



**Speech by Ambassador Javier Paulinich
Permanent Secretary of the Latin American
and Caribbean Economic System (SELA)**

Extra-Regional Relations

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Dear Andrés Serbin, President of the Regional Coordinator for Economic and Social Research (CRIES);

Dear Andrei Serbin Pont, Director of the Regional Coordinator for Economic and Social Research (CRIES);

Distinguished panellists:

Florencia Rubiolo, Catholic University of Córdoba, Argentina;

Paz Milet, University of Chile;

Ignacio Bartesagui, Catholic University of Uruguay;

Eduardo Pastrana, Pontifical Javeriana University, Colombia;

Distinguished participants,

We are pleased to be part of the collaborating team of this webinar, together with the Regional Coordinator for Economic and Social Research (CRIES) and the Catholic University of Córdoba, taking into account the particular topic of this event, i.e. the Indo-Pacific strategy and the challenges of the Pacific Alliance. Undoubtedly, activities like this one in these difficult times, cooperation and synergies among regional organizations, academia and civil society are fundamental.

There is no doubt that the importance of the Indo-Pacific as a geostrategic and geoeconomic region in the field of international relations is strengthened. The region's growing and sustained participation in trade transactions and investments in the global economy makes it a key player in the dynamics of international politics.

The regional bloc that constitutes the Pacific Alliance represents an area for obtaining economic advantages, to the point that it is considered the eighth economic power and the eighth export power in the world, whose consolidation has been based on the defence of free trade as an engine of the economic development of its members.

Today, both regional areas, independently, have relied on the formation of strategic alliances and transnational cooperation.

Undoubtedly, for the Pacific Alliance, a possible rapprochement to the Indo-Pacific represents a great challenge to enhance its interests.

The interesting multipolar reconfiguration processes in the Indo-Pacific, which bring India, Australia and Indonesia into prominence, represent new opportunities for cooperation that can be used by Latin America and the Caribbean. In this connection, the Pacific Alliance can play a relevant role as an integrative bridge.

I am confident that, during this virtual event, composed of leading specialists, analytical opinions will be expressed to understand the importance of convergence between the two blocs and the associated benefits.

2

For the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA), addressing this issue represents the possibility of continuing to expand the confluence areas that Latin America and the Caribbean has with potential extra-regional partners, with the aim of providing Member States with the greatest and best business and trade options. Thus, the Indo-Pacific joins the integration work in the economic and trade fields that the region has carried out with Europe, Eurasia, China, India, Korea, among others, which are of special interest to our organization.

For this reason, this is an opportunity to bring value judgments to policymakers, in accordance with the academic vision, on the emerging rapprochement of these integration zones.

Finally, I wish to express my gratitude to the entire coordinating team of this meeting, the first of many that we, at the Permanent Secretariat of the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA), expect to organize with CRIES and academic institutions, in order to address topics of international relevance. I also wish to express my appreciation to the public that has been highly interested in learning more about this innovative topic.

Thank you very much.