



Final Report

VI Latin American and Caribbean Meeting of Logistic Port Communities: Network of Digital and Collaborative Ports

Economic Recovery

Panama City, Panamá
16, 17 and 18 March 2022
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I. RAPPORTEUR'S REPORT

1. On 16 and 17 March 2022, the [VI Latin American and Caribbean Meeting of Port Logistics Communities](#) was held in Panama City under a hybrid modality (face-to-face and virtual) and organized by the Permanent Secretariat of SELA, through the Network of Digital and Collaborative Ports (D&C Ports Network), jointly with CAF-development bank of Latin America and the Maritime Authority of Panama (AMP). It was also sponsored by the Business Alliance for Secure Commerce (BASC), Panama Chapter, and CrimsomLogic Latam. In this way, SELA gave continuity to the Digital and Collaborative Ports Network Project, as included in SELA's Work Programme for 2022-2026.

Representatives of the following Member States of SELA participated in the event: Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Colombia, Chile, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay and Venezuela, as well as Costa Rica. The meeting was also attended by representatives of the port logistics communities (CLP) of the region, such as customs, trade and transport authorities, port and maritime authorities, and port terminals; port agents, academics, researchers, both from the public and private sectors, and consultants. Representatives of the following regional organisations also attended: Association of Caribbean States (ACS); Inter-American Development Bank (IDB); Central American Transport Commission (COCATRAM); Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the Inter-American Committee on Ports (CIP) of the Organisation of American States (OAS).

At the international level, the International Association of Ports and Harbours (IAPH) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) were present. From the private sector, the Business Alliance for Secure Commerce (BASC); CrimsomLogic Latam and Maritime Policy Bureau attended. It is worth noting that out of a total of 155 participants, 120 attended virtually and 35 in person. In addition, the event was simultaneously broadcast through SELA's YouTube channel. The receptiveness achieved by this event, as reflected in the number of participants, confirms the interest of the members and collaborators of the Network, as well as of the general public, in the activities developed within the framework of the SELA-CAF Project: Network of Digital and Collaborative Ports.

2. Opening remarks were delivered in turn by Ms. Erika Mouynes, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Panama, who referred to the level of port resilience demonstrated by her country during the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighting that the ports are essential infrastructure assets and catalysts for economic growth. He also emphasised the importance of reducing logistics costs to increase the region's competitiveness and the need to implement digital tools to facilitate the elimination of non-tariff barriers as part of an increasingly efficient port management.

Afterwards, Ambassador Clarems Endara, Permanent Secretary of SELA, said that with this event, the organization ratifies its commitment to promote programmes and policies that foster digital transformation of ports, promote port security and sustainability, and improve city-port relations in the region and intermodality in the sector. He also invited those countries that do not yet belong to the D&C Ports Network to join this initiative for regional integration, promotion of best practices and cooperation to facilitate and optimise regional trade.

For his part, Mr. Antonio Silveira, Manager of Physical Infrastructure and Digital Transformation of CAF-Development Bank of Latin America, emphasised the need to

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promote sustainable development, regional integration and more effective planning and coordination of port logistics activities in Latin America and the Caribbean. Similarly, Mr. Edgar Patiño, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the National Port Authority (APN) of Peru, commented that, in 2021, intensive work was carried out to define the legal personality and formalise the institutionalisation of the D&C Ports Network. In addition, he pointed out the need to leverage the development of the ports in the region through hyperconnectivity.

Mr. Noriel Arauz, Administrator of the Panama Maritime Authority (AMP) and Panama's Minister of Maritime Affairs, said that this event was a perfect example of regional bodies seeking the welfare of port communities in the region. Mr Arauz stressed that, although the world economy continues to be affected by COVID-19, the port logistics sector has not stood still and has been part of the solution and not part of the problem, setting an example as an economic sector and a model to follow. He expressed his pleasure that the topics of digital transformation, physical security, cyber security, and the sustainable development of the sector were the subject of the discussions planned for the event.

Finally, the Director General of the International Association of Ports and Harbours (IAPH), Patrick Verhoeven, stressed that: i) given the increase in energy and freight prices, market recovery still looks distant; ii) ports are at the core of the logistics chain; iii) there is a need to invest in policies that promote business continuity; iv) operational risks need to be addressed through collaboration and electronic data sharing with a view to bridging the digital divide in the port community; v) in the context of the fourth industrial revolution and cyber security, "the more digital we become, the more vulnerable we are;" vi) the energy crisis will accelerate transport decarbonisation processes, so it is necessary to rethink the way the industry has been managed; and vii) the role of the port authority needs to be redefined and reinvented, beyond its local environment, and thought of in terms of networking.

