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NATIONAL REPORT OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF  
COMMITMENTS FROM THE FOURTH SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS

**REPORT ON THE MAIN ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE AGENCIES OF THE DOMINICAN  
STATE IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE MANDATES  
OF THE FOURTH SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS**

The Government of the Dominican Republic has defined a strategy for economic growth and social development in accordance with our reality, as established in the mandates of the Summits, combining economic policy with objectives that go further than growth and stability, with an integrated social policy for human development.

<b>SECRETARIAT OF STATE FOR LABOR</b>
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**1. CREATING DECENT WORK:**

**A. National Commitments**

**1. Forced Labor**

This practice does not exist in the Dominican Republic; it was abolished with the enactment of the Labor Code of the Dominican Republic on May 29, 1992, a document reached by means of consensus among labor stakeholders (employers and workers) with the participation of the Dominican Government and the International Labour Organization (ILO).

The Dominican Republic has signed the two International Labour Organization conventions on the abolition of forced labor.

1. Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) ratified on 5.12.1956.
2. Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105).

The Government has taken steps to eliminate this scourge and prevent its reappearance, by means of a policy of training, education, and inspection.

Training and education, by means of workshops and courses that explain the ratified conventions and worker's rights and duties under current labor laws. This is a permanent plan on account of the ratification of the two conventions referred to above.

Principle VII of our Labor Code states that: Any discrimination, exclusion, or preference based on reasons of sex, age, color, national descent, social origin, political opinion, trade-union membership, or religious belief is prohibited.

**2. Child Labor**

The Dominican Republic ratified Convention No. 138, the Minimum Age Convention, on 15.06.1999, and Convention No. 182, the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, on 15.11.2000.

The Dominican Republic, in coordination with the Secretariat of State for Labor and the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), has drawn up a Strategic Plan on the Worst Forms of Child Labor in the Dominican Republic, covering the years 2006-2016.

This plan establishes levels of precision in labor regulations and efforts to raise awareness among children.

Legal framework. Ratified ILO Conventions, Labor Code, and Law 136-03, Code for the Protection System and Basic Rights of Children and Adolescents.

### **3. Reducing Youth Unemployment**

According to data from the Central Bank's National Work Force Survey (ENFT), between October 2005 and April 2006, certain economic activities (bars, restaurants, hotels, construction, farming, and services) reported dynamic GDP in the final three quarters, increasing the employment rate from 46.0% to 46.8%.

### **4-5. Gender Equality and Education**

In spite of these positive data, the predominance of informal activities and low levels of education and academic training threaten competitiveness and the country's proactive insertion into the international market through DR-CAFTA.

The job market reflects high levels of young people: 53.8% of the total EAP in 2005 was aged between 20 and 39 years. Offering quality and high-productivity job opportunities for this segment of the population is thus a challenge.

Another important aspect of the Dominican labor market is the lack of gender equality in employment: although surveys indicate that women are generally more qualified, men occupy 66% of all jobs and are generally better paid; this indicates the existence of cultural patterns that favor men within the job market.

To make decent work a reality, the Secretariat of State for Labor presented a proposal for a Pilot Decent Work Project in Monte Plata, the action plan of which involves:

- ✓ Tripartite meetings to identify priority areas for work
- ✓ Workshops to identify priorities on the common agenda
- ✓ Evaluation of the training needs of each of the parties
- ✓ Examination of relevant experiences
- ✓ Definition of the parties' roles
- ✓ Clearly defined indicators
- ✓ Publication of materials

### **Joint Participants and Collaborating Agencies**

Including:

- ❖ The Social Security Affiliates' Defense Directorate
- ❖ Social Security General Management Offices
- ❖ Occupational Risks Administration (ARL)
- ❖ COPRESIDA
- ❖ National Council for Disabilities (CONADIS)
- ❖ INFOTEP
- ❖ Pastoral Service of the Dominican Church
- ❖ Cultural Clubs
- ❖ Various NGOs

### **Social and Economic Benefits of the Project**

The subsidized Social Security component in the health area and the SUIBEN targeted assistance programs should make a valuable contribution to the programs to be carried out under this project.

