



The Social Policy Dialogue:
An Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)/
Government of Denmark Initiative in Support
of the Social Summit Goals and Commitments

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Sustainable Development Department
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Background and Objectives

Begun in 1997, the Social Policy Dialogue is a Latin American initiative led by former Chilean President, Patricio Aylwin, a prime mover of the Copenhagen Social Summit, and supported by the IDB and the Government of Denmark. To date, the Dialogue has worked in Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala and Honduras.

The initiative responds directly to the Social Summit's basic goal of giving highest priority to "the promotion of social progress, justice and the betterment of the human condition, based on full participation by all." More specifically, it embraces a number of the commitments agreed to at the Social Summit, including commitments 1, 4, 5, and 10, which respectively call for creating an enabling environment to achieve social development; promoting social integration; achieving equality and equity between women and men; and improving international and regional frameworks for cooperation for social development.

The project was conceived at a time when economic growth and democracy had resumed in the region, and social reforms were underway. These conditions had opened a window of opportunity for promoting a better balance between economic and social growth, citizen participation in social reforms and citizen's ownership of the reform process. The project's purpose is to ground social policy on a solid internal consultation process with key stakeholders in government and civil society, with the aim of having agreements that survive a single government administration and become national policy. It has a long-term perspective, and pays attention to the processes as well as the outcomes of development.

Methodology

The initiative enlisted Patricio Aylwin, internationally recognized for helping to reestablish democracy and achieving difficult political consensus while he was President of Chile. It promotes national level dialogues and includes a first visit by Aylwin to the country chosen, where he interviews a broad cross-section of society, including labor unions, NGOs and women groups, the church, and the elected Congress, among others. This visit provides the information to organize a second meeting of selected representatives from the country with Mr. Aylwin and Bank staff at Bank headquarters, facilitated by a conflict management team, to flesh out ideas in more detail, work out potential conflicts, and achieve consensus on social priorities.

Experience with the first, pilot phase of the project, improved the methodology. In the second phase, currently underway, the Dialogue does not attempt to cover a range of

topics but rather centers on a priority social issue; Bank staff are more closely involved with the Dialogue; and the project team is keenly aware of the need to keep independence from the government while at the same time is careful not to launch a parallel dialogue process. The team pays special vigilance to integrating gender issues, a task that was more difficult than anticipated during the pilot phase, and, most importantly, the project supports follow-up activities in the country to maintain and nurture the consensus reached.

On this last point, for instance, the initiative is considering supporting follow-up work in Honduras, through the Honduran Social Policy Dialogue Commission. The activities, which are based on the results from Mr. Aylwin's second visit to Honduras, include (i) drafting a bill for educational reform, (ii) organizing individual working sessions as well as group meetings with the presidential candidates and their technical advisors to build consensus among the political parties on the main lines of action for educational reform, (iii) meetings on the same issue with the press, civil society and the private sector, (iv) a study of education programs in execution to determine which ones coincide with the proposal to transform the education system, and (v) a visit to Washington D.C. to secure the loans to implement this reform.

Results

In both Ecuador and Honduras, the Social Dialogue singled out educational reform as the key area to reach consensus and promote change. In Ecuador, the Dialogue promoted consensus-building among the participants on a series of measures to implement educational reform and fostered increased agreement with Bank staff on educational issues and priorities. As a result, in October 1998, the IDB Board of Executive Directors approved a loan to Ecuador for US\$45 million to develop a rural autonomous school network program. The project objectives are to: (i) grant autonomy to manage their own resources to approximately 20% of the rural schools in the country, with greater involvement by parents and community members in school administration; and (ii) improve teaching conditions in rural basic education (primary and lower secondary education) within the areas of influence of targeted schools.

In Honduras, the project provided technical support to a government forum for national dialogue called FONAC (Foro Nacional de Convergencia) in deciding on and preparing an educational reform bill. The project helped to guide the dialogue on educational reform, opening FONAC to the participation of civil society, the teachers' union and international donor agencies. It built trust between FONAC and non-FONAC members and facilitated links between FONAC, a Roundtable of Cooperating Agencies on Education and the Ministry of Education. A Social Dialogue Commission emerged out of the negotiation session at the Bank headquarters to strengthen FONAC's work. Financing from IDB and other donors helped to promote a solid networking process which included regional dialogues including more than 250 municipalities.

