



UNITED NATIONS



**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA
AND THE CARIBBEAN**

**THIRTIETH SESSION OF THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

GENERAL INFORMATION

I. Introduction

The thirtieth session of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) will be held in San Juan, Puerto Rico, from 28 June to 2 July 2004. Pursuant to resolution 596(XXIX) as adopted at the twenty-ninth session of ECLAC (Brasilia, Brazil, 6-10 May 2002), member States agreed that the meeting would be held in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

As the Commission's most important event in each biennium, the session provides an opportunity to analyse issues that are important for the development of countries in the region and to examine the progress of the activities conducted by ECLAC.

The aim of this document is to provide delegates attending the session with useful background information and logistical support to facilitate their work at the thirtieth session of ECLAC.

Session coordinators will be pleased to answer any questions you may have concerning the logistics or organization of the event, either before or during the session.

Basic information about Puerto Rico

Puerto Rico is an archipelago located in the Caribbean. To the east lie the Virgin Islands and, to the west, the Mona Passage (approximately 120 km wide), which separates Puerto Rico from the Dominican Republic. The southern coastline of the island borders the Caribbean Sea, while the Atlantic Ocean lies to the north. Puerto Rico consists of a larger main island, which is the smallest of the four Greater Antilles, the municipal islands of Vieques and Culebra, located to the east, and the islands of Mona, Monito and Desecheo, to the west.

Owing to its location, Puerto Rico has a tropical marine climate year round. Its coastline extends 501 km, and its national territory covers an area of 8,900 km². The island's terrain is mostly mountainous with an area of plains in the north, cliffs along the western coast and sandy beaches ringing the island.

The population of Puerto Rico is 3.8 million inhabitants and boasts an 89% literacy rate. Spanish is the predominant language, but English is also widely spoken. In addition to "puertorriqueños," Puerto Ricans are also known as "boricuas" or "borincanos."

Puerto Rico is a commonwealth of the United States. Its system of government was established by the Constitution of 1952. Its territory is divided into 78 municipalities; major ones include San Juan, Bayamón, Arecibo, Mayagüez, Ponce, Guayama, Humacao and Carolina.

The government of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico is divided into three constitutional branches:

Executive branch:	Headed by the Governor
Bicameral legislative branch:	Chamber of Representatives and Senate
Judicial branch:	Supreme Court of Puerto Rico

Its legal system is based on the Spanish Civil Code for matters related to private law and on common law for affairs subject to public law.

Puerto Rico's main political parties are the Popular Democratic Party, the political party in office and a proponent of the island's current status as a commonwealth; the New Progressive Party, which seeks the annexation of Puerto Rico as a federate state of the United States of America; and the Puerto Rican Independence Party, which advocates the island's independence. General elections are held every four years in November. The next elections will be held on 7 November 2004.

The national budget for 2004 totals US\$ 23,282,000,000. The gross domestic product (GDP) for fiscal year 2003 amounted to US\$ 74,362,000,000, and per capita GDP stood at US\$ 19,220.

Puerto Rican exports total US\$ 55,175,300,000 while imports amount to US\$ 33,749,700,000, yielding a trade surplus of US\$ 13,788,200,000. Puerto Rico's main trading partners are:

<u>Exports:</u>	United States, Netherlands, Belgium, France, Dominican Republic, Germany, Italy, Singapore, Japan and the United Kingdom
<u>Imports:</u>	United States, Ireland, Japan, Germany, Virgin Islands, Singapore, Dominican Republic, Colombia, the United Kingdom and Brazil

Historical background

Discovered by Christopher Columbus on 19 November 1493 during his second voyage to the New World, the island of Puerto Rico was inhabited at the time by the Taino indians. Borikén (the native inhabitants' name for the island, which means "the great land of the valiant Lord," had a population of between approximately 70,000 and 100,000 Taino Indians. The supreme *cacique* (chief) was *Agüeybana*, who resided in the *yucayeque* (village) of Guainía (now Guánica municipality).



Juan Ponce de León
Primer Gobernador de Puerto Rico

The Spaniards called the main island San Juan Bautista and named the tiny island where the capital city was founded Puerto Rico. Later, in 1521, the names were switched, making San Juan the name of the capital city.

In 1508, Juan Ponce de León embarked upon the conquest and colonization of the island. Ponce de León, the island's first governor, established the first Spanish settlement in Puerto Rico, calling it Caparra. Shortly thereafter, colonists began to complain about the location of the first settlement. The Spanish Crown then authorized the settlers to move to the tiny island of San Juan, then known as Puerto Rico, or Rich Port, because of its excellent natural harbour.

