

With the adoption of "Declaration of Antigua, Guatemala" and launch of the CESALC website

SER Curaçao's efforts to reactivate the regional network of socio-economic advisory councils are bearing fruit

Willemstad, 12 September 2019 - With the adoption of the 'Declaration of Antigua, Guatemala' and the launch of the website of the regional network of socio-economic advisory councils (Consejos Económicos y Sociales de América Latina y el Caribe (www.cesalc.org)) at an official regional meeting, which was held on the 4th and 5th of September 2019 in the city of Antigua in Guatemala, an important milestone was reached in the further realization of agreements made earlier on the reactivation of the CESALC network that had been standing still for years. Thanks in part to the efforts of the Social and Economic Council (SER) of Curaçao, the network was revived.

Last week's regional CESALC meeting was the follow-up to bilateral technical consultations that took place on April, the 5th, this year between representatives of the SER of Guatemala ("Consejo Economico y Social (CES) de Guatemala") and those of the SER of Curaçao. The CES of Guatemala is the official coordinator of the CESALC network while the SER holds the board membership of the international association of social economic councils and similar institutions (AICESIS) on behalf of the Latin America and Caribbean region.

In addition to the SER, delegations from the socio-economic advisory bodies of Honduras, Guatemala, the Dominican Republic and Spain were also present at the regional meeting. The main themes that were discussed were the new governance structure and working methods of the CESALC network, the future of work and the chances of decent work and the alignment of national / regional policy with the achievement of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) of the United Nations.

During the meeting it was further agreed to appoint a new CESALC coordinator for the period 2019-2021. The new coordinator to be appointed will send a work plan to the SERs that are connected to the regional network in the coming two months.

In the "Declaration of Antigua, Guatemala", the countries further committed themselves to consolidate the CESALC network as a tool for dialogue, knowledge sharing and exchange of experience within the region, taking into account the following principles:

- that the SERs from the region are developing into strategic platforms of dialogue, participation and consultation between relevant economic actors with the aim of making an effective contribution to sustainable development and implementation of socio-economic policies;
- that the SERs from the region endeavor to initiate dialogue processes at the national level and also to pay attention to regional and international agendas;
- promoting regional cooperation;
- that the CESALC network will focus in particular on issues of interest to the region such as the fight against hunger and poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean, the stimulation of economic growth, progress, social inclusion, sustainable development and on programs and projects aimed at safeguarding the economic rights of workers and non-workers, in particular vulnerable groups such as women, children, the elderly, migrants, the disabled and indigenous people;
- that the CESALC network will present its recommendations to the authorities of the region in order to contribute to the political and administrative debate on relevant socio-economic issues.

More information can be found on the CESALC website (www.cesalc.org) and the SER website (www.ser.cw).