Unity and diversity of demographic processes: political challenges for Latin America and the Caribbean in an international perspective

Demographic change in Latin America and the Caribbean has presented historical peculiarities compared to other developing regions. Indeed, the demographic, epidemiological and urban transitions began in some LAC countries before than in Africa, Asia and other developing regions, and moved quickly even under economic and socio-political crisis, although they were not immune to that crisis.

While the speed of these transitions has slowed (and even his outstanding speed during the second half of the twentieth century no longer seems so exceptional, given the intense processes of demographic transition experienced in other regions and developing countries, particularly in Asia) levels of fertility, mortality, morbidity and urbanization in the region still stand in the developing world (lower in fertility and mortality and morbidity, and higher in urbanization).

It is important to consider that transition processes have not been homogeneous within the regions, coexisting diverse situations as in the case of Latin America and The Caribbean, with advanced transition countries such as Cuba, Uruguay, Argentina and Chile - with moderate transition countries such as Guatemala, Haiti and Bolivia.

Nowadays, the transitions have tended to generalize in developing regions, generating processes of convergence of demographic trends. However, previous history and, especially some specificities of Latin America and the Caribbean, such as strong social, cultural, gender and ethnic inequalities generates peculiar shape transitions, which have divergent traits in other regions of the development world.

There are not fixed and precise counterpoint between the LAC region and other developing countries, since the above inequalities are not unique to the region. We want underline the differences in the transitions between developing regions, even if they are not similar on magnitudes and implications.

The simultaneous existence of convergence of demographic processes among developing regions due to concepts such as modernization, individualization, rationalization, -and the divergences for historical, socioeconomic, cultural and political specificities, open a broad window for comparison of demographic processes between developing regions, including the examination of factors that affect their
possible convergences and divergences. For this reason, the main objective of the VII Congress of the Latin American Population Association (ALAP) and the XX Congress of the Brazilian Population Association (ABEP) is to present and discuss recent advances in research on population processes in the region, and simultaneously to stimulate comparative analysis with other regions and developing countries. The emphasis on the comparison of experiences and processes between countries also aims to strengthen ties and stimulate academic South-South and South-North cooperation.

In this sense our usual participation of regional specialists, is extended to other regions, particularly in Africa, Asia and other developing regions in order to advance with comparative studies of population and development.

To this end, we call for proposals of regular sessions, plenary, regular tables and posters for the presentation of research results on historical demography, population dynamics, fertility, mortality, health and sexual and reproductive rights, marriage and families, gender, cities and urbanization, internal and international migration, poverty and inequality, population and development, indigenous peoples, ethnicity and race, screenings, childhood, youth and aging, population studies borders, population and environment. Proposals with national and regional approach and especially comparisons between countries and between developing regions are encouraged.

The fact of holding the congress in Foz do Iguaçu is a symbolic fact because the conference is held in a triple border city among Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay and it is also near Itaipu, hydroelectric dam largest in South America, where specific migratory situation, the particular demographic dynamics of border, urbanization, changes in the environment and use of natural resources and their impact on the population living situations are big dimensioned in this region. The proximity of Iguaçu Falls, one of the seven natural wonders of the world, is a propitious occasion to be in contact with nature.

We will be waiting for you.