In response to the constant threat of European adversaries in the Caribbean, Spain began to build defences around the tiny island of San Juan during the mid-1500s. Its strategic location and the natural depth of the bay prompted King Philip II to order the construction of the first fortresses. Puerto Rico soon developed from Spain's most important military outpost in the region to, in the words of one of Puerto Rico's former leaders, Francisco Manuel de Lando, "the gateway and key to all the Indies."

Thirty years or so later, the gold fever of the *conquistadores* subsided. By 1536, the supply of placer gold was virtually depleted, prompting an exodus of people from the small colony. Subsequent leaders implemented a series of reforms aimed at developing a farm-based economy on the island. Cattle, sugarcane, tobacco and coffee were Puerto Rico's chief products.

In December 1897, Spanish Prime Minister, Práxedes Mateo Sagasta, granted Puerto Rico autonomy. The Letter of Autonomy granted Puerto Rico its own government and gave it broad trade advantages. The island's government would be headed by a Governor-General and a bicameral Legislature. In 1898, a few months before the first popular elections of its newly autonomous government were to be held and following the outbreak of the Spanish-American war, Puerto Rico was invaded by the United States military. In the Treaty of Paris, Spain ceded the island to the United States as "war booty." Puerto Rico then became a territory of the United States.



Luis Muñoz Marín
Primer Gobernador Electo
por el pueblo de Puerto Rico

On 2 March 1917, Puerto Ricans received United States citizenship pursuant to the Jones Act. In 1943, United States President Franklin D. Roosevelt recommended to Congress that Puerto Rico should be granted the right to elect its own governor. Consequently, in 1948, the people of Puerto Rico voted for their own governor. Luis Muñoz Marín, of the

Popular Democratic Party, was elected and remained in office until 1964.

Following the economic turmoil of the 1930s and the shortages caused by the Second World War, Puerto Rico underwent a far-reaching process of social change. This was a truly peaceful revolution which transformed the island from a rural, single-crop, traditional society into an urban, modern industrial country. Operation "Manos a la Obra" (shoulder to the wheel), carried out under the Muñoz Marín administration, changed the economic outlook for Puerto Ricans, providing new opportunities for development and increasing the standard of living for the population in general.

In the summer of 1950, President Harry S. Truman signed Public Act 600, a statute granting Puerto Rico the right to draft its own constitution for subsequent approval by the United States Congress. In August 1951, elections were held for seats in the Constituent Assembly. The Assembly drafted a document that was subsequently approved by the people of Puerto Rico in a plebiscite on 3 March 1952. On 25 July that same year, the Constitution was enacted, thereby creating the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and a system of self-government that has been in place ever since. As a commonwealth, the country has made significant economic and educational progress and has become one of the most dynamic, progressive societies in the Caribbean and Latin America.

The Constitution of 1952 established an autonomous, republican government, divided into the executive, the legislative and the judicial branches. The executive branch is headed by the Governor, the legislature comprises the Senate and Chamber of Representatives and the judicial branch is made up of a number of different types of courts and jurisdictions, including a Supreme Court. The island is divided into 78 municipalities, each of which is headed by a mayor who, together with the municipal assembly, assumes all administrative duties. General elections to select government representatives are held every four years. Puerto Rico is among the few countries in Latin America that has successfully kept a democratic system and civil liberties in place for over half a century.



All matters related to customs, immigration, interstate commerce, mail and defence fall under the jurisdiction of the United States Government. As United States citizens, Puerto Ricans serve in the United States Armed Forces, whether as volunteers or as part of the Selective Service.

At the general elections held on 5 November 2000, the people of Puerto Rico elected the first female Governor of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Sila M. Calderón, of the Popular Democratic Party.

Web pages of interest:

Official guide to Puerto Rico: www.gobierno.pr
Interactive maps of Puerto Rico: www.travelmaps.com
Puerto Rico Tourism Company: www.gotopuertorico.com
Puerto Rico Convention Bureau: www.meetpuertorico.com

2. Location of the session

The thirtieth session of ECLAC will be held at the Hotel Caribe Hilton, in the capital city of San Juan.

Hotel Caribe Hilton

Address: Calle Los Rosales
San Gerónimo Grounds
San Juan, Puerto Rico
Mailing address: Apartado 1872 San Juan, PR 00902-1872
Telephone: 1 (787)721-0303
Fax: 1 (787)722-2910
Web site: <http://www.hiltoncaribbean.com/sanjuan/>

Approximately 200 governmental delegates and nearly 100 representatives of specialized agencies and other bodies within the United Nations system, non-governmental organizations and special guests are expected to attend.

