



NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF LATIN AMERICAN & CARIBBEAN COMMUNITIES
ALIANZA NACIONAL DE COMUNIDADES LATINO AMERICANAS Y CARIBEÑAS

NALACC Celebrates Second General Assembly in Chicago

November 11-12, 2005

More than 50 community-based groups from around the country gathered in Chicago last November to celebrate the second General Assembly of the National Alliance of Latin American and Caribbean Communities (NALACC). The meeting was dedicated to the memory of two inspiring national leaders, Rosa Parks and Ed Roybal, as well as to the memory of all those who have suffered in the terrible hurricanes and earthquakes this past year.

At the Assembly, NALACC members overwhelmingly affirmed the following mission statement:

NALACC is a network of organizations led by immigrants from Latin America and the Caribbean, which works to improve the quality of life of our communities, both in the United States and in our countries of origin. Through NALACC we seek to build transnational leadership capacity and strengthen migrant participation in the political process so that we can advocate for public policy solutions to the root causes of migration, at the same time as we seek to reform immigration laws in the United States to make them more humane and effective.

NALACC members also ratified its bylaws and approved a social justice agenda for the hemisphere that includes humane treatment for immigrants and the implementation of social and economic policies in Latin America to address the structural problems underlying poverty and migration. The first area of work, Improving quality of life for immigrant communities in the United States, recognizes that the obstacles that immigrants encounter as they try to create decent, dignified lives in the United States go far beyond issues related to immigration policy. Among other issues, immigrant communities have serious concerns about education, health care, housing, and labor conditions. However, the current migration policy context hampers the ability of immigrant communities to take a more visible role in this broader range of concerns. To date, most of NALACC's work in this program area has focused on the need for a just, intelligent, and durable reform of US immigration policies.

The second area of work focuses on improving living conditions for the majority of the population in countries of origin and contributing to a clear sense of hope for a better life for future generations. Every day, more and more people come to see migration as the only path to a better life. It is only through substantial advances improving quality of life and bringing renewed hope for the future that one could imagine a scenario, respectful of the basic rights of individuals, in which the pressure to migrate gradually decreases over time. This line of work presents NALACC with an important opportunity to make a contribution to public policy debates that currently receive little citizen oversight and where policy choices have huge impacts on the lives of many people.