

**PUBLIC SOCIAL SPENDING – CONFERENCE THEME
AT THE VII GOVERNORS' MEETING**

Bogotá, December 11, 2008. Investing in children is a strategic decision that guarantees better living conditions for children, adolescents and youth, and ensures a country's human development.

The Seventh Meeting of Governors and Special District Mayors for Children, Adolescents and Youth is working on that theme today and tomorrow in the city of Barranquilla (Atlántico).

The goal of this new Meeting of governing authorities is to influence social spending by the public, private and cooperation sectors to ensure the rights of children, adolescents and youths, and not only increase this spending, but also to distribute it with criteria of pertinence and equity, manage it adequately and make it sustainable at the national and territorial level.

On this occasion the invited speaker on this subject is Dr. José Antonio Ocampo, an economist with a Ph.D. in economics from Yale University (1976) and an undergraduate degree in economics and sociology from Notre Dame University (1972)..

Dr. Ocampo has held posts in the Colombian government as Minister of Agriculture and Development (1993-1994), Minister of Finance and Public Credit (1996-1997) and Director of National Planning.

He also was designated Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), and UN Deputy Secretary General for Economic and Social Affairs in August 2003 – a post he held until mid-2007.

In his presentation he will discuss two concepts of social policy: one which has served as the fundamental base for social policy reform in recent decades and whose emphasis is on the focalization of State sub subsidies to the poorest population and the design of public-private schemes; the other is conceived as a strategy based on universality and solidarity, which has made very little progress in Latin America.

The latter scheme, based on universalization, can have three basic functions: "developing social assistance programmes with universal vocation in certain social groups, adopting the programmes to specific characteristics of some sectors, and serving as a bridge towards universal programmes, as occurs with conditioned subsidies".

José Antonio Ocampo also will make an analysis of the fiscal requisites that must be met to advance towards a social policy that is universal in scope, and will refer to the imperious need to strengthen tax systems and make them more progressive to reach this concept.

This conference will be held today, December 11, beginning at 3:30 in the afternoon in the Hotel El Prado in the city of Barranquilla, site of the Governors' meeting.

Press contacts:

ICBF – Diana Samacá Tel. 4377630 ext. 1093 – 95 - 97
Office of the Inspector General of the Nation – Luz Angela Arteaga; Tel. 5878750 ext. 12121
IOM – Karen Mora – Tel. 312.4204062
UNICEF, Marisol Quintero – Tel. 3120090 ext. 439 – Mobile: 315.8642912
Office of the Governor of Atlántico, Sandra Devia – Tel. 315.7164345

Entities promoting the Facts and Rights Strategy throughout the country:

- Office of the Attorney General of the Nation, Colombian Family Welfare Institute (ICBF), UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND (UNICEF), National Federation of Departments, Office of the Governor of Atlántico..
- Presidential Agency for Social Action and International Cooperation, Office of the Vice President of the Republic, National Planning Department (DNP), Ministry of Social Protection, Ministry of Education, Ministry of the Environment, Housing and Territorial Development, Presidential Young Colombia Programme (Colombia Joven), Escuela Superior de Administración Pública (ESAP), Office of the Comptroller General of the Republic, International Organisation for Migrations (IOM), Fundación Plan, Save the Children, UNFPA, National Business Council, National Planning Council, National Federation of Departmental Assemblies, National Federation of Councilmen, Alliance for Colombian Children.

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