



THIRD REGIONAL INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE ON AGEING IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

San José, Costa Rica 8 –11 May 2012

GENERAL INFORMATION

INTRODUCTION

The Third Regional Intergovernmental Conference on Ageing in Latin America and the Caribbean will take place in San José, from 8 to 11 May 2012.

The purpose of this document is to provide delegates attending the Conference with background information which may be useful for their attendance at the event.

Session coordinators will be pleased to answer any questions concerning logistics or organization, whether before or during the event.

1. Basic information on Costa Rica

Costa Rica is located in the southern part of Central America and borders with Nicaragua to the north, the Caribbean Sea to the east, Panama to the south and the Pacific Ocean to the west.

Costa Rican territory includes Cocos Island, an uninhabited island covered in dense tropical forest some 480 km to the south-east of the Osa peninsula in the Pacific Ocean.

Costa Rica has a surface area of 51,100 km² and a population of 4,253,897.

Administratively, Costa Rica is divided into seven provinces: San José, Alajuela, Cartago, Guanacaste, Heredia, Limón and Puntarenas.

San José is the country's capital city, as well as its largest and most populated. It is located in the heart of Costa Rica and is a major point of passage, congregating over 1 million people every day.

Language

Costa Rica's official language is Spanish. English is also spoken, especially in tourist areas.

Climate

Costa Rica has a fairly constant temperature with only small variations during the year. Temperatures in the central valley, where San José is located, average 21°C. On the coast temperatures vary from 24°C to 30°C. A northerly breeze in December, January and February can lower the temperature by 3°C to 5°C.

For the month of May, the National Meteorological Institute of Costa Rica quotes a low of 18°C and a high of 26°C, average precipitation of 248.5 mm and 21 rainy days.

Useful information for visitors

Local currency Colón (\$)	<p>The currency used in Costa Rica is the colón (plural: colones). The current exchange rate stands at 520.69 colones = US\$ 1. United States dollars, in cash or in travellers cheques, may be exchanged in almost all hotels and in the banks. The exchange rate in hotels and at banks is almost always the same, so visitors are advised to exchange money at the hotel to avoid long lines at the banks. All hotels accept United States dollars or credit cards, but change for most transactions will be given in local currency, not dollars. Most restaurants take credit cards. The most widely accepted cards are Visa, Mastercard and American Express. Although exchange facilities are readily available, visitors are advised to exchange some money immediately upon arrival in Costa Rica.</p> <p>Cash can be drawn on a credit card at some banks and ATMs in San José. Visa or Mastercard are the most widely accepted for this purpose.</p>
Local time	UTC or GMT minus 6 hours.
Electricity	The electric current is 110 volts nationwide. All hotels have electric power. Plugs have two flat prongs.
Water	Tap water is drinkable in most of Costa Rica. Nevertheless, travellers are advised to buy bottled water for personal consumption.
Airport tax	An exit tax of US \$ 29 is payable per person.
Tipping	All taxes are included in room rates, but tips are not. A tip may be offered upon receipt of particularly satisfactory service. In restaurants, it is usual to leave a 10% tip. However, some establishments add it to the bill automatically, so check to see if the tip has already been included. No tip is usually paid on taxi fares. The tip is not included in other service charges.
Taxis	Good taxi service is available in San José. Prices are controlled and metred (the metre is known as a "maría"). Cabs are red with a yellow triangle on the forward doors and start the run with a basic minimum fare. Airport taxis are orange and very reliable. Visitors are advised not to use unauthorized taxi services. The basic taxi fare is US\$ 1.20 and hotel taxis have fares for specific routes, although these differ little from the regular fare.

2. Venue of the meeting

The Third Regional Intergovernmental Conference on Ageing in Latin America and the Caribbean will take place in San José, from 8 to 11 May 2012, at the Convention Centre of the Hotel Barceló Premium San José Palacio, in San José.

The hotel is 11 kilometres, or a journey of about 20 minutes, from the Juan Santamaría International Airport.