3. In line with its objectives, the VI Latin American and Caribbean Meeting of Port Logistics Communities: i) showed the degree of development of port activities in the region and projected the sector's prospects for the coming years; ii) analysed the initiatives for the integration of intermodal transport and infrastructure development in the countries of the region; iii) presented the progress achieved in port sustainability and in the port-city relationship; iv) presented the main challenges of physical security and cyber security of ports; vi) assessed port digitalisation as a way to boost growth and increase the competitiveness of LAC; and vi) held, on 17 March, the customary meeting of the D&C Ports Network Steering Committee, in which the current state of the Network, the immediate work plan and the challenges for the coming years were discussed.
4. On 18 March, the technical visit to the Panama Canal (Aguas Claras) and the Manzanillo International Terminal (MIT) facilities took place.
5. This report, the agenda of the event, with direct access to the presentations made, and the list of participants are available at: [VI Latin American and Caribbean Meeting of Port Logistics Communities](#), on SELA's Web site (www.sela.org). In addition, the Permanent Secretariat offers, through the sub-portal Network of Digital and Collaborative Ports, access to information on the most relevant aspects related to the development of port logistics communities (LPCs) in Latin America and the Caribbean.

II. SUMMARY

In the debates that took place during the two days of work, the panellists made, in their presentations and/or in response to the audience's concerns, some reflections on the development of port logistics communities in LAC, the performance and the present and future challenges of the maritime-port sector. Some of these reflections are summarised below:

Theme. Outlook of the port activity in Latin America and the Caribbean in the context of the pandemic

- 1) The COVID-19 health crisis generated a global disruption of economic activity and supply chains and transportation in terms of equipment and container shortages, less reliable services, congested ports and longer delays and waiting times, which have hindered the region's economic recovery. Hence, adaptability, flexibility and resilience have become essential for the early recovery of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC).
- 2) In many ports, special task forces have been formed to develop and implement a set of pandemic protocols, led by senior port officials and comprised of representatives of major service providers, with the aim of coordinating effective response actions in the face of rapid changes. These protocols establish minimum numbers of employees per shift for container loading and unloading among other logistical activities in the yard.
- 3) Although uncertainty is considerable and risks are multiple (continued presence of COVID-19, disruption of the supply chain, changes in globalisation patterns, rising transport costs and increasing port congestion, among others), the projection for maritime trade in the region is positive. Thus, for example, while in 2020 it contracted by 3.8%, in 2021 it increased by 4.3%. On the other hand, at the country level, there has been heterogeneous behaviour with slower recoveries compared to the world average. Central America and the Caribbean suffered the greatest variations in container traffic. Both subregions recorded greater impacts than the South American region.
- 4) A notable impact was the reduction in port calls, especially at the onset of the pandemic, which resulted in lower port revenues due to lower volumes of trade transported. In addition, maritime freight rates loaded and unloaded in LAC contracted by 3.4 %. Moreover, the pandemic exposed and exacerbated existing problems in the maritime transport sector, especially labour shortages and infrastructure needs.
- 5) The experience of the pandemic allowed the identification of some challenges and the possibility to accelerate changes. In some ports, emerging opportunities such as e-commerce were explored, for example through investments in distribution and warehousing centres, along with improved port connectivity.
- 6) There is a need to rethink the energy transition of ports through investment initiatives using alternative fuels for the ships of the future and the implementation of renewable energies in ports. To that end, public policies should be designed in three specific areas: i) modernisation of ports; ii) trade facilitation; and iii) maritime connectivity to reduce transhipment needs.
- 7) It is necessary to promote cooperation among all actors in the port logistics chain as a basis for making better decisions for the modernisation of the sector.

