



THIRTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF ECLAC

Havana, 7-11 May 2018

THIRTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (ECLAC)

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GENERAL INFORMATION



INTRODUCTION

The thirty-seventh session of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) will be held in Havana, from 7 to 11 May 2018. In accordance with resolution 714(XXXVI) adopted at the thirty-sixth session of ECLAC and resolution 2016/13 of the Economic and Social Council, member States agreed that Cuba would be the host country of this session.

The session is the most important intergovernmental conference for steering the work of ECLAC. It serves as a forum for consideration of the most pressing economic and social development issues for the countries of the region, as well as an occasion to review the progress made by the Commission.

The purpose of this document is to provide delegates with useful information to facilitate their work at the meeting.

1. GENERAL INFORMATION ON CUBA

1.1. Geographical location

Cuba is one of the northernmost islands that make up the Antilles or West Indies, and is located at the mouth of the Gulf of Mexico, between the Yucatan and Florida peninsulas. The north and east coasts of the island are bordered by the Atlantic Ocean, while the beaches to the south are bordered by the Caribbean Sea. The Cuban archipelago spans 110,922 square kilometres and comprises the island of Cuba, Isla de la Juventud, and more than 4,500 keys and islets. It is 1,250 kilometres long, 193 kilometres across at its widest point and 32 kilometres across at its narrowest point. It includes almost 5,900 kilometres of coastline and a wide range of lovely beaches, particularly on the north coast.

Cuba is mostly flat, although it includes four large mountain ranges: Guaniguanico in the west, Trinidad in the central province of Sancti Spíritus, and Nipe-Sagua-Baracoa and Sierra Maestra in the eastern region, home of the highest point in the country, the Pico Real del Turquino, which is 1,974 metres above sea level. The largest river is the Cauto, which is 370 kilometres in length. The Zapata swamp, which is south-east of Havana, is the largest area of wetland in the Caribbean and one of the largest in the world, owing to strong conservation and protection of its topography, flora and fauna.

1.2. Climate

Cuba has a moderate subtropical climate. The island is located near the Tropic of Cancer, and owing to its long and narrow surface area, is kept cool by trade winds and sea breeze. The annual average temperature is 25°C. January and February are the coolest months, with an average temperature of 22°C, while August is the hottest month, at 28°C on average.

Relative humidity is 81%, and there are two distinct seasons: dry, from November to April, and rainy, from May to October, with average annual rainfall of 1.375 mm.

Havana has a warm tropical climate. In May, the average temperature in the city is around 30°C/22°C.

1.3. Language

The official language is Spanish.

1.4. Flag

The Cuban flag includes three blue horizontal stripes representing the three original regions into which the island was divided under the colonial system; it also includes two white horizontal stripes representing the purity of the Cuban people's independence ideals, and a red triangle representing liberty, equality and fraternity. The colour red symbolizes the blood spilled during the fight for independence, while the single star is a symbol of unity.

The Cuban flag was first flown in Cárdenas, in May 1850, and was adopted as the national symbol by the Constituent Assembly of the Republic of Cuba in 1869, in Guáimaro, Camagüey.

1.5 Coat of Arms

The Cuban coat of arms is a pointed leather shield divided into three sections. At the top there is a golden key in a blue sea between two pieces of land, which symbolizes Cuba's key position between the Americas. The sun represents the birth of a new nation. The three blue stripes, separated by two white ones, represent the districts into which Cuba was divided under the colonial system. The royal palm that appears in the bottom right section, amid a Cuban landscape, represents abundant nature and the nobility and quiet strength of the Cuban people. The coat of arms is surrounded by laurel and oak branches, which symbolize victory and strength. At the bottom, the fastened bundle of sticks represents the unity of the Cuban people, and at the top a Phrygian cap of freedom with a single star is a symbol of a single and indivisible nation.

1.6 National anthem

This was composed in 1867 by Pedro Figueredo of Bayamo and sung by the rebel forces when they took the city of Bayamo on 20 October 1868, when the composer added the following verses:

Hasten to battle, men of Bayamo
For the homeland looks proudly to you
Do not fear a glorious death
Because to die for the country is to live.

To live in chains
Is to live in dishonor and ignominy
Hear the clarion call
Hasten, brave ones, to battle!

1.7. National flower

The national flower is the white garland lily, a delicate and sweetly-scented flower similar to jasmine.

1.8. National bird

The Cuban trogon (*priotelus temnurus*) is a member of the quetzal family, and its feathers are the colours of the Cuban flag: red, blue and white. Like the flag, it symbolizes freedom, as it is unable to live in captivity.

