



Slovensko predsedstvo EU 2008  
Slovenian Presidency of the EU 2008  
La Présidence slovène de l'UE 2008

## **EU-LAC SUMMIT**

During its EU Council Presidency, Slovenia will focus particular attention on the Latin American and Caribbean regions. Slovenia and Peru have taken on the demanding and responsible task of co-chairing the fifth EU-LAC Summit to be held in Lima, the capital of Peru, on 16 and 17 May 2008. The summit is one of the largest EU events during Slovenia's EU Presidency involving third countries, and will be attended by 60 heads of state or government from both regions.

This event is aimed at strengthening strategic partnership between the two regions, based on mutual respect, common values, and economic, political, cultural, historical and human ties. In view of this, Slovenia will strive for the summit to be a step forward in strengthening economic cooperation, with the objective of increasing trade between the European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean in the future. The European Union is traditionally the most important foreign investor in the region and, with EUR 1.2 billion per year, the largest foreign donor. Trade between the EU and the Latin American and Caribbean regions still offers many unexplored opportunities for enhanced cooperation.

It is vital to encourage development cooperation programmes and cooperation in social cohesion, climate change and the fight against drugs. The two regions have been successfully cooperating within multilateral organisations, thus forming the basis for enhanced political cooperation. The EU and LAC consistently advocate effective multilateralism and further strengthening of the UN's role in the present-day international community.

The Lima Summit will focus on two areas of common interest: poverty, inequality and inclusion, as part of the social dimension; and sustainable development – the environment, climate change and energy, as part of the environmental dimension. Social inequality is a global problem, posing a serious challenge to societies, and countries have adopted different

approaches to this issue. Slovenia advocates improving the quality of primary and vocational education as an indispensable means in the fight against poverty, as well as promoting the development of small and medium-sized enterprises, which can provide opportunities for new jobs in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Slovenia and the European Union also attach considerable importance to the adaptation to climate change, which affects every individual and the world as a whole.

The day before the summit, on 15 May 2008, a meeting of EU and LAC foreign ministers will be held, followed by a meeting of heads of state or government on 16 May 2008. The EU Troika, headed by the Slovenian Prime Minister, the representatives of subregional groups (Mercosur, Andean Community, Central America and Cariforum), Chile and Mexico will meet on 17 May 2008.

Preparatory events in the run-up to the summit:

- Seminar on the Management and Security of Public Stockpiles of Small Arms and Light Weapons, Including Ammunition (6–7 September 2007, San José)
- EU-LAC Forum on Social Cohesion (23–25 September 2007, Santiago)
- EU-LAC Forum for Local Government Representatives (29–30 November 2007, Paris)
- Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly (18–20 December 2007, Brussels)
- EU-LAC Ministerial Conference on the Environment (4 March 2008, Brussels)
- EU-LAC Cooperation and Coordination Mechanism on Drugs (5–6 March 2008, Vienna)
- EU-LAC Expert Seminar on Migration (10–11 March 2008, Brussels)
- EU-LAC Forum: Making Fiscal Policies Work for Social Cohesion and the Fight against Poverty (12–13 March 2008, Berlin)
- IV<sup>th</sup> Civil Society Social Forum (27–28 March 2008, Lima)
- V<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Civil Society Organisations from Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean (16–18 April 2008, Lima)
- Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly (29 April–1 May 2008, Lima)
- EU-LAC Business Forum (15 May 2008, Lima)

Cultural events will be held on the margins of the summit.