Currently FONAC, with the help of the Commission, is winding down the consultation process and preparing to present to Congress an education reform bill. During Patricio Aylwin's second visit to Honduras in March 2000, Honduran President Flores ratified his commitment to educational reform. The Education Minister proposed an expanded National Education Council with more civil society representation. Both the political parties and the private sector agreed to publicly support the reform project.

In the Dominican Republic, the project dealt with the broader issue of the "how to" or the execution of social reforms. In his first visit, Mr. Aylwin promoted the need for agreements for social policy implementation; the importance of consensus building and stakeholder involvement; and the need for beneficiary participation and better coordination of social policy implementation. It was agreed that a significant effort had to be made to coordinate the execution of social policies, establishing coordination units, both in the various government agencies and in civil society. Based on these findings, the forum on negotiation techniques held at Bank headquarters dealt with: (a) the coordination and monitoring of social policies; (b) the development of mechanisms and instruments to improve social management; and (c) the identification and implementation of instruments to increase participation and foster decentralization. The results from the forum discussions on the coordination and monitoring of social policies were incorporated into the design of an IDB loan for US\$70 million to Reform and Modernize the State.

In both Costa Rica and Guatemala, the project had to cease its activities midway to wait for a more favorable political and social climate. In the case of Costa Rica, the Dialogue did not pursue further work because the government decided against launching a second Governmental Round of Consensus that would have worked on translating the results from the dialogue process into concrete proposals. In Guatemala, Mr. Aylwin's first visit centered on the implementation of the Peace Accords. Activities were then halted because the government was not interested in the forum on negotiation techniques. The new government, however, has requested resumption of the Dialogue's consensus building activities. The project is considering helping to foster consensus on mechanisms to integrate indigenous groups into the trade agreements.

Overall, an evaluation of the project's pilot phase concluded that "the project is indeed an innovative way of helping countries establish the basis for a participatory process of discussing social policy issues, reaching consensus among a wide variety of actors, and setting a national agenda of priorities and strategies. Among the tangible results are the preparation of social pacts, consensus documents, and the will to continue the process; the identification of key social actors and the creation of a fluid exchange within a framework of respect, flexibility and pluralism; and the validation of a participatory approach in the design and implementation of social policies." (Evaluation Report by Marcia Rivera, May 1998.)

The project also helped to increase citizen's awareness of monitoring progress towards meeting the Social Summit's and the International Women's Conference goals.

Elements of Success

Features contributing to the project's success to date include, among others, the:

- Credibility and convening capabilities of both former Chilean President Aylwin and the IDB.
- Project's ability to support and monitor national dialogue processes as a neutral partner rather than as a main protagonist.
- Project's capacity to support follow-up in-country work.
- Project's ability to access and disburse funds quickly.
- Responsiveness from different stakeholders (including the government and civil society) in the different countries to actively engage in social dialogues.
- Bank's sectoral expertise as well as complementary financial and non-financial services.
- Project's long-term view and emphasis on the style as well as the content of social policies.

Lessons Learned

The project is rich in lessons. Among the main ones are:

- The feasibility of achieving broad-based consensus on specific social policies. Despite a strong tradition of centralized public policy making in Latin America, the project experience shows that people, including those in the poorest communities, are willing to actively participate in a dialogue process and that consensus on social reforms is possible. The process, however, needs time, resources and a specific focus.
- The importance of incorporating opposing viewpoints early on in the dialogues. Civil society's confidence in the process was raised by the project's ability to incorporate stakeholders that were likely to oppose reform (i.e. the teachers' union in Honduras) as well as members from the political opposition early in the dialogue process.
- The value of working with members of Congress. Their incorporation into the consensus building process improved the channels of communication between members from civil society and their elected legislators. In this way, the Social Dialogue helped the legislature increase their technical expertise and legitimacy among civil society.
- The requirement of basic experience with dialogue processes. Dialogue and consensus building activities require civil society organizations that have a minimum of experience in the practice of dialogue. If this condition is not met, it

is necessary to invest time and financial resources to develop the actors' capacities to listen and understand each other and to accept their diverse points of views as well as to conceive long-term, win-win reform proposals.

- The importance of nurturing an environment conducive to social reform, by including sustained efforts to convince the social actors of the need for change and the economic benefits of social reform. Social and political calm are integral to a favorable climate. The processes must show that social reforms can bring win-win solutions to the diverse stakeholders. A well-thought-out media strategy is a key mechanism to disseminate these ideas.
- Lastly, the importance of producing, through the dialogue process, two results: the development of both a shared technical reform agenda and confidence and trust among the participating actors. This last element, though intangible and hard to measure, is key to the Copenhagen Social Summit goals and the successful development of long-term social policies.

