



51st Latin American Council

SP/CL/LI.O/IF-25

51st Regular Meeting of the Latin American Council Final Report

*51st Regular Meeting of the Latin American Council
Caracas, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela
10 and 11 December 2025
SP/CL/LI.O/IF-25*

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A. PREPARATORY STAGE

In compliance with Article 12 of the [*Panama Convention establishing the Latin American Economic System \(SELA\)*](#), the Preparatory Stage of the 51st Regular Meeting of the Latin American Council was held, under the face-to-face and virtual format, on 10 December 2025 at the headquarters of the Permanent Secretariat of SELA, in Caracas, at 11:00 a.m. (Venezuelan time).

Delegations from the following Member States participated in the meeting: Barbados, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Guyana, Haiti, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Dominican Republic, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, and Venezuela. The following members of the Bureau were present: His Excellency Milton Rengifo Hernández, Ambassador of Colombia to Venezuela and Chair of the Latin American Council; the Honourable Dayne-Marc Chin Slick, Counsellor of the Embassy of Trinidad and Tobago in Venezuela and First Vice-Chair; His Excellency Leopoldo De Gyves de La Cruz, Ambassador of Mexico to Venezuela and Second Vice-Chair; and His Excellency Jorge Luis Mayo, Ambassador of Cuba to Venezuela and Rapporteur of the Latin American Council. Participants also included His Excellency Ambassador Lesly David, Permanent Secretary of SELA, and officials of the Permanent Secretariat.

ITEM I. THEMES OF THE 51st REGULAR MEETING OF THE LATIN AMERICAN COUNCIL

After confirming that a quorum was present, His Excellency Milton Rengifo Hernández, Ambassador of Colombia to Venezuela and Chair of the Latin American Council, opened the working session, greeting and welcoming all participants. He then highlighted that SELA represents a key contribution to integration and is synonymous with meaningful democracy. He also stated that SELA is an expression of democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean; that it has been an effective source of technical support for the region; that it is an organization that stands as a beacon of light in the darkness, as an institution that upholds multilateralism and contributes decisively to the search for new areas of cooperation and development on the continent.

He argued that Latin America and the Caribbean need a civilisational dialogue that will enable the consolidation of a region that yearns for, promotes and defends peace. To that end, he pointed out that SELA must continue to strengthen its role in providing technical support to governments and complementing existing integration mechanisms. He emphasised that the arrival of Ambassador Lesly David to the Permanent Secretariat represents a significant contribution from the Caribbean, enriching the institutional diversity necessary to build a continent whose cultural wealth matches the diversity of its geography. Finally, he declared the Preparatory Stage of the "51st Regular Meeting of the Latin American Council" open.

The Chair submitted the *Draft Agenda* (SP/CL/LI.O/DT No. 1-25) for consideration by the delegations and, as no objections were raised, he deemed it approved. He then read the *Annotated agenda and the themes for work* (SP/CL/LI.O/DT No. 2-25), submitted it for consideration by the delegations and, since there were no comments, declared it approved and gave the floor to the Permanent Secretary, who elaborated on it.

ITEM II. FORTY-NINTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PERMANENT SECRETARIAT

The Permanent Secretary greeted the members of the Bureau and the delegations and welcomed them to the "51st Regular Meeting of the Latin American Council of SELA," stating that it was a great honour to present the Annual Report of the Permanent Secretariat for the period from 1 August to December 2025.

He clarified that this was not simply an administrative report, but rather an account of the work of a team that, at a crucial moment, had acted in the spirit of a historic celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of SELA. He recalled that on 17 October, the organisation commemorated its 50th anniversary, reaffirming that its founding values remain fully valid.

He pointed out that the six-month period was closely linked to this commemorative spirit and aimed at consolidating SELA as a regional benchmark in the search for collective solutions through cooperation. He stressed that it was not just a matter of analysing macroeconomic figures, but of understanding how they impact the reality of Latin America and the Caribbean, and how the organisation translates the mandate of its member countries into concrete projects that promote economic, social and human integration.

He explained that the work from August to December was structured around three strategic lines: i) Regional coordination: acting as a platform for dialogue that ensures that the diverse needs of Member States are adequately represented; ii) Effective cooperation.: developing initiatives that facilitate economic and social integration, transforming agreements into tangible benefits for citizens, with criteria of efficiency and transparency in the execution of programmes; and iii) Strategic vision: strengthening SELA's position as a key interlocutor and promoter of public policy proposals at both the intra-regional and global levels, contributing to the region's progress with greater coherence and strength.