The future beneficiaries are therefore, in addition to the direct recipients of the project, employers and workers in general and, indirectly, the population as a whole.

### **Social Security Strategies**

Steps are being taken to strengthen the pensions system and the occupational risk insurance system. Launch of the Contributions Regime Basic Health Plan and inclusion of new areas in the subsidized system.

There are plans to implement actions to strengthen the subsidized system in Regions IV, V, III of health, and III of health.

There are also plans to implement an agreement, signed with the Central Elections Board, to provide members with documentation.

### **Employment Policies**

The General Directorate of Employment has developed, in conjunction with universities, INFOTEP, and technical schools and institutes, a broad training program for our work force, emphasizing the most vulnerable sectors (women and young people). This plan focuses on three basic areas: (a) fighting poverty, (b) creating productive jobs, and (c) social integration.

## **B. HEMISPHERIC COOPERATION**

The Secretariat of State for Labor (SET) continues to support and strengthen the operations of the agencies of the inter-American human rights system and to abide by the principles of the ILO, the Declaration of Human Rights, and treaties and conventions intended to protect migrant workers.

Major efforts are made in cooperation and solidarity with the Haitian people in their endeavors to revitalize democratic institutions, fight poverty, and promote equitable socioeconomic development. In this regard, the following exist:

- Project for didactic and methodological improvements in teaching processes, and in the learning of reading and writing and mathematics.
- Development of inclusive schools.
- Community support (southern border), through the Secretariat for Education and Culture (SEE-SEC).
- Adult literacy efforts, school meals in border regions and agricultural areas.
- Technical cooperation to assist Haitian farmers with machinery for rice growing / SEA – Dominican government.

In the area of forensic science, the Office of the Attorney General of the Republic worked to achieve international cooperation with countries such as Colombia, Chile, and the Basque government, in order to provide training for employees of the Forensic Science Institute (INACIF). Among the achievements of this office in 2006 was the inauguration of the North Regional Office of the National Forensic Science Institute (INACIF), based in Santiago.

<b>OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE REPUBLIC</b>
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During 2006, the Office of the Attorney General of the Republic made major efforts to meet its institutional and international commitments in accordance with the vision and mission of the Public Prosecution Service, through each of its agencies, which have unquestionably made laudable efforts to attain those goals.

The National Public Prosecution Service School, aware of our prosecutors' need for training, continued with its Improvement Programs (PP), Initial Training Program (PIF), and Special Training Program (PEF) for candidates seeking admission to the Public Prosecution Service career. Four generations graduated from the Special Program, and one graduated from the Initial Training Program; similarly, in accordance with a similar number of decrees, 127 members of the Public Prosecution Service career were given tenure.

At the same time, the Office of the Attorney General of the Republic has continued with the implementation of its new "Prosecution Office Management Model," which involves reorganizing regular working procedures with a view to decentralizing prosecutors' offices. As a part of this effort, a Model Management Manual was prepared, which includes basic instructions, in line with current regulations, for how prosecutors' offices are to proceed; this has already become a tool for change.

As a result, Model Prosecutors' Offices were set up in La Romana, La Vega, Baní, and, most recently, Elías Piña. At the same time, a large number of training workshops were held on reconciliation topics and on the implementation of the Management Model, with the support of USAID and its consultants. The most significant achievement was the successful installation of the *Justicia XXI* computer system, which collects general data on proceedings before the country's various jurisdictions at the prosecutors' offices in Santo Domingo, the National District, and La

Vega. It will operate in accordance with the Management Model required by each type of prosecutor's office and within the framework prepared by USAID for small prosecutors' offices.

The Department of Criminal Policy of the Office of the Attorney General was created in 2006; its task is to execute criminal policy guidelines within the framework of the Democratic Security Plan. At the same time, in accordance with Law 200-04 on Free Access to Public Information and Decree 130-05 adopting the Regulations for its application, the Office of the Attorney General of the Republic established the Public Information Access Office, providing the citizenry with access to information on organizational and procedural manuals, etc.

In 2006, the Department of Human Trafficking and Smuggling of the Attorney General's Office continued with its education days at high schools, schools, and colleges, dealing with issues related to this topic. It also succeeded in securing convictions to prison terms of between 10 and 20 years for violators of Law 137-03, which deals with shelters and refugees.