3. Coordination of the session

The session will be organized by ECLAC in conjunction with the Office of the Assistant Secretary of State for Foreign Relations of the Department of State of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

Conference Services Unit
ECLAC, United Nations
Ms. Cecilia Guarachi
Telephone: (56-2) 210-2667
Fax: (56-2) 210-2279
E-mail: cguarachi@eclac.cl
Santiago, Chile

Office of the Assistant Secretary of State for Foreign Relations
Department of State
Commonwealth of Puerto Rico

Rafael A. Subero Collazo, J.D.
Telephone: (787) 721-1751
Fax: (787) 723-3304
San Juan, Puerto Rico
E-mail: exteriores@estado.gobierno.pr

4. Programme of activities

The thirtieth session will be held from Monday 28 June to Friday 2 July 2004.

On Monday, 28 June, following the meeting of heads of delegation and the opening ceremony of the session, the participants will consider the substantive topic "Productive development in open economies".

On Tuesday, 29 June, both the ECLAC sessional Ad Hoc Committee on Population and Development (Conference Room 2) and the Presiding Officers of the Regional Council for Planning of the Latin American and Caribbean Institute for Economic and Social Planning (ILPES) (Conference Room 3) will meet throughout the day. The plenary will be held concurrently (Conference Room 1) and will provide delegates with the opportunity to examine the report on the activities of the Commission in the morning and, in the afternoon, the Commission's draft programme of work for the 2006-2007 biennium.

On Wednesday, 30 June, activities will continue with three concurrent meetings. In Conference Room 1, the review of the draft programme of work for the 2006-2007 biennium will continue in the morning, and the Committee on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries and Regions will assemble in the afternoon. In Conference Room 2, the ECLAC/UNESCO seminar entitled "Education financing and management in Latin America and the Caribbean" will be held in the morning, while the work of the ECLAC sessional Ad Hoc Committee on Population and Development will resume in the afternoon. Additionally, a special session on sustainable development will be held throughout the day in Conference Room 3.

The official opening ceremony of the thirtieth session will take place in the morning of Thursday, 1 July. The rest of the day will be reserved for the high-level seminar "Productive development in open economies," which will continue on Friday morning.

The secretariat suggests that, in addition to participating actively in the high-level seminar, ministers may wish to take part in the general discussion concerning the programme of work for the 2006-2007 biennium and the adoption of the resolutions of the session, scheduled for Friday afternoon.

5. Hotel reservations

Requests for hotel reservations should be addressed directly to the Hotel Caribe Hilton before 26 May 2004. After 26 May 2004, the hotel reserves the right to alter the rate offered and will not guarantee availability. We suggest that you use the attached form for this purpose.

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 code for confirmation.

Delegates are also requested to fax a copy of their reservation form and flight itinerary to the Office of the Assistant Secretary of State for Foreign Relations at (787) 723-3304. This will enable us to coordinate assistance for delegates upon their arrival at Luis Muñoz Marín International Airport.

Hotel	Room	Daily rate
Hotel Caribe Hilton Calle Los Rosales San Gerónimo Grounds San Juan, Puerto Rico www.caribehilton.com Telephone: (787)721-0303; 1-800-468-8585 Fax: (787) 724-6992 E-mail: reservations.caribe@hilton.com	<i>Standard single occupancy</i>	US\$ 150.00
	<i>Standard double occupancy</i>	US\$ 150.00
	<i>Junior Suite</i>	US\$ 244.00
	<i>Garden Suite</i>	US\$ 340.00
	<i>Corner Suite</i>	US\$ 380.00
	<i>Duplex Suite</i>	US\$ 540.00
	<i>Duplex Deluxe Suite</i>	US\$ 700.00

*In addition to the room rate, other expenses include:

- 9.54% in government taxes
- 6% hotel tax
- US\$ 4.50 one-time porter tip, per person
- US\$ 0.50 daily tip for housekeeping service, per person

The rates offered by the hotel are based on a group rate. When making a reservation, please mention the “ECLAC group” code, which is CEPA 062704. The hotel requires a credit card number to hold a reservation. All rates include continental breakfast. The hotel has agreed to provide all conference guests with complementary entry to its fitness centre and a 15% discount at *Las Olas Spa*.