He emphasised that the report presented reflects responsible use of resources and bears witness to the commitment and dedication of the Permanent Secretariat team and reiterated that every effort has been geared towards generating real value for the citizens of Latin America and the Caribbean.

He concluded by emphasising that integration is not a goal, but rather a daily act of political will and human solidarity, and that 2025 is ending with the firm conviction that only by working together can the region achieve the prosperity that its peoples deserve.

Finally, he presented the [*Forty-ninth Annual Report of the Permanent Secretariat*](#) (SP/CL/LI. O/DT No. 3-25), which describes the activities conducted from August to December 2025, in compliance with the [*Work Programme for 2022-2026, updated 2025*](#) (SP/CL/L.O/D No. 4-24).

The Chair invited delegations to comment on this matter.

The delegation of Guyana asked whether an analysis of the regional context had been carried out for each thematic area of the work programme, as well as a definition of indicators for evaluating SELA's work. In this regard, it suggested that activities related to migration should include the concept of the family as an economic unit and the determinants of migration flows, as well as the economic impact on places of arrival of migrants who have skills and competences that make them productive.

He asked whether there had been an evaluation of the "First Diploma Course on Comprehensive Disaster Management in Latin America and the Caribbean: reflections, challenges and proposals for

innovation in regional public policies and their impact on public-private partnerships" (21 August to 23 November 2024) in order to identify areas for improvement and requested information on Caribbean participation in that event. He also referred to the need to define the process for establishing best practices and lessons learned.

He commented that, in terms of energy, SELA should focus on analysing the regional electricity deficit, considering its impact on poverty levels. Finally, he stressed that the health of the populations of Latin America and the Caribbean should be considered a central issue.

The Venezuelan delegation expressed its support for SELA's strategic repositioning process, especially in the area of regional economic integration, highlighting the importance of the role that the organisation has been consolidating in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). It then made the following recommendations: i) a technical and political rapprochement between LAC and European countries, as well as with the European Union, on the situation of Latin American migrant communities residing there; ii) an analysis of the situation and challenges faced by Latin American migrants in Europe, particularly with regard to the recognition and guarantee of rights; iii) use of the network of international relations that SELA has been strengthening with States and integration mechanisms on other continents to facilitate such dialogue; and iv) addressing migration from the concept of family unity, as proposed by the delegation of Guyana.

Finally, the delegate stressed the need to keep the most vulnerable groups explicitly visible, namely children and adolescents, including unaccompanied minors and women. He added that these groups face different conditions of vulnerability and therefore require special and specific treatment, in parallel with a family-based approach. He therefore requested that this visibility be preserved in the formulation of SELA's activities, documents and analyses, without prejudice to the broader conceptual proposal made by the delegation of Guyana.

The Mexican delegation highlighted the importance of involving the private sector in the initiatives promoted by SELA, particularly in the port and logistics areas. It acknowledged the relevance of the point made by the Ambassador of Guyana and reported that, in accordance with the work programme, the "IX Annual Regional Meeting of Port Logistics Communities" is scheduled to take place in 2026. In this regard, it informed the Council of Mexico's willingness to host the meeting. The delegation stressed that organising the meeting in Mexico would facilitate the integration of the public and private sectors and allow for the discussion of issues that are fundamental to the efficiency, transparency and modernisation of international trade and port logistics in the region.

In response to the delegations, the Permanent Secretary pointed out that each activity contains a definition of indicators, justification, and objectives in its respective concept notes. In addition, each activity generates a report containing conclusions and recommendations that are highly instructive in that they reflect the experience, knowledge, and feelings of the specialists who, through their participation, lend prestige to the organisation's activities through the quality of their contributions. With regard to the work being done on migration, the Secretariat has considered the concept of the family unit. As regards the inclusion of Caribbean countries in the aforementioned diploma course, he explained that this has been limited by the unavailability of translation services.

The Chair requested that the suggestions made by the delegations be included in the *Work Programme for 2026-2029*.