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- 8) It is necessary to take advantage of some logistical opportunities for the region such as nearshoring, foreign direct investment (FDI) for the opening of subsidiaries, the integration of companies into regional value chains (RVCs) and the strengthening of these chains. The growing reconfiguration and regionalisation of Global Value Chains (GVCs) towards LAC, as seen in the last two years, should also be taken into consideration.
- 9) Strengthening RVCs implies: i) diversification of imports, especially by SMEs, and of more sophisticated products; ii) the development of adequate, sustainable and resilient infrastructure (ports, roads, airports, railways); iii) a reduction in international freight costs; and iv) the strengthening of regional integration, improving the trade architecture and reducing non-traditional trade costs.
- 10) The following areas of work were prioritised: i) promotion and financing to the business sector; ii) resilient infrastructure using clean energy; and iii) strengthening of trade integration processes.
- 11) There is a need to promote cooperation, co-responsibility and commitment among all actors in both the public and private sectors. This would facilitate progress towards the consolidation of collaborative governance and forums for rapid response.
- 12) At the same time, reference was made to the development of some practices aimed at alleviating the maritime industry. Thus, on behalf of the ports of Panama, the presentation by the Adviser of the Directorate of Ports and Auxiliary Industries of the Panama Maritime Authority highlighted the following: i) approval of six resolutions associated with the lifting of anchorage charges (including passenger vessels) and the extension of the expiry of operating licences and waste management certificates; ii) adjustment measures such as: cuts in operating costs, restructuring of effective supply management, readjustment of financial commitments made and reorientation of market strategies; iii) improvements in the capacity to respond to health and safety eventualities; iv) intensification of the automation process to optimise customer service and the gathering of cargo information, and the incorporation of technological tools such as electronic GMRs and Neopanamax RTGs; and v) development of new strategies linked to governance, the creation of partnerships and the country's logistical and agro-industrial development.
- 13) For her part, the Deputy Director for Operations Design and Management of the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Tourism of Colombia mentioned the implementation of trade facilitation actions carried out through the National Trade Facilitation Committee, such as: i) the scanning of export cargo upon entry to ports without charge, allowing the reduction of 12 hours on average, a saving of \$300 in average costs per container and avoiding physical intervention by the police; ii) the articulation of authorities to carry out the issuance of minutes and certificates on the same day of inspection; and iii) implementation of the Electronic Information System of the National Tax and Customs Directorate (DIAN) for customs transits, which included strengthening the interoperability of the Foreign Trade Single Window (VUCE) through the activation of web services with the ports, thus optimising cargo profiling times by up to one hour, and the implementation of the Integrated Risk Management System (SIGR) and Facial Biometrics project. It also undertook actions related to the strengthening of risk management systems, electronic submission and exchange of documents and electronic cargo release.

Theme. Intermodal transport: experience in the region

- 14) Intermodal connectivity in seaports was analysed considering three important concepts: i) intra-port; ii) port-city (last mile); and iii) hinterland. These concepts allow the identification of critical aspects and areas of opportunity to improve the port's cargo clearance efficiency and to develop its economic potential in a sustainable manner with its urban and regional environment.
- 15) A fundamental aspect to achieve a sustainable connectivity of the port with its hinterland is the development of intermodal networks. Thus, the consolidation of a competitive and efficient intermodalism contributes to sustainability in its three dimensions: economic, social and environmental.
- 16) Port connectivity is a key element for the future growth of ports and their use in the consolidation of logistics corridors. To that end, it is essential to optimise processes on a system-wide basis; to consider connectivity with respect to infrastructure and its total capacity; and to share information flows to ensure cargo security.
- 17) Moving towards sustainable regional connectivity involves the increasing incorporation of rail into logistics chains so that CLPs can take advantage of the economic, social and environmental benefits of this transport system.
- 18) One of the main challenges of logistics chains associated with upgrading initiatives is the coordination with local authorities in terms of design and bottlenecks in port cities. Therefore, it is necessary to maintain a strategic thinking that privileges integration, cooperation and port-city coordination in order to promote aspects such as competitiveness, sustainability, coexistence, employment generation and social responsibility.
- 19) Among other elements, port connectivity planning requires: i) the establishment of a formal body for connectivity planning with a long-term vision; ii) the expansion of linkages with inland regions; iii) the development of competitive intermodal corridors; and iv) the definition of performance indicators for evolution and trend analysis.
- 20) In terms of best practices developed in Mexico, the Integrated Transport and Logistics Coordinator of the Mexican Transportation Institute (IMT) referred to the Geographic Information System (GIS), which works in collaboration with the port community of Veracruz with the objective of analysing the records of trucks in a given period; he also presented an analysis of the vehicular flow in the area with which the average annual traffic of the main roads and the capacity of the infrastructure in the Port of Manzanillo was determined; and he highlighted the start-up of the Double Stacking Container Train in the Port of Lázaro Cárdenas.
- 21) The Vice President of Marketing and Corporate Affairs at Manzanillo International Terminal (MIT) shared the initiative "Portal Tecnológico de Comercio Exterior y Logísticas (PORTCEL)," an intergovernmental Web site and platform enabling the transformation of foreign trade processes through interoperability between state systems and private actors, which aims to extend to a regional space.
- 22) The Development and Sustainability Manager of the Talcahuano-San Vicente Port Company of Chile presented the experience of intermodality of the Biobío Port-Logistics System, which in 2020 moved 31 million tonnes of cargo for export. She also highlighted

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the initiative of the Trans-Andean Southern Railway that traces the rail passage from Chile to Argentina, a proposal of private origin that has required binational coordination.

