



University of West Indies
Graduate Institute of
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St. Augustine – Trinidad & Tobago



Institute for the Integration of Latin America and
the Caribbean
Integration and Regional Programs Department
Inter-American Development Bank

The CSME: Status, Issues and Priorities Regional Seminar: 40 years since the creation of INTAL

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UWI Graduate Institute of International Relations
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Opening Remarks

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This presentation was prepared to be presented at the Regional Seminar at the UWI campus, Trinidad & Tobago on occasion of the celebration of INTAL 40th Anniversary. The opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the IDB/INTAL. This presentation should be cited indicating the name of the author and the source:

http://www.iadb.org/intal/aplicaciones/uploads/ponencias/Foro_INTAL_2005_14_Carciofi.pdf

On behalf of the Integration Department of the IDB and of INTAL itself, I want to express my gratitude to those who have made this Seminar possible:

- To Dr. Dennis Gale, Director of the Institute of International Relations of the University of West Indies, who has agreed to the cooperation between the Bank and the University;
- To Professor Norman Girvan who has worked intensively in the academic contents and orientation of this Seminar. He certainly is the intellectual father of this meeting;
- To Anneke Jessen, who not only has written the CARICOM Report that she will be presenting in a few minutes, but has also helped us a lot in coordinating the tasks leading to the preparation of this Seminar.
- To our support staff in Buenos Aires and Trinidad who made all the travel and logistic arrangement that allow us to be sitting here;
- And lastly but not least, to all of you, audience and authors that are here today.

As may have been noticed, we are running this Seminar under the sub-heading of "40 Years of the Creation of INTAL".

Though I do not want to take much of our time from our discussion let me address the issue of how the decision involved in the creation of INTAL four decades ago is still relevant for the activity that gathers us all here today.

Why was INTAL created?

Because there were strong convictions in several quarters in our region –academic and political leaders alike- on the need to work very actively for the integration process to become a reality.

While it should be noticed that not everybody attached then the same contents to the notion of integration, this is not important for the point I am trying to make.

Curiously, and what is worth noticing, is that INTAL was created as a part, as a unit of the IDB. The question is why? Why is it that the Bank, created in 1959 as a Bank for Integration, saw the need to build an Institute with the specific purpose of integration?

Several elements should be taken into account:

1. From the very start, the Bank was able to set in motion several operations helping to develop infrastructure linked to integration;
2. But traditional financial instruments are of very limited leverage for the promotion of regional public goods;
3. The lending program of the Bank is shaped for and focused in individual member countries, and therefore there has to be a sort of concerted (coordinated) national program leading to

integration. But this is cumbersome in practice.

It became clear then the need to support the integration process *via* fostering collective actions that characterize more active trade. Consequently, if IDB wanted to work effectively for integration, it was not just a matter of “bricks and mortar” .

Something else had to be done, and these additional elements were located outside, so to speak, of the standard lending framework of IDB.

What was needed were, in fact, a complex set of related activities:

- a. Training;
- b. Research oriented to policy;
- c. Outreach to audiences mostly interested or affected by the process of integration;
- d. Technical support to member countries in order to build up institutional capabilities associated to trade disciplines.

In fact, INTAL was created with those objectives in mind. Its location in Buenos Aires is expressive of the task. One member country acting as host, thereby conveying a slight message to the Institution: the ownership of a key project that was sponsored by borrowing countries of the Bank. But at the same time making it clear that the Institute is located in the South, but with the responsibility of disseminating its activities all across Latin America and the Caribbean.

As time elapsed, and the Bank reshaped its organization differently, there emerged new tasks for INTAL because we are now an active part of the INTEGRATION department and, therefore, we share responsibilities with Headquarters. Basically, all our research capabilities are located in Washington and operational and support activities are conducted from Buenos Aires. Again, these are practical details that cannot distract our attention from the central message.

In helping to assemble this Seminar, INTAL is giving real content to its original mandate: we are providing resources to mobilize intellectual capital for promoting and contributing to the process of integration amongst members of a sub-region and, in doing so, trying to link in much better footing these economies to the world economy.

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