ITEM III. WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2026-2029

The Permanent Secretariat presented the *Draft Work Programme for 2026-2029* (SP/CL/LI.O/DT No. 4-25). It summarised the general situation in the region, highlighting, among other things, the following items: i) low capacity for growth; ii) high inequality; iii) low institutional capacity; and iv) weak governance. In this regard, it noted that the Economic Recovery area of the work programme addresses the promotion of investment and trade, strategic regional connectivity, and global outreach. The area of Digitalisation and Infrastructure covers sustainability and digital transformation, while the area of Social Development considers the fight against poverty, migration, gender issues and education. Finally, it stated that this work programme is ambitious but achievable, as it is based on SELA's experience and a shared vision of the future.

The Chair then passed the floor to delegations to express their views on the *Draft Work Programme for 2026-2029*.

The delegation of Guyana requested greater emphasis on food security issues, given their relevance to Caribbean countries. It also emphasised the inclusion of the private sector as a strategic ally for the development of the agricultural and food sectors.

The Mexican delegation highlighted the importance of the private sector in the port industry and mentioned the "IX Meeting of Port Logistics Communities" to be held in Mexico, in which the private sector plays a very significant role. It also expressed its interest in hosting the "II Regional forum on cooperation mechanisms for the socio-economic inclusion of migrants in host cities in LAC" or the activity related to the "II Discussion panel on migration: mechanisms to prevent human trafficking, migrant smuggling and forced labour around the International Migration Review Forum (FEMI 2026)." Finally, the delegate pointed out that, for Mexico, the issue of migration is a top national priority, not only because it is a host country, a transit country and the historical origin of large migrant communities, but also because migration constitutes a structural challenge throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.

The delegation of Venezuela recalled the importance of returning to the historical principles that guided the creation of SELA and were established in the *Caracas Declaration*, the founding document of CELAC. In particular, it cited paragraph 36, which entrusts governments with i) guiding the regional mechanisms and organisations to promote communication, articulation, coordination, complementarity and synergy; ii) ensuring the efficient use of resources; and iii) guaranteeing the convergence of efforts in line with integration objectives.

The delegation noted with concern that, despite SELA's efforts, there are currently multiple integration initiatives that overlap, duplicate efforts or proceed in parallel without sufficient coordination. To address this problem, it proposed moving towards the construction of sectoral convergence matrices that would make it possible to visualise the map of regional efforts and avoid duplication of work already initiated by other organisations. It also highlighted that SELA is the organisation with the greatest technical and political capacity to initiate this process.

He also raised the need to establish annual or biannual sectoral meetings among integration mechanisms. As a medium-term goal (three to five years), he proposed considering the possibility of holding presidential summits or higher-level meetings among the governing bodies of integration mechanisms to politically validate the technical convergence achieved.

Regarding SELA's work on relations with China, the Venezuelan delegation noted that the National Coordinators of CELAC are currently meeting in that country (7 to 13 December) to evaluate the first six months of implementation of the *China-CELAC Action Plan (2021)*,¹ which underscores the timeliness of strengthening this convergence.

He then called for deep reflection on the current international financing context and, in this regard, warned about financing from various non-traditional sources and cautioned that, although these contributions exist, even within the United Nations system, they represent a sensitive issue due to their political, ethical and strategic implications.

The Chair welcomed Mexico's intervention and expressed his support for the proposal. He noted that the initiative would be taken up again under "Other Matters" on the agenda (item 6) and announced his intention to propose one or more working sessions with the participation of the diplomatic corps accredited to Caracas from SELA member countries. These sessions would seek to deepen intergovernmental dialogue on migration and other sensitive issues on the regional agenda.

The Permanent Secretary noted that SELA had published a regional convergence matrix containing the progress made by each integration mechanism and added that China was offering training and 2,500 academic scholarships for LAC officials. Institutions such as the Chinese Academy of Sciences were interested in working with SELA in this area. He also commented that the call for venues for SELA events is open to all its members.

There being no further comments, the Chair approved *Draft Decision No. 1 Draft Work Programme 2026-2029*.

ITEM IV. ADMINISTRATIVE BUDGET OF THE PERMANENT SECRETARIAT FOR 2026

The Permanent Secretariat presented the *Draft Administrative Budget of the Permanent Secretariat for the year 2026*.

The Chair gave the floor to the delegations to express their views on the matter and, as there were no comments, approved *Draft Decision No. 2 Draft Administrative Budget of the Permanent Secretariat for the year 2026*.