1.9. National tree

Although the royal palm can be found throughout the Caribbean, it is a predominant feature of the Cuban landscape, providing wood and roofing material for rural construction, since the early days.

Its fruit are used to feed livestock and its leaves are used to preserve agricultural produce. Above all, its resilience in the worst storms has inspired respect and admiration and symbolizes the indomitable nature of the Cuban people.

1.10 Population

Cuba has a total population of 11,167,325. There are 25,675 more women than men, with a ratio of 995 men for every 1,000 women. The urban population represents 76.8% of the total population. Population growth is limited, with a lower fertility rate than the replacement rate, and with less than one daughter for every woman who gives birth. The infant mortality rate is 4.2 per 1,000 live births. Life expectancy is 78.45 years.

1.11 Havana

Established on 16 November 1519, this city's geographical location and safe harbour have made it, from early on, a natural bridge for communication and trade between Europe and the new world.

Havana's population is 2,106,646 and its port is the largest in the country. Its modern José Martí International Airport receives more than 3 million visitors per year and the city is the main destination for the large number of tourists visiting the country.

Havana is the seat of the central government and its main institutions.

1.12 Useful information for visitors

LOCAL CURRENCY	The central bank issues Cuban pesos (CUP), which are the national currency, as well as Cuban convertible pesos (CUC). MasterCard, Visa International and CABAL credit cards are accepted as long as they are not issued by United States banks or their branches in other countries.
Local time	UTC/GMT -5 hours.
ELECTRICITY	110 volts, 60 Hertz. Hotels also have 220-volt outlets.
HEALTH	Medical services will be available at the hotels mentioned in this document, at the Palacio de las Convenciones de La Habana and at the José Martí International Airport on delegates' arrival and departure dates.

2. Meeting venue

The thirty-seventh session of ECLAC will be held at the Palacio de las Convenciones de La Habana, in Cuba.

Address: Calle 146, núm. 1104, entre 11 y 17 D
Reparto Cubanacán, Municipio Playa
Apartado Postal 16046
La Habana, Cuba

3. Coordination of the meeting

The thirty-seventh session of ECLAC will be organized by ECLAC and the Government of Cuba, through the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Investment (MINCEX).

Questions on substantive and logistical matters relating to the meeting may be addressed to the following staff at ECLAC and MINCEX:

ECLAC	<p>Luis Yáñez (questions on substantive matters) Officer-in-Charge Office of the Secretary of the Commission ECLAC, United Nations Santiago Tel: (+56) 2 2210 2275 Email: luis.yanez@cepal.org</p> <p>María Eugenia Johnson (questions on logistical matters) Supervisor Conference Services Unit ECLAC, United Nations Santiago Tel: (+56) 2 2210 2667 Email: mariaeugenia.johnson@cepal.org</p>
Ministry of Foreign Trade and Investment (MINCEX)	<p>William Díaz Menéndez Director Office in charge of international economic organizations (DOEI) Ministry of Foreign Trade and Investment (MINCEX) Havana Tel: (+53) 7 838 0374 Email: william.diaz@mincex.cu</p> <p>Carlos Fidel Martín Rodríguez Deputy Director Office in charge of international economic organizations (DOEI) Ministry of Foreign Trade and Investment (MINCEX) Havana Tel: (+53) 7 836 0442 Email: carlosfidel@mincex.cu</p> <p>Jessie Coto Morales Specialist Office in charge of international economic organizations (DOEI) Ministry of Foreign Trade and Investment (MINCEX) Havana Tel: (+53) 7 836 0442 / (+53) 7 838 0368 Email: jessie.coto@mincex.cu</p>

4. Hotel reservations

The Ministry of Tourism is in charge of accommodation for participants in this event. It has secured a group of hotels with excellent locations and experience in catering to participants in events held in Cuba, for which descriptions and prices are as follows:

Prices / Cuban convertible pesos (CUC) / Day rates / Per person

HOTEL	Double room per person	Single room
Meliá Habana*	120	165
Four Points Quinta Avenida**	100	150
Memories Miramar	80	130

*Includes Internet access throughout the guest's stay at the hotel.

**Includes five hours of Internet daily.

These prices include:

- Accommodation with breakfast
- Personalized assistance
- Transport between José Martí International Airport and selected hotel
- Transport to meetings at the Palacio de las Convenciones de la Habana

All prices are per person, per night and per room type and are in Cuban convertible pesos (CUC). Any request for room upgrades or other specific services must be included in the hotel reservation request and will be confirmed **on request** by the CUBATUR travel agency.

