



ALAS FOUNDATION TOOK PART IN THE VIII IBEROAMERICAN SUMMIT OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT TO PROMOTE A REGIONAL PLAN FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

ALAS, represented by Shakira and Alejandro Sanz, secured a commitment from each of the Heads of State in order to consolidate Early Child Development in Latin America as the most relevant social project of the century. It is the first time that the Heads of State Summit has invited an external organization to take part in such an event, so that they can present in the closure ceremony their plan of action to all the heads of Government.

El Salvador, 25th. October 2008 – During the next Heads of States summit, to be held from the 29th-31st of October in El Salvador, the basis for a regional plan will be agreed in order to launch a strategic advance towards bettering Early Child Development, with a view to making it universal and free in the near future.

To introduce the initiative, Shakira and Alejandro Sanz will present a map of the work undertaken by the ALAS Foundation, with the support of Jeffrey Sachs- the director of the Earth Institute of the University of Colombia- which will highlight six key points, imperative to making Early Child Attention a reality in the countries of Latin America, in order to put an end to the effects generated by the world crisis regarding the nutrition, health and education of underprivileged children.

These are: 1. Establish a Regional Group of Work concerning Early Child Development (ECD) lead by ALAS and supported by multilateral entities and NGOs such as SEGIB, Earth Institute, BID, the World Bank, UNICEF, World Health Organization and UNDP Millennium Goal Support Group; 2. Promote an integral equivalent to ECD in each country, 3. Monitor the progress in each country; 4. Create ECD pilot projects in at least five low-income countries of Latin America, 5. Form financial strategies to back throughout Latin America and 6. Deliver feedback in the next Latin American summit about the advances made.

“We are going to El Salvador counting on the support of the participating countries and especially that of President Saca who will chair the summit and also Enrique Iglesias who directs the efforts of the Latin American debate. Our objective is to make child education a reality in all our countries, because we know that it’s the real way to overcome poverty”, stated Shakira in the name of the ALAS Foundation.

ALAS and its representatives will also promote the need for a regional Statistical Census and a Monitoring of Child Action which will analyze the efficiency of the policies undertaken with regards to public health, nutrition, hygiene and infant education; measuring its achievements, monitoring high and low quality practices and establishing the needs and position of children under the age of 6 throughout Latin America. For the attention of the regional governments, ALAS will emphasize the importance of creating campaigns for Early Child Development in order to increase awareness amongst parents and hence better their understanding of how to stimulate the development of their children.

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