Annex: Individual country stories

From early 1997 to the present the project team organized and/or executed activities in five countries: Guatemala, The Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Costa Rica, and Honduras. The project went through two phases: The first or pilot phase expanded from 1997 to July 1999. During this period, the project comprised only two activities: Mr. Patricio Aylwin's visit to the country and a forum on negotiations techniques in Washington, D.C. In August 1999, the project initiated its second phase and began to include follow-up activities to consolidate the gains achieved during the execution of the initial activities.

Preparatory activities

The project activities were undertaken once explicit agreements had been reached with the authorities of each country, particularly the president of the country. Preparatory missions were attended by Bank headquarters staff, the Country Office Representative, the program coordinator, and members of the team. During the missions, the respective agenda was drawn up, thematic priorities were identified, and information collected. In Ecuador, the Dominican Republic, Honduras, and Panama; local consultants were hired to advise on the preparation of the thematic structure of the meetings. Prior to the visits, background documents were collected on the social situation in the country and the main issues to be discussed. In addition, preparatory meetings were held with Bank experts in the social sectors working on projects in the country, Country Office staff, local consultants, and the project team.

Guatemala

The visit to Guatemala took place from April 12 to 19, 1997. Interviews and meetings were held with the main country authorities (the President and Vice President of the country, the President of the legislature, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Finance, the Secretary of the Planning Office (SEGEPLAN), the economic cabinet, the social sector cabinet, party leaders in the legislature, and the group for modernization of the Executive and the civil service). The following activities were carried out during these events: (i) information on plans and initiatives was collected and views were exchanged on resolution of the main social problems; (ii) it was agreed that implementation of the Peace Accords required greater consensus-building; (iii) the dilemma between commitments requiring swift decision-making and the need for consensus-building was analyzed; and (iv) mechanisms for economic and social participation and administrative decentralization were examined.

Discussions were held with the main negotiators of the Peace Accords, the Commission to Monitor Implementation of the Peace Accords, and the Historical Clarification Commission (Truth Commission). At each meeting, various social issues were reviewed and it was agreed that: (i) the Peace Accords incorporated most of the goals, recommendations, and conclusions of the Copenhagen Summit and Beijing Conference;

(ii) the Peace Accords constituted guidelines for medium-term development in that they established what was to be done, but "how" and "by whom" still needed to be determined; and (iii) the commissions established as called for under the Accords were forums for participation and consensus-building institutions. Their members made up a critical mass of 200 individuals and constituted a de facto network that would help develop a participatory culture.

Activities were carried out with representatives of civil society, including, among other institutions: the Civil Society Coordination Office, women's and human rights organizations, Fundación Rigoberta Menchú, the Confederation of Maya Peoples of Guatemala (COPMAGUA), the Council of Private Sector Foundations, the Coordination Committee of Agricultural, Commercial, Industrial, and Financial Associations (CACIF), and trade unions. The following topics were discussed at these events: (i) citizen participation in the identification, prioritization, and fulfillment of their needs; (ii) discrimination and exclusion; and (iii) the need to increase and improve the education of girls, especially indigenous girls, and the priority it should be assigned.

Mr. Aylwin held two conferences attended by over 300 persons each. The first, sponsored by the Association for Social Studies and Research of Guatemala (ASIES), stressed the need for dialogue and consensus to achieve social development and implement the actions set forth in the Accords. At the conference at the Center for National Strategy Studies (ESTNA), the concept of the rule of law and the responsibilities of the various stakeholders (government, military, civil society) were discussed.

The field visit included discussions with the representatives of the Council of Elders in Tajclavé (Tonicapán), the Municipal Development Corporation and community leaders of San Gaspar (Quiché), and a visit to a camp of demobilized guerrillas in Tululché.

The activities carried out promoted: (i) the need to seek agreements to resolve social problems; (ii) a commitment on the part of all Guatemalans to implement the Peace Accords and their dissemination; and (iii) the importance of consensus-building based on the experience of other countries.

At the conclusion of Mr. Aylwin's visit, the Guatemalan government did not show much interest in the forum on negotiation techniques, thus no further activities were programmed. Based on this experience, the project team began to make sure that before initiating activities in any country, the government understood that when they accepted the SPD project, they were accepting two indivisible parts: Mr. Aylwin's visit and the forum.

The Guatemalan administration that took office in January 2000 has requested the SPD project to continue executing consensus building activities. Some suggested areas for intervention are the design (together with the Social Division) of the "how" and "by whom" long-term strategy to reduce poverty and/or the design of policies to incorporate vulnerable groups into the economy.