ITEM V. ADMINISTRATIVE AND INSTITUTIONAL MATTERS

The Permanent Secretary presented the *Audit Report on the Financial Statements of the Permanent Secretariat for fiscal year 2024*.

The Chair gave the floor to the delegations to comment on the report and, as there were no comments, declared the *Draft Decision No. 3 Audit Report on the Financial Statements of the Permanent Secretariat for fiscal year 2024* approved.

¹ Comprehensive and multidimensional strategy to deepen bilateral and multilateral cooperation, focusing on the economy (infrastructure, clean energy, 5G technology, natural resources), security (fight against organised crime, Beidou satellite technology), culture and education (student exchanges, media, peoples), seeking mutual benefit and shared development under the CELAC framework, with clear objectives until 2027 in key areas such as green transition and digitalisation. On 10 December this year, China published the [Document on China's Policy towards Latin America and the Caribbean](#), the latest update of the 2021 document, the first version of which dates back to 2008.

The Permanent Secretary presented the *Audit Proposal for fiscal year 2025*.

As there were no comments on the proposal presented, the Chair approved *Draft Decision No. 4 Audit Proposal for fiscal year 2025*.

ITEM VI. OTHER MATTERS

1. Election of the new Bureau of the Latin American Council

The Bureau for the 2025-2026 term was announced, whose functions will begin at the close of the current Council. The Government of Colombia was elected to the Chair of the Latin American Council; the Government of Uruguay to the First Vice-Chair; the Government of Barbados to the Second Vice-Chair; and the Government of Cuba to the Rapporteurship.

The Chair opened the floor for comments on this matter and, as there were no comments, he declared *Draft Decision No. 5 Appointment of the Bureau of the Latin American Council* approved.

2. Declaration *Ending the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States against Cuba*.

The Cuban delegation submitted the document *Ending the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States against Cuba* for consideration at the Ministerial Stage through a declaration by the Latin American Council.

The Chair gave the floor to the delegations to comment on the declaration presented.

The delegation of Bolivia abstained from supporting the declaration.

The delegation of Guyana reserved its position until receiving instructions from its Foreign Ministry.

The delegation of Mexico fully supported the declaration.

The delegation of Paraguay did not support the declaration.

The delegation of Peru supported the declaration but expressed its temporary reservation regarding the paragraph referring to the economic losses estimated by the bloc for the period between March 2024 and February 2025.

The delegation of Ecuador expressed its decision to dissociate itself from the declaration.

The delegation of Uruguay, in the absence of consensus, abstained from supporting the declaration.

The delegation of Venezuela supported the declaration and requested that this position be recorded for the history of this body.

The Chair declared the declaration approved and, there being no other business to discuss, the Chair closed the Preparatory Stage of the 51st Regular Meeting of the Latin American Council.

B. MINISTERIAL STAGE

The Ministerial Stage of the "51st Regular Meeting of the Latin American Council" was held, in the face-to-face and virtual format, on 11 December 2025. The ceremony took place at the headquarters of the Permanent Secretariat of SELA, in Caracas, at 11:00 a.m. (Venezuelan time).

Delegations from the following Member States of the organisation participated: Barbados, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Guyana, Haiti, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Dominican Republic, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

The following personalities were present at the Bureau: His Excellency Milton Rengifo Hernández, Ambassador of Colombia to Venezuela and Chair of the Latin American Council; the Honourable Dayne-Marc Chin Slick, Counsellor of the Embassy of Trinidad and Tobago in Venezuela and First Vice-Chair; His Excellency Leopoldo De Gyves de La Cruz, Ambassador of Mexico to Venezuela and Second Vice-Chair; and His Excellency Jorge Luis Mayo, Ambassador of Cuba to Venezuela and Rapporteur of the Latin American Council. Representing Venezuela, the host country of the organisation, was His Excellency Yván Gil, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Venezuela. Participants also included His Excellency Ambassador Lesly David, Permanent Secretary of SELA, and officials of the Permanent Secretariat

OPENING SESSION

The Chair of the Latin American Council greeted and welcomed the audience, made some references to the work carried out during the Preparatory Stage, and opened the Ministerial Stage of the 51st Regular Meeting of the Latin American Council. He then gave the floor to the opening remarks, which were delivered by the following personalities:

His Excellency Yván Gil, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, after greeting the Bureau and the delegations, highlighted the importance of SELA for Venezuela as a space for contributing to the doctrine of humanity and a determining factor for the consolidation of economic, commercial and productive relations in Latin America and the Caribbean. He pointed out that SELA is one of the most structured and solid organisations in the region because it represents the vast majority of all the countries in the region. Finally, he said that it was an honour for him to have the various participating delegations in Caracas.

