



Speech by Silvia Hernández Rada, Analyst of Relations for Integration and Cooperation of the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA)

Economic and Technical Cooperation

*IX Annual Meeting of the Working Group on Trade and Competition of Latin America and the Caribbean (WGTC)
Asunción, Paraguay
03 and 04 October 2019
SP/IXRAGTCCALC/DT N° 1*

Copyright ©SELA, October 2019. All rights reserved.
Printed in the Permanent Secretariat of SELA, Caracas, Venezuela.

The Press and Publications Department of the Permanent Secretariat of SELA must authorise reproduction of this document, whether totally or partially, through sela@sela.org. The Member States and their government institutions may reproduce this document without prior authorisation, provided that the source is mentioned and the Secretariat is aware of said reproduction.

Honourable Mr Pedro Mancuello, Vice-Minister of Trade of Paraguay;

Honourable Mr Fabrizio Castiglioni, President of the National Commission on Competition (CONACOM) of Paraguay;

Honourable Mr Juan Luis Crucelegui, Head of Capacity Building and Consulting Services of the Department of Competition and Consumer Policies, UNCTAD;

Representatives of institutions in charge of Trade and Competition of Latin America and the Caribbean;

Representatives of regional and international organizations and institutions;

Representatives of public and private institutions of Paraguay;

Representatives of academic institutions;

Distinguished speakers, participants and special guests;

Ladies and gentlemen:

It is an honour for me to participate in the opening session of the IX Annual Meeting of the Working Group on Trade and Competition of Latin America and the Caribbean, on behalf of the Permanent Secretariat of the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System and of Ambassador Javier Paulinich, its Permanent Secretary.

SELA feels very satisfied to have organized this meeting along with the National Commission on Competition of Paraguay, with the support of the Ministry of Industry and Trade, and in tandem, as usual since the creation of the WGTC, with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

This year, the central debate will focus on productive transformation and innovation, with the purpose of encouraging a healthy and necessary discussion on the importance of interaction between trade and competition policies in tune with the development of such processes, which have become crucial in the globalized world and at a more local level, as a particularly major challenge for the region.

Thus, the participation of government representatives, especially from trade and competition agencies, as well as representatives of regional organizations, scholars, the private sector and Paraguayan institutions, as well as of the interested public, whose presence is an honour for us as it shows the interest in dealing with this subject.

Bearing in mind the Latin American and Caribbean economic outlook, we must certainly recognize the efforts being made by our countries to optimize their processes and increase their production levels, to diversify their exports, and to increase their competitiveness. To this end, the countries are undertaking structural changes in their business ecosystems in order to generate greater and better linkages and add value to their production matrices.

2

However, we must also admit that we are lagging behind in comparison with other regions, which forces us to strengthen our roadmap in order to reduce the productive and innovative gap.

Among other aspects, successful productive transformation processes involve a leap forward in the way public management is conducted, in decision-making and in coordination. Much of the work that should be carried out for such purpose is related to the harmonization of trade and competition policies. That is why we are here, to gain knowledge about national, regional and international experiences.

In view of the importance of the issues that we are to discuss, we have no doubt that these days will be very productive, with fruitful and successful conversations, that will be very useful.

Finally, I would like to thank the Government of the Republic of Paraguay, particularly CONACOM, for its commitment in conducting this ninth meeting of the WGTC.

Thank you very much!