The Office for the Defense of the Environment and Natural Resources also made major achievements during 2006, such as:

1. By means of Resolution No. 67/2006 of February 17, 2006, the Investigating Magistrate of the Samaná Judicial District, Dr. Heriberto Luis Jhonson, admitted the ruling of the Public Prosecution Service and ordered the arrest of the U.S. citizen Roger Charles Fina, president of the company Multigestiones Valenza, S. A. The accused was brought to trial in that judicial district for organizing and carrying out the importation and unloading of 26,845 tons of rock ash at the port of Arroyo Barril in Samaná province.
2. The National Environmental Volunteer Corps was established. Gathering together hundreds of organizations and individuals at the national level, its main goal is to guarantee active community participation in planning the Environmental Criminal Policy enforced by the specialized Public Prosecution Service for that area.
3. It also launched the 1 (809) 200-0594 toll-free number, through which citizens can inform the environmental prosecution service of situations with an impact or negative affect on natural resources and the environment.

The Coordinating Office for Children, Adolescents, and Family worked hard for the wellbeing of vulnerable sectors, most importantly: rescuing at-risk street children; collecting and destroying arcade machines; the children's medical days held in various parts of the nation; and the operations conducted to rescue under-18s from bars and discotheques around the country.

The main achievements of the National Directorate for the Attention of Victims of Violence include: assisting with the first meeting of the Group of Psychology Professionals from neighborhood units and prosecutors' offices; planning and conducting the workshop "Working in their Shoes, using DNAV and PARME funds; and, finally, coordinating the consultancies carried out for the creation of the National Directory of Attention for Victims, using funds from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

## **NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR STATE REFORM (CONARE)**

The Government of the Dominican Republic has been pursuing programs and projects intended to combat poverty in order to ensure governance. It promotes policies that encourage the development of both local and regional markets, and the National Competitiveness Council, through its partnerships and cluster development initiatives, is working for innovation, diversification, and improved quality for key and niche products on local and regional markets, with a view to insertion in the global marketplace. The Council also plays a key role in identifying regulatory and logistical barriers that hamper efficient commercial performance vis-à-vis countries with better practices.

It promotes legal and institutional policies, which allow poor sectors of the population access to labor markets, the credit market, and markets for goods and services, to incorporate themselves into general and productive life and, to obtain a level of earnings that enables them to satisfy their basic needs and escape from poverty.

### **C. INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

The Secretariat of State for Labor (SET), in coordination with the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM), the ILO, and ECLAC, is working to improve its ability to generate statistics that focus on labor matters. It follows up on the technical support work carried out by the OAS in the implementation of the Inter-American Program adopted by means of resolution AG/RES. 2141 (XXXV-O/05).

The OAS's aim is to prepare an inter-American program for exchanges of experiences and best practices in order to strengthen and enhance, in our countries, mechanisms for participation by civil society organizations, the private sector, and the citizenry in general.

The participation of civil society organizations in this process is intended to help visualize, disseminate, and monitor the commitments acquired by governments and to generate an increasingly constructive involvement that will enable our country to overcome the problems of participation by all sectors.

## **SECRETARIAT OF STATE FOR EDUCATION**

The Secretariat of State for Education is the agency of the executive branch of government responsible for guiding and managing the national education system and for enforcing the relevant provisions of the Constitution of the Republic, the General Education Law (66-97) and related statutes, and the applicable regulations. This Secretariat of State is the link between the executive branch and all institutes of education, public or private, domestic or foreign, at the kindergarten, primary, secondary, and tertiary levels.

The Secretariat's permanent mission is to promote national development through comprehensive education, a right of all Dominicans, working for the development of citizens who can perform social activities that are useful and consistent with social demands.