His Excellency Lesly David, Permanent Secretary of SELA, greeted the Bureau and the delegations. In response to the remarks made by His Excellency the Foreign Minister of Venezuela, he recalled that it is important for the countries of the region to maintain their commitment to integration beyond ideologies, fostering cordial relations and strengthening regional trade. In this regard, he reiterated SELA's commitment to continue working to build bridges of dialogue and promote the opening of spaces for the development of proposals focused on the growth of the region, mainly in economic aspects.

He then stated that regional integration is a strategic necessity for Latin America and the Caribbean, a region with more than 660 million inhabitants that continues to face high levels of inequality, low economic growth and persistent social gaps that particularly affect the most vulnerable populations. In this context, he presented the work programme as a roadmap aimed at transforming challenges into concrete actions, focusing on economic recovery, social development, and digitalisation and infrastructure as essential pillars for more equitable and sustainable development.

He also pointed out that the Permanent Secretariat has reiterated its commitment to fully implement the planned activities, including those related to trade facilitation, the organisation of the "III China-LAC Cooperation and Investment Forum," the coordination of policies for poverty eradication, and the strengthening of gender-sensitive educational initiatives for migrant women and girls. He stressed that digital transformation and the development of modern infrastructure are essential for regional competitiveness. Finally, he acknowledged the political will expressed by member countries and guaranteed, on behalf of SELA, tireless, transparent work aimed at the well-being of the peoples of the region.

His Excellency Milton Rengifo Hernández, Ambassador of Colombia to Venezuela and Chair of the Latin American Council, expressed his gratitude for the words of the Venezuelan Foreign Minister and highlighted the relevance of SELA in the face of rapid changes in global geopolitics. He pointed to the transition towards an economy more focused on the domestic market and based on the revaluation of multilateralism as a social focus. He reaffirmed the commitment of member countries to promote consensus while respecting the sovereignty and self-determination of peoples in order to strengthen integration and collective development.

Finally, he expressed his satisfaction at the honour bestowed upon Colombia through its ratification as Chair of the Latin American Council. In this regard, he reiterated his country's commitment to contribute to the fulfilment of the fundamental aspects of SELA's mandate. He added that he was fully prepared to make every effort possible for the sake of the Patria Grande en Paz (Great Homeland in Peace). Finally, he expressed his deepest gratitude to SELA's membership for the trust placed in him. He then announced the approval of the draft decisions agreed upon during the Preparatory Stage.

The delegation of Brazil congratulated SELA on its work in the area of integration and highlighted the important role played by the organisation in this process. The delegate indicated that her government is making the necessary efforts to formalise its return to SELA, adding that "Brazil should never have left." She expressed her gratitude to SELA for keeping her country involved in its activities during this period of absence. She acknowledged the importance of the work and praised the inter-secretariat working groups which, in her opinion, represent a series of efforts to avoid duplication, join forces and promote the necessary convergence and synergies. She highlighted the importance of SELA in providing technical support to CELAC on issues of productive integration.

Adoption of decisions

The following decisions were approved:

Decision N° 618 Work Programme of the Permanent Secretariat for 2026-2029; Decision N° 619 Administrative Budget for the year 2026; Decision N° 620 Audit Report on the Financial Statements of the Permanent Secretariat at 31 December 2024; Decision N° 621 Appointment of auditors for fiscal year 2025; and Decision N° 622 Appointment of the Bureau of the Latin American Council.

Adoption of the Declaration *Ending the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States against Cuba*

The Chair submitted for consideration by the delegations the Declaration [Ending the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States against Cuba](#), which was approved with the addition of the following paragraph:

"The Latin American Council of SELA, with Bolivia and Uruguay abstaining, Guyana and Peru expressing reservations, Paraguay opposing, and Ecuador dissociating itself, recalls and reasserts, together with the other countries present in person or virtually, Decision N° 112 of the Latin American Council in relation to the "Imposition of economic measures of a coercive nature" and Decisions N° 356 and 360, which refuse the application of unilateral measures that affect the free development of international trade and violate international law and the most essential principles of regional coexistence."

