



## **CLAF-CERN Symposium (14/11/2025)**

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Dear colleagues,

I would like to thank the contribution of all participants in the event of today. As the new Director of CLAF, I have quickly come to realize how this institution is dear to the physics community of the entire continent. The enthusiasm with which our proposals have been received in the various countries and institutions with which I have talked this year is emblematic of this. And I hope that we will be able to meet such expectations.

CLAF is a very mature institution. It was created in 1962 by joint action of the Government of Brazil and UNESCO. Its creation shortly followed the creation of the first regional office of UNESCO, in Montevideo, as CLAF was aimed to work as an arm of UNESCO for the development of Physics in Latin America. Over the course of its history, CLAF had its highs and lows, but the institution remains solid and resolute in its mission of contributing to the advancement of the physical sciences in the region.

It is important to realise, though, that over the past 60 years since the foundation of CLAF, physics research has greatly advanced in Latin America, and the context of the field in today is very different from 40 or even 20 years ago. Physics training is no longer limited to a few centers and has expanded to many countries and regions that a few decades ago had only a very peripheral



role. And I believe that the continuation of the mission of CLAF now rests on exploring these new frontiers.

It is somehow paradoxical that despite all the progress at local and national levels in the region, physics research in Latin America remains relatively little interconnected - and in some sense less interconnected than when CLAF was created! I guess that the reason for this is that the development of local capacities at the various countries was naturally followed by autonomy; whereas in the past, strong interconnection derived from dependency.

From the recognition of this insufficient level of regional collaboration, it is clear to me that the next step in the work towards the development of the physical sciences in Latin America involves actively working to promote the integration of physics research in the region. And this should be done by exploring new avenues and instruments that have not yet been effectively put to the service of this goal. Oddly enough, this does not mean creating new instruments, but rather using what is already available, as CLAF was created precisely for this purpose.

Of all fields, high-energy physics is undoubtedly the one in which the Latin-American community is the most interconnected, this being the reason why it is the topic of today's meeting. In this sense, the presence of Dr. Salvatore Mele here is particularly relevant, as much of what is already in place for the region in terms of cooperation in this field is thanks to CERN's vision - and additional steps will certainly need CERN's continued and active support. The same is true for regional community actions like LAA-HECAP, as was just shown by Dr. Rogério Rosenfeld. The focus of the meeting in the Brazilian and Chilean communities is not by accident either, as they would be the natural pillars of this process.



The creation of a *Latin-American Cooperation Group on High-Energy Physics* wishes to explore the singular nature of CLAF to more effectively promote regional integration in the field: By bringing together, from one side, representatives of the communities of high-energy physics from the various countries, together with representatives from the governments and relevant institutions of the CLAF member states, to jointly define an agenda and explore opportunities for joint coordinated actions at a regional level.

As a follow-up to this meeting, I would like, therefore, to invite you to work with CLAF in establishing such a group, which should work as a stable node of dialogue, convened by CLAF, between the scientific community and the regional governments, with the goal of advancing a true regional policy for the development of the field, to the benefit of all countries and groups of the continent.

As much as such an idea may sound ambitious (and it is), I believe it is precisely the ambition for which CLAF was created. And I believe, given the non-trivial boundary conditions of our region, that it is one of the most promising, if not the only way, to start cementing existing relations at an institutional level, and from there taking the steps towards the next phase in the process of promoting the development of physics in Latin America, which is to lay the foundations for the construction of a true Latin-American Physics, much like our European colleagues have done.

Thank you.