The hotel details are:

HOTEL BARCELÓ PREMIUM SAN JOSÉ PALACIO

Address: Residencial El Robledal, La Uruca 4581150
San José
Tel: (506) 2220-2034
Fax: (506) 2520-2046
Website: <http://www.barcelosanjosepalacio.com>

3. Coordination of the meeting

The meeting is being organized jointly by ECLAC and the National Council for Older Persons (CONAPAM) of the Office of the President of the Republic of Costa Rica.

Enquires on substantive matters pertaining to the meeting may be directed to Sandra Huenchuan, Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE) - Population Division of ECLAC (tel. (56-2) 210-2030, e-mail: sandra.huenchuan@cepal.org); Luis Fidel Yáñez, Officer-in-Charge of the Office of the Secretary of the Commission of ECLAC (tel. (56-2) 210-2275, e-mail: luis.yanez@cepal.org); and Guillermo Acuña, Legal Adviser to the Office of the Secretary of the Commission of ECLAC (tel. (56-2) 210-2488, e-mail: guillermo.acuna@cepal.org).

Enquiries concerning operational aspects of the meeting should be addressed to Paula Warnken, Protocol Officer, Office of the Secretary of the Commission (tel. (56-2) 210-2651, e-mail: paula.warnken@cepal.org), and Claudia Guerrero, Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE) - Population Division of ECLAC (tel. (56-2) 210-2024, e-mail: claudia.guerrero@cepal.org).

4. Hotel reservations

The ECLAC Conference Services Unit has reserved a limited number of rooms at special rates.

Single room: US\$ 96.90 (includes taxes, breakfast and wireless Internet connection)

Double room: US\$ 108.30 (includes taxes, breakfast and wireless Internet connection)

Reservations: Hotel Barceló Premium San José Palacio
Att.: Samia Portillo
E-mail: sportillo@barcelocr.com
Tel: (506) 2220-2034, ext. 742
Fax: (506) 2520-2046

Requests for reservations should be addressed directly to the hotel **by 15 April 2012**. Beyond this date, the hotel cannot guarantee the special rate or availability of rooms. **For reservations you can only use the attached form.**

Delegates are responsible for their own reservations. It is advisable to check that the hotel has processed your reservation and to request a reservation number or confirmation code.

A credit card number is required in order to make a reservation. Hotels in Costa Rica operate a no show policy, whereby reservations may be cancelled up to 24 hours prior to expected arrival, failing which, cardholders who do not show up will be charged for the first night. All delegates must settle their own hotel bill at the end of their stay.

5. Entry requirements for Costa Rica

Bearers of regular, diplomatic or official passports should request a visa at their nearest Costa Rican embassy or consulate. Citizens of some countries do not require a visa to visit Costa Rica.

Costa Rica requires an international yellow fever vaccination certificate in some cases. This certificate becomes valid 10 days after vaccination. It is usually required for persons entering Costa Rica temporarily or permanently who are proceeding from or who have been in the previous 90 days in Angola, Benin, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Colombia, the Congo, Ecuador, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea, Guyana, Liberia, Nigeria, Peru, Plurinational State of Bolivia, Sierra Leona or Sudan. Travellers are advised to make enquires on this point before they travel.

Official website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Costa Rica: www.rree.go.cr/

6. Local transport

Participants must make their own way between the airport and the hotel, which offers a two-way minibus shuttle service included in the room rate.

Shuttles can carry up to 12 people on each trip and may be coordinated for travellers on the same flights at the established times.

Visitors arriving outside the shuttle timetable may take a private taxi, which costs approximately US\$ 20 per trip (hotel-airport or airport-hotel). The same price applies for large groups arriving outside the shuttle's regular hours

TIMETABLE FOR TRANSPORT BETWEEN AIRPORT AND HOTEL	
HOTEL – AIRPORT	AIRPORT - HOTEL
Morning	
4 a.m.	
5 a.m.	
6 a.m.	6.30 a.m.
7 a.m.	7.30 a.m.
8 a.m.	8.30 a.m.
10 a.m.	10.30 a.m.
11 a.m.	11.30 a.m.
Noon	12.30 p.m.
Afternoon	
2 p.m.	2.30 p.m.
3 p.m.	3.30 p.m.
4 p.m.	4.30 p.m.
6 p.m.	6.30 p.m.
7 p.m.	7.30 p.m.
8 p.m.	8.30 p.m.
9 p.m.	9.30 p.m.
10 p.m.	10.30 p.m.