- 23) The Secretary of the Fundación Polo Logístico Región Rosario-Santa Fe, Argentina, presented the experience of the Paraná-Paraguay Waterway, whose management, through international public tenders and the conducting of dredging, beaconing, tolls and improvement works, has allowed the growth of exports from that country. Nearly 80% of total exports leave through the Port of Rosario, which serves as a transhipment point for goods from Paraguay and Bolivia.

Theme. Strategies for sustainable development of ports and their communities

- 24) Among the elements affecting the sustainability of ports in the region, the participants highlighted the following: socio-economic changes, urban impacts, culture and heritage preservation, environmental impact, governance and public-private partnership.
- 25) As regards the strategies for sustainable development in the port-logistic field, the role of private investment was highlighted as a catalyst for high impact projects by generating competitiveness, sustainability, employment and social responsibility, which has become a fundamental element for port modernisation in the region.
- 26) There must be a close linkage of road, rail and port connectivity to leverage the value generation process of international trade. Such a linkage must also exist among the state, academia and industry. Hence the need for the port authority to have a much broader vision, beyond the port sphere and including port connectivity to roads and the interconnection of CLPs with logistics services, going beyond their physical limits.
- 27) There is a need to enact innovative policies that facilitate and dynamise knowledge sharing, strengthen the supply chain and encourage consolidation and innovation. Such policies should be aimed at: i) enhancing CLPs; ii) boosting foreign trade competitiveness; iii) attracting long-term investment; iv) increasing cargo volumes; v) responding effectively to maritime traffic growth; and vi) enhancing port capacity.
- 28) In terms of best practices developed in the maritime port area in Peru, the Director of Planning and Economic Studies of the National Port Authority (APN) of that country highlighted the importance of maintaining a strategic thinking of port-city integration, based on six aspects: i) port city; ii) competitiveness; iii) sustainability; iv) coexistence; v) dialogue; vi) generation of local employment; and vii) social responsibility. In this regard, the Provincial Municipality of Illo created the Illo City Council. In addition, beach clean-up activities have been consolidated and social responsibility activities have been conducted with the aim of improving the social, environmental and economic conditions of its surroundings.
- 29) In Chile, in the environmental field, the Manager of the Logistics Community of San Antonio (COLSA) referred to the development of measurement indicators based on the Clean Production Agreement of the Port of San Antonio, which cover the following aspects: i) sustainability; ii) Best Available Techniques (BAT) in the operation; iii) reduction of solid waste; iv) reduction of emissions of solid bulk; v) energy performance; vi) estimation of the carbon footprint; and vii) corporate social responsibility. He also commented on the creation of the Port Logistics Council, with representation from the State, academia and industry.