Ecuador

Mr. Aylwin visited Ecuador from September 27 to October 4, 1997. The agenda of the visit included the most important social issues, with special emphasis on social service delivery. The meetings in Quito included the participation of key figures of civil society and government. At a conference organized by the Ecuadorian Association of Newspaper Editors (AEDEP), attended by approximately 200 persons, Mr. Aylwin stressed the need for dialogue and consensus to promote governance and achieve social development.

The mission traveled to Guayaquil, where interviews were conducted with the mayor, youth leaders at Guayaquil University, members of the business community, and community program participants. The mission met with municipal indigenous leaders in Guamote and visited community development projects. Altogether over 20 meetings were held, culminating in a visit and report to the President of the country and the Council of Ministers.

At the Council of Ministers meeting, Mr. Aylwin summarized his impressions of the mission, stating that among the various stakeholders contacted there was a general sense of a lack of governance and a certain contempt for politicians. In contrast, the conditions were at hand to reverse the situation, particularly: (i) the upcoming session of the Constitutional Assembly, which represented an opportunity to build consensus on the criteria for reorganization of the country's judicial and administrative structure and lay the foundations for reform of the State; (ii) the already institutionalized dialogue between Management and labor, which was making significant progress; (iii) the great willingness of nationally renowned religious and military figures to cooperate in the area of social policies; (iv) the repeated desire of the President of the country and his government to seek broad-based agreements that would lead to the establishment of State policies on the social sectors; (v) revitalization of various civil society institutions; and (v) the technical work being done by the government to establish a long-term social agenda.

Of the series of social issues reviewed at the meetings, the practically unanimous conclusion was that education reform should have definite priority with respect to the need to build consensus. It was therefore proposed that education be the central topic of the forum to be held in the second phase of the project and that it be linked to vocational training and governance.

The forum was held in Washington, D.C. on December 3 to 5, 1997. Fourteen prominent figures attended, including representatives of the government, trade unions, the business community, the church, indigenous movements, the military, and youth movements. Mr. Aylwin chaired the meeting, which was moderated by CMI International Group. Staff from Bank headquarters presented information and guidelines for the discussions.

The group reviewed the main problems of education and agreed on a series of measures for education reform. The outcome of the meeting included: (i) a document on recommendations, indicating how the group reached agreements on what the main problems and possible solutions in education were; (ii) recommendations on how to build consensus; and (iii) suggestions on how to proceed.

In a first evaluation of the forum, the participants stated that they considered the meeting very helpful and that progress was made in consensus-building and establishing linkages. They agreed on follow-up activities for consolidation and expansion of the group and to address other social issues assigned priority. The group has already helped present proposals on education reform to the Constitutional Assembly and has conducted an analysis of social security reform.

The involvement of the Bank staff from Headquarters and the Country Office significantly contributed to the success of the program activities. The forum discussions facilitated the activities for an IDB project on rural education by promoting consensus-building among the participants and an understanding with the Bank officials on the issues and priorities. In October 1998, the Board of Executive Directors approved a loan for US\$45 million to develop a rural autonomous school network program. The loans objectives were to (i) grant autonomy to approximately 20% of rural schools to manage their own resources, with greater involvement by parents and community members in school administration; and (ii) improve teaching conditions in rural basic education (primary and lower secondary education) within the areas of influence of targeted schools.

In August 1998, a new government assumed office in Ecuador. Given the administration's desire to seek broad-based agreements that would lead to the establishment of State policies on the social sectors, the project team visited Ecuador in May 1999. The government appointed the Minister of Social Development (which comprised the Ministries of Education, Health, Labor and Social Security) as the counterpart to the project.

Given the seriousness of the economic situation, the project team recommended holding a National Forum for Social Dialogue to discuss the relevance of social reforms to the economic development of a country. The government would use the event to mark the beginning of a process of National Dialogue and Consensus Building to implement social reform in key areas. The National Forum would be opened by president Jamil Mahuad, president Iglesias and ex-president Patricio Aylwin and key socio-economic issues would be addressed by a group of internationally renowned speakers. This event, originally scheduled to take place in July 1999 was delayed due to severe economic and social crisis. In October 1999, the IDB decided to postpone the SPD project activities indefinitely.