Hotel reservation requests for the three hotels mentioned in this document must be made using the form included in **annex 1**, which must be completed and sent to the CUBATUR travel agency by **3 May 2018**.

The rooms confirmed by CUBATUR must be paid for prior to guests' arrival using the form and payment methods described in **annex 1**.

Payments for these services to CUBATUR are possible by credit card (MasterCard, Visa, CABAL and BFI, as long as they are not issued by United States banks) or in cash (CUC). Hotel reservation requests must be sent to:

Agencia de Viajes CUBATUR
 Eventos e Incentivos
 Calle 15 núm. 410 entre F y G. Vedado.
 Tel.: (+53) 7 836 4037 // 7 835 5095
 Email: claudia.garcia@central.cbt.tur.cu or nelson.ramos@central.cbt.tur.cu

A block of rooms has also been secured at the Hotel PALCO, located at the same venue as the conference, at the following rates:

Price per person in euros / online

HOTEL PALCO****	EUROS		EUROS	
Precio por persona/Price per person	Precio/Price Ocupación/Occupancy		Precio/Price Ocupación/Occupancy	
Room type	Standard		Junior suite	
Duración/Stay (days/nights)	Double*	Single	Double*	Single
3 days / 2 nights	210	232	265	291
4 days / 3 nights	253	286	337	375
5 days / 4 nights	297	341	408	459
6 days / 5 nights	341	395	479	544
7 days / 6 nights	384	450	550	628
8 days / 7 nights	428	504	622	712
9 days / 8 nights	471	558	693	796
Noche Adicional/Additional night	55	69	81	110

Price per person in dollars / online

HOTEL PALCO****	DOLLARS		DOLLARS	
Precio por persona/Price per person	Precio/Price Ocupación/Occupancy		Precio/Price Ocupación/Occupancy	
Room type	Standard		Junior suite	
Duración/Stay (days/nights)	Double*	Single	Double*	Single
3 days / 2 nights	249	275	312	342
4 days / 3 nights	301	340	395	441
5 days / 4 nights	353	405	479	540
6 days / 5 nights	405	469	563	638
7 days / 6 nights	456	534	647	737
8 days / 7 nights	508	599	730	836
9 days / 8 nights	560	664	814	935
Noche Adicional/Additional night	60	75	84	116

What does the travel package include?

- ✓ Accommodation in a double or single standard room or junior suite at the **Hotel PALCO (4 stars)**
- ✓ Daily buffet breakfast
- ✓ Pick-up from the airport and the hotel for arriving and departing flights
- ✓ Assistance and transfer for the social activity scheduled by the event organizers
- ✓ ***The price of the double room is multiplied by two, which is the number of people who must occupy the room to be considered a double**

The services reserved and confirmed by the international sales department of the Palacio de las Convenciones de la Habana can be paid for online with **Visa** or **MasterCard** credit cards, and the reservation form in **annex 2** must be completed.

Hotel reservation requests must be sent to:

Wilma Madams Jiménez

**Dirección Comercial Empresa Organizadora de Congresos, Ferias y Exposiciones
Palacio de las Convenciones de La Habana**

Email: wilmamj@palco.cuventas@palco.cu

Tel: (+53) 7 208 4398, (+53) 7 202 6011; extension: 1105

5. Entry requirements for Cuba

Participants who are citizens of countries with which Cuba maintains a visa waiver agreement are not required to obtain a visa, as long as they travel with the appropriate passport.

Participants requiring visas should contact the nearest Cuban embassy or consulate.

Participants from countries where there are no Cuban diplomatic missions but who require a visa to enter Cuba will be issued with a visa at José Martí International Airport upon arrival. Those participants must send their visa request to the organizing committee at the email address below and will receive confirmation of receipt from the same authority.

Email: visa37cepal@mincex.cu

In order to obtain a visa card, the following information must be sent to the aforementioned email address:

1. Name(s) and surname(s)
2. Date of birth
3. Place of birth
4. Nationality
5. Passport number
6. Type of passport
7. Place of issue of passport
8. Date of issue of passport
9. Date of expiration of passport
10. Port of embarkation
11. Reason for participation
12. Date and time of arrival and airline

Note: the addresses and locations of the Cuban diplomatic and consular missions abroad are available at <http://www.cubaminrex.cu/en>

Participants can obtain the necessary visa for Cuba from these missions.

Members of the international press interested in covering this event must request a press visa (D-6) from the Cuban embassy or consulate in their country of residence. When applying for the visa, they should provide a list of the professional equipment they will bring with them. The embassy or consulate will collect the visa-processing fee.