Theme. Port security and cyber-security

- 30) A full understanding of cyber security risks in CLPs requires considering cyber security as a highly relevant item on their agendas, as well as fostering cyber security governance.
- 31) Some factors that slow down the understanding of the need for and importance of cyber issues by many staff in a CLP are: i) many parties to coordinate, usually independent; ii) a business ecosystem composed of multinational companies and small companies; iii) professionals under pressure; iv) narrow vision regarding cyber issues; and v) low interest in cyber security.
- 32) Among the elements that threaten the security of port infrastructure, the following were identified: unavailability of electronic security equipment (CCTV, access control system, scanners and metal detectors), inadequate lighting and insufficient peripheral fencing and back-up power plants.
- 33) Among the challenges facing the security of port operations, the following were identified: i) structural affectation; ii) cargo theft; iii) human trafficking; iv) illicit movement of drugs through the ship, as supposed legitimate cargo; v) smuggling by employees and shareholders; vi) terrorism; vii) retention of port officers; viii) shortage of security personnel; ix) adequate and timely responses to incidents on the docks; x) sabotage; xi) cyber-attacks; xii) natural disasters; and xiii) fires.
- 34) Building a cyber resilient port community requires, among others, the following elements: i) defining the cyber ecosystem and understanding how cyber security risk can impact the enterprise; ii) promoting cyber risk management as a high-level responsibility and as a competitive and operational factor; iii) creating effective organisational cyber awareness; iv) analysing organisational vulnerabilities from a holistic perspective; v) establishing a common language with clear definitions; vi) understanding the risk that cyber security entails in the maritime port environment; vii) systematising the flow of information that facilitates timely and well-informed decision-making to detect and mitigate the potential damage of a threat to the organisation; viii) developing sustainable knowledge by providing and exchanging data to protect the organisation; ix) providing human resources with effective technological tools that facilitate the timely detection and identification of any possible digital threat; and ix) moving from individual risk mitigation to collective risk mitigation.
- 35) Training to build cyber awareness represents a low-cost, high value-added investment, and ultimately the benefits of a more cyber-aware workforce translate into a more competitive and resilient organisation. Promoting cyber awareness, an essential element in implementing effective protection against potential digital threats, involves: i) engaging executives on cyber security issues; ii) developing an organisation-specific cyber security capability maturity model; iii) administering the risk management model based on cyber security capability maturity; iv) promoting a culture of cyber security awareness; v) ensuring effective third party management; and vi) implementing appropriate cyber security solutions to respond to security incidents.
- 36) There are four vectors associated with cyber security in ports, namely: public corruption, crime, seizures, especially of drugs, and drug trafficking zones, all of which are frontline elements that must be combated in Latin America and the Caribbean.

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- 37) As a response to cybercrime, it was proposed to adopt international trade standards and to increase and invest in policies and operational risk management with a strategic focus on collaboration and electronic data exchange with strategic partners, as well as the promotion of a culture of prevention.
- 38) Given the interrelationship between the two elements, the technological security of ports is as important as their operational efficiency and must go hand in hand with productivity to optimise productive strategies.
- 39) Cyber security is based on three pillars, namely: i) ubiquitous broadband; ii) technology-centred business and society; and iii) social stratification of technological skills.
- 40) Following are some of the actions that should be considered to increase port security and mitigate potential threats: i) ongoing staff training; ii) constant updating of security software; iii) protection for endpoints; iv) installation of a powerful firewall; v) permanent backup of data; vi) access control, limited to the requirements of each individual; vii) use of individual accounts for staff; viii) use of complex and effective passwords; ix) virtual private network (VPN); x) security of devices and networks previously authorised to connect to the corporate network; and xi) continuous re-evaluation of strategies and actions associated with port security and cyber security management.
- 41) The region should adopt a centralised and structured approach to cyber resilience and share this knowledge and experience with partners in each port.
- 42) The IAPH guidelines aim to assist ports to fully understand the financial, commercial and operational impact of a cyber-attack. They also aim to guide CLPs in making an objective assessment of their capabilities and resources to prevent, stop and recover from a cyber-attack, as well as to determine their needs in terms of the resources they have available to address potential threats to their cyber security.
- 43) Among the security and cyber security practices referred to at the event, it is worth mentioning the experience of the BASC Panama Maritime Port Security Committee, which was created to strengthen the security of the country's maritime hub with the active participation of the Container Security Initiative (CSI), BASC certified companies and port terminals. This experience has shown that public-private partnerships (PPPs) are an excellent scenario for collaborative work and resilience.
- 44) As regards the relevance of collaborative work for the maritime port sector, it was highlighted that the D&C Ports Network represents the synergy and strength between authorities, the port sector and academia, who work together to add value, capacities and services, in a changing environment of global challenges.

Theme. Digital transformation of ports

- 45) Digital transformation is linked to the interoperability, integration and interconnectivity of port operations, whose cyber security challenges, in turn, are linked to the use of technology in port operation and management; to the need to implement complex solutions in logistics chain operations; and to the effective training of human resources.