6. Entry requirements for Puerto Rico

As Puerto Rico is a commonwealth of the United States of America, its inhabitants are United States citizens. Therefore, United States citizens do not need a passport to enter Puerto Rico. Holders of regular, diplomatic or official passports of other nationalities should apply for a visa at the nearest United States embassy or consulate. Applications must be submitted at least **30 (thirty) days prior to scheduled travel.**

Information on United States embassies and consulates is available online at the United States Department of State's web site: <http://usembassy.state.gov/>

7. Local transportation

Delegates are responsible for arranging transport between Luis Muñoz Marín International Airport and the Hotel Caribe Hilton.

Taxis are available at the airport, hotels and most tourist points; rates are fixed according to location. Outside of these areas, taxis are metered and can be hired by the hour.

Set rates - Tourist areas

Airport / Isla Verde	US\$ 8.00
Airport / Condado / Miramar	US\$ 12.00
Airport / Pier Area in Old San Juan	US\$ 16.00
Piers / Old San Juan	US\$ 6.00
Piers / Condado / Miramar	US\$ 10.00
Piers / Isla Verde	US\$ 16.00
Piers / Plaza Las Américas shopping mall	US\$ 12.00
Piers / Plaza Carolina shopping mall	US\$ 20.00
Piers 1, 4, 6 & Navy Frontier / El Morro	US\$ 6.00
Pan-American Piers / El Morro	US\$ 10.00

8. Registration

Registration of delegates attending the session will take place on 28 June in the lobby of the conference area of the Hotel Caribe Hilton from 8:30 a.m. on. Participants will be given identification badges, which, for security purposes, will have to be shown at all conference meetings.

9. Additional services in the conference area

A currency-exchange desk, ATM machines, a travel agency, cellular phones for rent and a special module for secretarial services for delegates will be available in the conference area.

10. Communications

International fax and telephone services will be available to delegates in the conference area. Calls must be paid for by each delegate individually, either by calling collect or by using a telephone or credit card.

11. Languages

The official languages of the session will be Spanish, English and French.

12. Medical services

The Hotel hosting the session is equipped to administer first aid 24 hours a day in the event of an emergency during the session.

13. Climate

Puerto Rico has a tropical marine climate. June and July are summer months, and the temperature varies between highs of 95 degrees Fahrenheit during the day and lows of 80 degrees Fahrenheit at night, with little chance of rain. <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/sju/>

14. Meals

Room rates include continental breakfast, for a maximum of two persons per room. Coffee will be provided during recesses. Delegates are responsible for all other meals.

15. International press centre

In order to facilitate press coverage of the thirtieth session of ECLAC, an international press centre will be set up in the conference area of the hotel.

Reporters wishing to cover the session must register and obtain accreditation the press centre, which will be open on a daily basis starting at 9:00 a.m.

The centre will have an information and documentation office, cubicles for accredited press representatives and working areas for print media journalists.

Questions should be directed to Mr. Víctor Fernández, Chief of the ECLAC Information Services Unit, telephone (56-2) 210-2330; fax (56-2) 210-1947; e-mail vfernandez@eclac.cl.



**UNITED NATIONS
THIRTIETH SESSION OF THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (ECLAC)
Puerto Rico, 28 June-2 July**

HOTEL RESERVATION REQUEST FORM

Name		Last name	
Head of delegation <input type="checkbox"/>	Delegate <input type="checkbox"/>	Observer <input type="checkbox"/>	Special guest <input type="checkbox"/>
Official title:			
Organization or institution:			
Address:			
City:		Country:	
Telephone:	Fax:	E-mail:	

Hotel reservation with:

HOTEL CARIBE HILTON Calle Los Rosales, San Gerónimo Grounds San Juan, Puerto Rico Tel: (787) 721-0303; 1-800-468-8585 Fax: (787) 724-6992 E-mail: reservations.caribe@hilton.com Attention: Wanda Torres	Standard single occupancy	US\$ 150.00
	Standard double occupancy	US\$ 150.00 Breakfast included
	Junior Suite (single or double occupancy)	US\$ 244.00 Breakfast included
	Garden Suite	US\$ 340 Breakfast included
<i>Type of accommodation</i>	Double <input type="checkbox"/>	Suite <input type="checkbox"/>
Single <input type="checkbox"/>		
Date of arrival in Puerto Rico:	Flight no.:	Arrival time:
Date of departure from Puerto Rico:	Flight no.:	Departure 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:	

Reservations should be made directly with the Hotel Caribe Hilton (see address above). Each delegate is responsible for his/her own reservation. It is advisable to check that the hotel has processed your reservation and to request a reservation number or code for confirmation. **The rates offered by the Hotel are based on a group rate. When making a reservation please mention the "ECLAC group" code, which is CEPA 062704.** A credit card number is required to make a hotel reservation.