The Dominican State, through the Secretariat for Education, has implemented a series of measures intended to raise and update the quality of Dominican education. The most important of these are:

- a. World-Links Projects: teacher-training, involving national and international collaborative projects among students.
- b. National Computers-for-Teachers Program, which has benefited 22,000 teachers.
- c. Strengthening the technological structures of more than 500 information and communications technology centers (ITC centers) across the nation.
- d. A set of Operating Regulations for the information and communications technology centers, governing the self-sustainability policy for the technological structures installed at centers of education.
- e. National training program for the incorporation of ITCs at the kindergarten, primary, and secondary levels.
- f. Digital Libraries, installed with funds from the Tele-Education Project, which is financed by the Dominican Telecommunications Institute.
- g. Technological corners for the kindergarten level, and 50 digital blackboards.
- h. Teachers and technicians participate in an on-line course for tutors, given by the Ministry of Education of Spain.
- i. Teachers and technicians benefited, under the agreements entered into with the Organization of Ibero-American States (OEI), at the course for university experts.

<b>SECRETARIAT OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS</b>
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The government, through the Under Secretariat for Consular and Immigration Affairs, has created an International Consular Network to fight illicit migrant smuggling and trafficking in human lives.

The Migratory Affairs Division has organized several seminars and, as a result, four Consular Networks have been established—Europe, the Caribbean, South America, and Central America—with the main aim of having consular chiefs take joint action to prevent trafficking in persons and migrant smuggling, protect the victims of those offenses, and following up to secure the arrest and/or prosecution of smugglers and traffickers.

Main functions of the Consular Networks:

- a. Disseminating information on methods to combat human trafficking and smuggling.
- b. Reporting any abuse or trafficking by individuals or agencies to the authorities.
- c. Working to defend children and adolescents in coordination with the Inter-institutional Commission against the Abuse and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents.
- d. Working with victims, providing them with consular, psychological, and medical services, accommodation, advice on legislation and immigration formalities, etc.

The networks have a Technical Secretariat, and its headquarters, which will rotate every two years by the election of the networks' consular representatives, will serve as the coordinator of the actions to be carried out in pursuit of its goals.

Similarly, there is a network of intergovernmental and nongovernmental agencies that work together to fight illicit migrant smuggling and human trafficking; it represents an effort toward the correct implementation of national crime policy and the fight against organized crime, to reduce the presence of traffickers in the most vulnerable areas where the problem is found.

These agencies include:

- a. Office of the Attorney General of the Republic
- b. The National Council for Children (CONANI)
- c. Center for Family Orientation and Integration (COIN)
- d. Division of Women's, Children's, Adolescents', and Senior Citizens' Affairs (SEREX)
- e. National Police
- f. The NGOs associated with the CIPROM
- g. The Secretariat of State for Women
- h. The Secretariat of State for Education
- i. General Migration Directorate
- j. National Directorate for Victim Assistance (DNAV)

<b>NATIONAL DIRECTORATE FOR VICTIM ASSISTANCE (DNAV)</b>
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The Attention Units have multidisciplinary teams that enable them to address the various manifestations of violence from different professional spheres: social, medical, legal etc.

Since 2006, the education sector has been included in the awareness days held at schools and colleges located in vulnerable areas. Publicity campaigns are being carried out across the country by means of TV channels.

Training courses are taught in the following areas: baking, cooking, domestic electricity; this is a response to the programs implemented as an alternative for earning income.

<b>NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR CHILDREN (CONANI)</b>
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As the top authority within the administrative subsystem of the National System for the Protection of the Rights of Children and Adolescents, the CONANI carries out various programs and actions to combat trafficking in persons aged under 18 in our country.

First of all are the comprehensive care programs offered at Halfway Houses, which target children and young people who, at a given time, need to be separated from their families because of risks or dangers they face. Another component is the Program against Abuse and Commercial Sexual

Exploitation, carried out in conjunction with the multisectoral and multidisciplinary Inter-institutional Coalition against the Abuse and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents.

The Council has a schedule of courses, workshops, and other events throughout the year, invariably in coordination with other related agencies, such as the Center for Family Orientation and Integration Families (COIN), where cases involving trafficked women are dealt with. As this Center's clinic, women are given medical, psychiatric, and psychological assistance, are helped with their papers, and are offered training and skill-acquisition courses.