The shuttle service operates from 4 a.m. to 9 p.m. For further information, please contact the Hotel Barceló San José Palacio on (506) 2220-2034, ext. 694/745 or 733.

7. Registration of participants

An online registration system will be set up on the ECLAC website (www.cepal.org/celade/costarica2012) as of 19 March 2012.

Accreditation will begin on **Tuesday 8 May at 9 a.m.**, in the lobby outside the Greco A meeting hall in the convention centre of the Hotel Barceló Premium San José Palacio. Participants will be given identification badges, which, for security purposes, must be shown at all meetings.

For further information on accreditation, please contact Paula Warnken (paula.warnken@cepal.org; tel. (56-2) 210-2651) or Claudia Guerrero (claudia.guerrero@cepal.org; tel. (56-2) 210-2024).

Online registration **does not exempt** participants from the requirement to send an official note indicating the names of the head of delegation and accompanying members.

8. Opening session

The meeting will be opened at **3 p.m. on 8 May** in the brick nave of the old customs building (Antigua Aduana), opposite the Universidad Internacional de las Américas, beside Santa Teresita church.

9. Communications

The conference venue will provide an office with computers and an Internet connection for conference delegates. ECLAC will cover the costs of international communications from the conference venue for duly authorized officials (see article V of the hosting agreement).

10. Internet

A wireless Internet connection (wi-fi) will be available in the offices allocated to the meeting and in the conference rooms.

11. Languages

The official language of the meeting is Spanish. Simultaneous interpretation in English will be provided.

12. Documents

Documentation will be uploaded to the Conference website (www.cepal.org/celade/costarica2012) as it becomes available.

13. Medical service

The hotel is equipped to administer first aid 24 hours a day in the event of an emergency during the Conference.

All participants should carry medical insurance valid for Costa Rica with sufficient coverage for any eventuality.



UNITED NATIONS
THIRD REGIONAL INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE ON AGEING
IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

San José, 8 – 11 May 2012

HOTEL RESERVATION REQUEST

First name:		Surname:	
Head of delegation <input type="checkbox"/>	Delegate <input type="checkbox"/>	Observer <input type="checkbox"/>	Special guest <input type="checkbox"/>
Official title:			
Agency or institution:			
Address:			
City:		Country:	
Tel:	Fax:	E-mail:	

Please reserve a room at:

HOTEL BARCELO PREMIUM SAN JOSE PALACIO Residencial El Robledal, La Uruca, San José, Costa Rica Tel: (506) 2220-2034, ext. 742 Fax: (506) 2520-2046 E-mail: sportillo@barcelocr.com Att: Samia Portillo	Standard single <input type="checkbox"/> US\$ 96.90 (includes tax, breakfast and Internet)	
	Standard double <input type="checkbox"/> US\$ 108.30 (includes tax, breakfast and Internet)	
Date of arrival in Costa Rica:	Flight No:	Approx. time:
Date of departure from Costa Rica:	Flight No:	Approx. time:

I authorize the use of my credit card to guarantee my hotel reservation:

American Express <input type="checkbox"/>	Master Card <input type="checkbox"/>	Visa <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>
Credit card No.			Expiry date:

Reservation requests should be addressed directly to the Hotel Barceló Premium San José Palacio **by 15 April**. Delegates are responsible for their own reservations. It is advisable to check that the hotel has processed your request and to ask for a reservation number or confirmation code. To guarantee reservations, delegates are required to indicate their flight number and time and date of arrival and departure to and from Costa Rica, as well as credit card details. When making reservations, delegates should specify that they will be attending the Third Regional Intergovernmental Conference on Ageing in Latin America and the Caribbean, in order to qualify for the special rate negotiated.