Dominican Republic

During the visit from October 6 to 10, 1997, over 20 meetings were held, involving direct contact with some 190 individuals. In particular, meetings were held with government authorities (the President of the country and ministers), businessmen, trade unionists, non governmental organizations, political party leaders, and representatives of the church and the media. A field visit was conducted to the province of Salcedo, where information was obtained on community involvement in social and productive projects.

Mr. Aylwin gave a lecture entitled "Dialogue and Consensus in Poverty Reduction and Social Development." The conference, which was organized by Pontificia Universidad Madre y Maestra (PUCAMAYMA), was moderated by Monsignor Agripino Núñez. The introductory address was given by Father José Luis Alemán. Over 200 people from the world of academia, politics, and trade associations attended the conference.

The activities carried out by Mr. Aylwin basically promoted: (i) the need for agreements for social policy implementation; (ii) the importance of consensus-building from the international perspective and in the experience of other countries; (iii) the need to increase dissemination and analysis of the policies proposed by the government and to encourage greater commitment and involvement on the part of all stakeholders; (iv) the need to establish channels to enable the beneficiaries to play a part in the implementation of social programs; and (v) the need for better coordination for social policy implementation.

The Government of the Dominican Republic made a commitment through the social dialogue project to launch social reforms based on the premise that to do so requires the State to share responsibilities with civil society. This is reflected in the priority assigned by the government to community development, the creation of opportunities for participation, conflict resolution based on consensus-building, and the establishment of new interagency relations.

The country's tradition of reaching agreement and the good will demonstrated by the major stakeholders towards consensus-building were an excellent sign that there was much room for optimism about the possibility of future agreements being reached on the implementation of the main social policies.

The project team concluded that: (i) the agreements reached in the past had set social policy priorities in general terms, leaving the "how" to be determined; (ii) information on the government's social policy needed to be increased and channels needed to be established to enable the beneficiaries to play a part in the implementation of social programs; (iii) a significant effort had to be made to coordinate the execution of social policies, establishing coordination units, both in the various government agencies and in civil society.

Based on these findings, the forum on negotiation techniques (held in Washington D.C, August 5-8, 1998) dealt with three related themes: (a) the coordination and monitoring of

social policies; (b) the development of mechanisms and instruments to improve social Management; and, (c) the identification and implementation of mechanisms and instruments to increase participation and foster decentralization. The results from the forum discussions on the coordination and monitoring of social policies were incorporated into the design of and IDB loan for US\$70 to Reform and Modernize the State.

Costa Rica

A preparatory mission visited San José de Costa Rica from January 19 to 23, 1999. The goals of the mission were to identify areas and activities where the project could support the process of dialogue and concertation on social reform and to learn from the process of consensus building initiated by the government in July 1998. The mission held several meetings with key people involved in the process of national concertation. Among those interviewed were advisors to the president, the First Vice-President of Costa Rica and her advisor, the Secretary to the Presidency, the President to the *Mesa de Concertación*, the *Defensora de los Habitantes*, facilitators to the process and university members.

The mission and the government identified two areas of interest to the country and the bank where the project “Social Policy Dialogue” could strengthen the process of consensus building in the country: the **Second Round of Concertation** to begin in late May 1999 and the Program of *Asignaciones Familiares* (PRODESAF).

In a letter from the Minister of the Presidency, Mr. Roberto Tovar Faja, dated April the 29th, 1999, the government requested immediate assistance to strengthen consensus on the issue of PRODESAF. The newly created program called for the creation of a Social Investment Fund targeted to the poorest sectors of the population. In this area the activities of the Social Policy Dialogue project would be aimed at (1) building knowledge about the role of social investment funds to combat poverty, (2) improving the technical content of the funds; and, (3) gaining support for the newly designed instruments among the major stakeholders. To that effect the activities would be targeted to (1) the newly created Commission entrusted with the administration of the Social Investment Fund, (2) Members of Congress and (3) the press. Themes to be included in the dialogue among stakeholders were to include targeting of resources, subsidies to the demand and supply, community participation and others of similar relevance.

In May 1999, the government decided against launching the Second Round of Concertation in the country and the SPD project activities were never organized.

Honduras

The preparatory mission to Honduras took place from October 12 to 19, 1998. The mission held meetings with the Under-Secretary of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Finance, the Secretary of the Planning Office, the Executive Secretary of *the Foro*

Nacional de Convergencia (FONAC), the economic cabinet and the social sector Ministers, including the Minister of Labor. The mission also held meetings with the party leaders from the five political parties in the Legislature, with representatives from civil society, including, among others: ethnic groups, NGOs, the universities, women's and human rights organizations, the Council of Private Sector Foundations, and trade unions.