Cuban laws require journalists working in the country to obtain accreditation temporarily. The accreditation fee for this event is CUC 60.

Members of the press who are granted visas to cover the event must, upon their arrival in Cuba, go to the International Press Centre (CPI) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to obtain their accreditation. The CPI is located at the intersection of Calle 23 and Calle O, Vedado, Havana; telephone: (+53) 7 832 0526 / (+53) 7 832 0527 / (+53) 7 832 0528; email: actividadesprensa@cpi.minrex.gob.cu

Press accreditation must be visible at all times.

Accredited members of the press and their equipment, bags, suitcases and other personal items that they bring to events will be subject to security checks.

6. Transport

José Martí International Airport arrivals/departures:

Participants staying in the aforementioned hotels will be provided with:

- Transport between José Martí International Airport and their selected hotel
- Transport to meetings at the Palacio de las Convenciones de la Habana

7. Registration

An online registration system will be available on the ECLAC website (<https://periododesesiones.cepal.org/37/en>) from 2 April 2018.

Online registration does not exempt delegations from the requirement to provide official notification of the name of the head of delegation and all accompanying members.

Accreditation will begin at 8.30 a.m. on Monday, 7 May, in the **lobby of the Palacio de las Convenciones**. Participants will be issued with an identification badge, which, for security purposes, must be kept visible and shown at all meetings.

For further information on accreditation, please contact Paula Warnken (paula.warnken@cepal.org, (+56) 2 2210 2651).

8. Internet

The meeting rooms set aside for the conference will have wireless Internet access (Wi-Fi).

9. Languages

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

10. Documents

As the Conference documents become available, they will be accessible on the website: <https://periododesesiones.cepal.org/37/en>

11. Medical services

The Government of Cuba will provide first aid services in case emergency medical assistance is required at the meeting venue. Participants should make the meeting coordinators aware of any medical needs.

12. Security

The Government of Cuba will provide a special security service for participants at the meeting venue and in the surrounding area.

13. International Press Centre

In order to facilitate coverage of the thirty-seventh session of ECLAC, there will be an international press centre. Journalists wishing to cover the session must register online beforehand at: <https://periododesesiones.cepal.org/37/en> and obtain accreditation on Monday 7 May in the press centre at the Palacio de las Convenciones, from 8 a.m.

Questions relating to media coverage of the meeting should be addressed to Guido Camú, Officer-in-Charge of the ECLAC Public Information Section (guido.camu@cepal.org ; (+56) 2 2210 2440).

ANNEX 1

THIRTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (ECLAC)

Havana, 7-11 May 2018

HOTEL RESERVATION REQUEST FORM

*(for reservations at Meliá Habana, Four Points Quinta Avenida and
Memories Miramar)*

CUBATUR EVENTOS

Calle 15 núm. 410 entre F y G. Vedado.
Plaza de la Revolución
La Habana
Tel.: (+53) 7 836 4037 // 7 835 5095
Email: claudia.garcia@central.cbt.tur.cu

Reservation for:

Name: _____ Country: _____
Email: _____ Tel.: _____
Single room: ____ Double room: ____
Date of arrival: _____ Date of
departure: _____
Airline and flight no.: _____ Time of arrival: _____
Selected hotel: (Option 1) _____
(Option 2) _____

Received on: _____
Date of payment: _____

Methods of payment:

- ❖ Credit cards:
MasterCard, Visa, CABAL, BFI, as long as they are not issued by United States banks.
- ❖ Cash:
Payment in Cuban convertible pesos (CUC)

ANNEX 2

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HOTEL RESERVATION REQUEST FORM

(Reservations for Hotel PALCO)

Enviar a/Send to:

Wilma Madams Jiménez

**Dirección Comercial Empresa Organizadora de Congresos, Ferias y Exposiciones
Palacio de las Convenciones de La Habana**

ventas@palco.cu

wilmamj@palco.cu

Fecha solicitud de reserva/Date of reservation request:

Nombre y apellidos Name(s) and surname(s)		
Nacionalidad Nationality		
Total de días y noches Total days and nights		
Fecha de entrada Date of arrival		
Fecha de salida Date of departure		
Tipo de habitación Room type Standard: ____ Junior suite: ____	DOBLE/Double	SENCILLA/Single
Llegada/Arrival No. de vuelo Flight number:		
Línea aérea Airline		
Hora de llegada Time of arrival		
Salida/Departure No. de vuelo Flight number		
Línea aérea Airline		
Hora de salida Time of departure		
Email		