### **NATIONAL DRUGS COUNCIL**

The Government of the Dominican Republic reaffirms its commitment to the mandates of the Declaration and Plan of Action of Mar del Plata arrived at the Fourth Summit of the Americas, held in Mar del Plata, Argentina, on November 5, 2005. In accordance with the National Strategy against Illicit Trafficking in Drugs and Controlled Substances, the National Drugs Council has carried out actions and programs in pursuit of that mandate, in recognition of the dimension of the problem and possibility offered by international cooperation for making such efforts viable and effective.

To that end, the Dominican Republic has designed and launched a National Plan for Democratic Security, the result of coordinated multidisciplinary efforts of various government agencies and external advisors, which crystallized as the Council for Civic Security, of which the President of the National Drugs Council is a member and the chief goal of which is to prevent and control the levels of violence and crime in our country.

The National Drugs Council is in the final stages of implementing our new National Antidrug Strategy for 2007-2011, which began in 2006. Support is given to this by the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD), an agency which, on account of its experience and weight in our Hemisphere, and of which we are an active member, provides us with advice and encouragement for creating and implementing strategies, actions, and programs that allow us to remain at the vanguard of drug prevention, control, and treatment.

Currently, the National Drugs Council, with assistance from CICAD and close cooperation from the office of the executive branch's advisor for drug-related issues, Dr. Marino Vinicio Castillo, steps are being taken to establish the Drugs Observatory of the Dominican Republic. The Observatory will be responsible for all research and information about illicit trafficking and use and abuse of drugs and controlled substances in our country; this will assist in providing statistics, data, and indicators for designing, implementing, executing, and evaluating our strategies and actions for attacking this phenomenon, targeting high-, medium-, and low-risk sectors, and including the carrying out of the National Household Survey and the Study of Social and Economic Costs, two vital instruments for effectively combating drug-related threats.

In the area of demand reduction, during the current administration the National Drugs Council has greatly expanded the scope of its drug prevention programs, increased the number of workshops, lectures, talks, training events, and educational and occupational activities in areas such as education, the community in general, youth, sports, and the workplace.

These programs are focused on young people and children, but we do not exclude from our target population such sectors as parents, schools, the community in general, the workplace (public and private), non-profit organizations, sports clubs, social and cultural associations, churches, and neighborhood organizations. Another high priority is treatment, rehabilitation, and social reincorporation programs for addicts, with the National Drugs Council one of the main donors to the institutions recognized by Law No. 122-05 and other regulatory instruments that work in those areas.

At the initiative of the National Drugs Council and following CICAD recommendations, the Dominican Republic recently adopted standards of care for drug-addicts; this was a major step forward, helping to achieve better levels of care and service from specialized nongovernmental organizations, notwithstanding the country's zero-tolerance laws.

In addition, we have made major efforts to establish mechanisms to ensure closer control over the revenues earned by drug trafficking and related offenses. To this end the National Money Laundering Committee was set up under Law No. 72-02 and has maintained an accelerated rhythm of work in designing and implementing actions and strategies to prevent and control money-laundering activities in our country. The same law also created the Office for the Safekeeping of Seized Goods and the Financial Analysis Unit (UAF), which operates under the close control of the National Money Laundering Committee, chaired by the President of the National Drugs Council.

Different government agencies—such as the Secretariat of State for Public Health, the National Drugs Council, the National Drug Control Directorate, the General Customs Directorate, the Ports Authority, the Office of the Attorney General of the Republic, etc.—have been working together to develop actions and implement strategies for making our country's preventive control measures more effective.

The National Drugs Council, as the agency responsible for conducting the national antidrug policy, sees the Hemispheric Antidrug Strategy—signed and ratified by the Dominican Republic—as an instrument of incalculable value for defining strategies and actions for improving our performance vis-à-vis the drugs phenomenon.

The Dominican government acknowledges that fighting drugs requires major technological, human, and economic resources for it to be able to expand its efforts, and this is a challenge that requires the support of the international community, particularly since developing countries have limited resources that should be directed into meeting the basic needs of their populations.

Our country, led by the government of His Excellency the President of the Republic, Dr. Leonel Fernández Reyna, wishes to reiterate its political willingness to do everything within its power to ensure a future that is free from drugs, along with its support for the principle of joint responsibility as a basic element in addressing this threat that undermines the security of our peoples and of democratic regimes.