- 46) Global logistics 4.0 has become a challenge for all national, regional and global actors. Furthermore, accelerating digital transformation brings about multiple threats to port maritime security that raise the need to shift the paradigm from individual risk mitigation to collective risk mitigation in order to ensure that all actors in the ecosystem are considered.
- 47) To achieve the business continuity and resilience required in port operations, it is necessary to move from a paper culture to data and digitisation. Building a cyber resilient port community requires the implementation of an effective cyber information exchange system.
- 48) The Maritime Single Window (an electronic tool that facilitates, through a single point, timely access to information on arrivals, departures and stay of vessels, persons and cargo, without duplication) should not only be applied from a regulatory perspective but also from immigration, agriculture and other sectors linked to the logistic flow.
- 49) In the digital port context, three essential types of data can be identified: nautical, administrative and operational. Similarly, elements such as processes, standards and incentives, as well as a culture of partnership, are also essential to efficiently share information and data derived from the activities of a port logistics community.
- 50) The benefits arising from the digital transformation of ports include the following: i) development of ports with high cargo capacity; ii) use of the strategic location of ports; iii) the growing potential of multimodal ports; and iv) the development of clusters.
- 51) Digitisation projects must be backed by the total willingness of managers in their development and implementation who, aware of the need for collaborative work, must develop strategies, action plans and protocols that allow an immediate response to the challenges of port maritime activities.
- 52) Collaborative work is crucial to address issues such as the following: i) no or very low trust between customs and ports; ii) duplication of data and document requirements; iii) increasing complexity in international trade and transport (including high logistics costs); iv) low level of awareness of the benefits derived from cooperation between customs and ports; and v) the imminence of cyber threats and the urgent need for collaborative work to effectively address them.

III. CONCLUDING REMARKS

- 53) The closing speeches were delivered by Ms. Ana Margarita Reyes, Deputy Administrator of the Panama Maritime Authority (AMP); Ms. Lucía Meza, representative of CAF-development bank of Latin America in Panama; Mr. Edgar Patiño, President of the National Port Authority (APN) of Peru; and Ambassador Clarems Endara, Permanent Secretary of the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA), who made some final considerations about what the [VI Latin American and Caribbean Meeting of Port Logistics Communities](#) left vis-à-vis the future of the maritime port sector in Latin America and the Caribbean. These considerations are summarised as follows:
 - i) Sustainable strategies and methods that will contribute to the cyber security and digital transformation of port facilities; ii) promotion of a proactive debate on the creation of port logistics communities; iii) the need to implement policies that will boost the exchange of knowledge, strengthen the supply chain and promote

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consolidation and innovation; iv) assessment of the professionalisation and technical strength achieved in most port and logistics institutions in the countries of the region; v) the need to explore better collaboration schemes to achieve effective public-private governance models that incorporate academia and civil society; v) active presence of women with a high professional level offering contributions that broaden the perspectives for the achievement of efficiency and a greater possibility of innovation in the sector; vi) promotion of the CPL with a view to enhancing the impact that the sector generates in the economy and to achieve greater integration of intra-regional trade; vii) emphasis on the importance of data for achieving efficiency in port and logistics services; viii) the need to use sophisticated tools for risk control, resilience of services, adaptation of processes, digitalization and technological updating; ix) the need to build, in a collaborative manner, alternatives that help ports with less experience and others with greater maturity learn from each other with each of the initiatives or processes adopted in order to achieve efficiency; and x) ratification of SELA's commitment to promote, jointly with other regional organisations and through the implementation of programmes and policies that boost the development of the maritime-port sector, a system of consultations and coordination of positions and strategies in the region, supported by the D&C Ports Network as a mechanism for public, private and academic work, in order to generate more and better integration and achieve economic recovery.

- 54) It should also be noted that since its inception in 2014, and this [VI Latin American and Caribbean Meeting of Port Logistics Communities: Network of Digital and Collaborative Ports](#) ratified it, the D&C Ports Network has become an instance at the permanent service of the port sector in Latin America and the Caribbean, action-oriented; open to the strength of diversity; and integrator of international entities for the sake of regional progress. It has become an effective platform for the dissemination of best practices in the management of CLPs, thus contributing to facilitating regional trade. For their part, the meetings promoted by the D&C Ports Network have become a forum of growing interest to debate on the logistics-port reality of the region and to propose actions to enhance its value, both for national economies and for the regional economy, in terms of its insertion in the world economy.
- 55) This initiative represents the strength derived from the synergy among the public and private sectors, academia and members of the communities, with the purpose of generating value, capacities and services, thus increasing the potential of Latin America and the Caribbean to compete and advance towards its economic recovery in terms of the well-being of the population. As a result, the Network of Digital and Collaborative Ports is moving towards its institutionalisation and at the time of drafting this report, in May, the creation of the Action Committee for the institutionalisation of the Network of Digital and Collaborative Ports was achieved by Decision No. 595 approved by the Latin American Council.
- 56) This decision provides for the construction of an Action Committee to achieve a formal constitution in accordance with the needs of the Network. This Committee should be set up and begin its work as soon as possible in order to draft a constitutive act and its rules of operation, thus establishing the Network as a permanent vehicle at the service of the port sector in the region.