

active role within these groups on the basis of its proposed involvement for the three priority areas concerned.

A comprehensive picture of the existing and new initiatives taken by the EU member states and the partner countries in support of the Tuusula priorities still need to be established by the bi-regional group. The implementing modalities and coordination mechanisms of those initiatives need also to be clarified.

The Commission will ensure that the bi-regional group addresses these issues and will strive for significant progress in this area.

8. Conclusions

Looking ahead to the 2002 Summit, the Commission is focusing in particular on three priorities among those identified at Tuusula: *the promotion and protection of human rights, the promotion of the information society and the reduction of social imbalances.*

All other Rio priorities will be integrated into the Commission's strategies for individual countries and regions and into co-operation programming, taking account of the Commission's own constraints and objectives.

The test of this strategy will be in the tangible results obtained by all the partners between now and the 2002 Summit. Experience may also suggest the need for adjustment as we go along. But the aims of the strategic partnership will not change: to strengthen relations between two regions whose increasing interdependence warrants the search for joint answers to global challenges.

ANNEX 1

Activities to be carried out within the framework of the

"Rio action priorities"

The 11 top priorities selected in Tuusula for immediate action

Priority 1: Deepen and enhance existing co-operation and consultations in international forums and extend them to all matters of common interest.

Priority 2: Promote and protect human rights, especially those of the most vulnerable groups of society, and prevent and combat xenophobia, manifestations of racism and other forms of intolerance.

Priority 3: Women – adopt programmes and projects related to the priority areas contained in the Beijing Declaration.

Priority 4: Enhance co-operation programmes in the area of environmental and natural disasters.

Priority 5: Drugs – implement the Panama Global Action Plan, including measures against illicit arms traffic.

Priority 6: Formulate proposals for bi-regional co-operation directed to establishing mechanisms to promote a stable and dynamic global economic and financial system, strengthening national financial systems and creating specific programmes to help the economically relatively less developed countries.

Priority 7: Promote trade, including SMEs and business forums.

Priority 8: Provide support for bi-regional co-operation in the fields of education and university studies as well as research and new technologies.

Priority 9: Cultural heritage, EU-Latin America/Caribbean cultural forum.

Priority 10: Establishment of a joint initiative on particular aspects of the information society.

Priority 11: Support activities related to research, postgraduate studies and training in the field of integration processes.

ANNEX 2.1

EC FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS FOR THE PERIOD 1995-1999¹²

(Latin America)

	Bilateral activities	Sub-regional activities	Regional activities	Total
Priority No 1				
Priority No 2	80 128 762	25 102 175	8 247 000	113 477 937
Priority No 3	19 180 000	956 097		20 136 097
Priority No 4	163 061 436	9 562 015	25 673 181	198 296 632
Priority No 5	74 743 689	1 822 756	280 000	76 846 445
Priority No 6	649 830	1 900 000		2 549 830
Priority No 7	26 119 643	28 520 603	86 218 498	140 858 744
Priority No 8	144 665 000	2 685 240	74 560 537	221 910 777
Priority No 9	5 929 840		740 000	6 669 840
Priority No 10	1 610 143		799 500	2 409 643
Priority No 11	1 261 000	8 667 501	80 000	10 008 501
TOTAL	505 601 450	79 216 387	195 758 716	780 576 553

¹² In EUR.

ANNEX 2.2

EC FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS FOR THE PERIOD 1995-1999¹³
(CARIBBEAN)

	Bilateral Activities	Subregional Activities	Regional Activities	Total
Priority N° 1	-	-	-	-
Priority N° 2	16,721,000	-	3,335,000	20,056,000
Priority N° 3	1,750,000	-	-	1,750,000
Priority N° 4	5,836,000	-	13,489,000	19,325,000
Priority N° 5	5,500,000	-	9,243,000	14,743,000
Priority N° 6	109,180,000	-	-	109,180,000
Priority N° 7	38,256,000	1,697,000 ¹⁴	37,561,000	77,514,000
Priority N° 8	18,287,000	-	44,246,000	62,533,000
Priority N° 9	2,195,000	-	4,465,000	6,660,000
Priority N° 10	-	-	-	-
Priority N° 11	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	197,725,000	1,697,000	112,339,000	311,761,000

¹³ In EUR

¹⁴ Programmes for the countries of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS).

ANNEX 3

Action – Information Society

Implementation procedures

1. Description of programme

ALIS will include a series of activities aiming at creating the condition for a long term partnership between the two regions and focussing on the following priorities : development of infrastructures, training of human resources and promoting contents and applications, including take-up measures.

Support and contributions will be designed to:

- **Promote the regulatory dialogue**, especially in the fields of telecommunications and the protection of privacy, copyright and other electronic commerce related issues. Technical solutions and new standards pertaining to these regulatory fields will undoubtedly be implemented in certain projects. Observing them will provide material for dialogue on these subjects, which are of major importance in the context of international institutions and will encourage preliminary consultations between Europeans and Latin-Americans and Caribbean in accordance with the principle proposed at the Vilamoura meeting in 2000;
- **Support the exchanges** by convening each year of a bi-regional forum of high-level decision-makers from the private and public sectors and representatives of civil society. This forum will enable the European Commission to organise wide-ranging consultation on the general guidelines and initiatives of ALIS and to give broader expression to the concrete achievements of, and lessons learned from, the projects implemented";
- **Increase the interconnection capacity** of the research communities of European, Latin-American and Caribbean which make most use on either side of the Atlantic of the Internet extensively on a daily basis for their joint research. By strengthening this interconnection capacity, ALIS will enable these communities to contribute to the pilot projects, foreshadowing the future uses of the networks;
- **Foster the training of human resources** in the specific field of Information society technologies, notably through the university EU-LA networks;
- **Implement pilot and/or take up projects** in the application sectors completing the range of measures implemented under other programmes and according to regional priorities, as stressed recently at several international conferences on the information society in Latin America and the Caribbean (ITU, IDB, etc.); eligible field of application would concern :
 - Education sector in synergy with national initiatives (cf. 5.1),
 - Health, involving local public authorities extensively and combining economic co-operation and development aid,
 - Urban transport, where there is clearly a need for improvement,

- Government offices, in particular local government offices which provide the people in the region with daily services, and for the exercise of democracy, applications for the opening up of rural areas, which would prevent the creation of a digital divide in the emerging economies of the region,
- Economic added value activities, such as electronic commerce and cultural tourism.

In setting up such projects the European Commission will have recourse to the networks (where these exist) set up under Community programmes : for example, projects in the education sector should be able to mobilise ALFA resources while projects in the field of urban transport and administrations should receive financing from URBAL, subject to possible adjustments to that programme. Specific mechanisms should be studied with a view to implementing demonstration projects in other fields.

2 *Stages and timetable*

- Financing proposal: end of 2000-beginning of 2001
- Launch of a call for proposals: second half of 2001
- Closure of the receipt of proposals from information society operators: early 2002
- Start of project implementation: mid-2002
- Duration of projects: 1 to 3 years
- Mid-term review: end of 2003-beginning of 2004

3. *Co-ordination*

- With the Member States: via the ALA and EDF committees and *ad hoc* Council groups.
- With all the partners: via the bi-regional group of senior officials. The Commission will also propose setting up an *ad hoc* group of experts for the monitoring and co-ordination of activities relating to the priority information society sector.