The mission discussed the following issues with the participants: (i) the project's goals and its methodology; (ii) the main social problems affecting the country; (iii) the need to develop a methodology to build consensus on the main areas of social reform. Among the series of social issues reviewed at the meetings, the practically unanimous conclusion was that education reform should have definite priority with respect to the need to build consensus. It was therefore proposed that education be the central topic of the Forum to be held in the second phase of the project and that it be linked to vocational training and governance.

Mr. Aylwin's visit to Honduras was arranged to take place the first week in November 1998. Due to the Hurricane Mitch, however, this activity had to be postponed. A second preparatory mission was organized from January 27 to 30, 1999. The main goal of this mission was to re-organize Mr. Aylwin's agenda to include the new challenges the country is facing. To that effect the mission held a meeting with President Carlos Roberto Flores, who expressed his high expectations regarding the contribution the project could make to the process of reconstruction and transformation of Honduras. The mission recommended organizing a workshop previous to Mr. Aylwin's visit. The goal of the workshop would be to analyze some of the main processes on consensus building underway in Latin America and to discuss the role of civil society in these processes.

The workshop entitled *Consensus Building in Latin America: Lessons Learnt* was held in Tegucigalpa on February 27, 1999. The three case studies included El Salvador, Costa Rica and Bolivia. Experts from each of the three countries were invited to discuss the background to the domestic processes, the role of civil society, the role of the political parties, the participatory methodologies implemented, the instruments to reach consensus and the lessons learnt. A document with the main expositions was compiled and distributed.

Mr. Aylwin's visit to Honduras took place from March 14 to 21, 1999; and included over 20 meetings and two and a half days in the field. Mr. Aylwin held two major conferences. The first one in San Pedro Sula on March 16, co-sponsored by the private sector in that city, was attended by three hundred people for the private sector and civil society. The second conference, organized jointly by the four main universities, took place in Tegucigalpa on March 18. Over five hundred people from the world of academia, politics, the private sector and civil society were invited to this event. At both conferences, Mr. Aylwin gave lectures stressing the need to create synergies between the State, the market, and civil society to achieve economic growth with equity, development, and strengthen democracy.

On April 29, 30 and May 1, 1999; twenty prominent leaders representing all sectors of Honduran society met in Washington in an effort to build national consensus on educational reform. A Harvard University expert in negotiation techniques facilitated the identification of aspects of agreement among the many educational reform proposals originating in the Honduran society. The country's education system has not been deeply modernized in more than a century. Mr. Aylwin chaired the meeting. IDB officials, both from headquarters and the Country Office, were incorporated in the discussions as the diagnostic study and the proposed solutions would become the basis for a future IDB loan in the education sector.

Back in Honduras the twenty leaders continued to work together (under the name of Social Policy Dialogue Commission) supporting the work headed by the FONAC. On December 1999 they began to organize Mr. Aylwin's second visit to the country with the goal to foster political support for the education reform proposal. Mr. Aylwin visited Honduras from March 6 to 11, 2000. During that time he participated in 12 meetings and two television programs. The main results and compromises achieved were (i) President Flores emphasized his commitment to the education reform process underway, (ii) the presidential candidates expressed their desire to reach a public agreement regarding education reform, (iii) the Minister of Education publicly proposed to modernize the National Education Commission by incorporating the members from civil society, (iv) representatives from the private sector coincided with the goals of education reform and manifested their desire to actively support the implementation of education reform, (v) international donors expressed their commitment to finance education reform and its executing agency, and (vi) the president of Congress declared his intention to discuss and promulgate the required legislation before the end of the year.

Mr. Aylwin recommended (i) to begin the execution of the education reform as soon as possible, (ii) to generate more confidence among certain actors such as the press, (iii) to approve the legislation required to implement reform before the end of the year, (iv) to restructure the National Education Commission, (v) to form an executive group to implement education reform, and (vi) to coordinate and harmonize current education programs with the proposal for reform.

Based on Mr. Aylwin's recommendation, the SPD Commission has recently presented a proposal for US\$45,000 to implement follow-up activities. The activities include (i) the drafting of the bill for education reform, (ii) organizing individual working sessions as well as a group meeting with the presidential candidates and their technical advisors to build consensus among the political parties on the main (and first) lines of action for education reform, (iii) meetings with the press, civil society and the private sector, (iv) study on the education programs in execution to determine which ones coincide with proposal to transform the education system, (v) a trip to Washington D.C. to secure the loans to implement reform.