The Chair, there being no further matters to consider, declared the 51st Regular Meeting of the Latin American Council closed.

D E C I S I O N S

C. DECISIONS

DECISION N° 618**WORK PROGRAMME OF THE PERMANENT SECRETARIAT FOR 2026-2029****THE LATIN AMERICAN COUNCIL,****HAVING SEEN:**

Articles 5 (2) and Article 15 (6) of the Panama Convention;

The document "Draft Work Programme of the Permanent Secretariat of SELA for 2022-2026" (SP/CL/LIO/DT N° 4-25).

Decision N°587.

WHEREAS:

The Panama Convention establishing SELA is a broad and flexible instrument that allows for adapting the objectives and functions of the organisation to the changing realities of the international environment and for setting priorities according to the needs of Member States.

An agile and flexible regional organisation is necessary to develop appropriate and timely responses to the region's new challenges.

SELA should be adapted to the new circumstances, as a natural forum for the analysis and exchange of experiences of the countries in the region in matters related to the external economic agenda, as well as for the development of regional cooperation, in coordination with other organisations in the region.

DECIDES:

Article 1: To approve the Work Programme of the Permanent Secretariat of SELA for 2026-2029.

Article 2: In conducting the various activities contemplated in the aforementioned Work Programme, the Permanent Secretariat shall maintain regular contacts with the members of the Bureau of the Latin American Council and other representatives of the Member States.

DECISION N° 619**ADMINISTRATIVE BUDGET FOR THE YEAR 2026****THE LATIN AMERICAN COUNCIL,****HAVING SEEN:**

Article 15 (5), Article 31 (6) and Article 36 of the Panama Convention and Article 6 of Decision 177.

WHEREAS:

The Permanent Secretariat needs to be provided with adequate financial resources to fully comply with the functions set forth in the Panama Convention and the Work Programme approved by the Latin American Council for 2025;

DECIDES:

Article 1: A budget shall be approved in the amount of US\$ 1,600,644 for the period from 01 January to 31 December 2026, according to the following distribution by category:

CATEGORIES:	US\$
I. PERMANENT SECRETARIAT	1,600,644
1. International staff	517,658
2. Local staff	554,625
3. Direct Expenses - Work Programme and official travels	430,610
4. Communications, materials and administrative expenses	97,751
TOTAL	1,600,644

Article 2: The budget for the year 2026 shall be financed with contributions from Member States in accordance with the current quota system, as set out hereunder:

<u>% APPLIED</u>	<u>MEMBER STATES</u>	<u>REGULAR QUOTAS IN US\$ YEAR 2026</u>
29,132%	GROUP I	466.303,36
14,566%	ARGENTINA	233.151,68
14,566%	MEXICO	233.151,68
40,685%	GROUP II	651.219,55
8,137%	COLOMBIA	130.243,91
8,137%	CUBA	130.243,91
8,137%	CHILE	130.243,91
8,137%	PERU	130.243,91
8,137%	VENEZUELA	130.243,91
16,544%	GROUP III	264.816,84
1,379%	BAHAMAS	22.068,07
1,379%	BOLIVIA	22.068,07
1,379%	ECUADOR	22.068,07
1,379%	EL SALVADOR	22.068,07
1,379%	HONDURAS	22.068,07
1,379%	NICARAGUA	22.068,07
1,379%	PANAMA	22.068,07
1,379%	PARAGUAY	22.068,07
1,379%	DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	22.068,07
1,379%	SURINAME	22.068,07
1,379%	TRINIDAD & TOBAGO	22.068,07
1,379%	URUGUAY	22.068,07
1,556%	GROUP IV	24.903,24
0,389%	BARBADOS	6.225,81
0,389%	BELIZE	6.225,81
0,389%	GUYANA	6.225,81
0,389%	HAITI	6.225,81
12,083%	HOST COUNTRY	193.401,07
12,083%	VENEZUELA	193.401,07
100,00%	TOTAL QUOTAS	1.600.644,00

Article 3: Member States shall be reminded of their commitment to comply with their budgetary obligations in a timely manner in order to enable the Permanent Secretariat of SELA to perform its functions efficiently.

Article 4: The financial commitments of the Permanent Secretariat related to the expenses of the Work Programme, debt payments and obligations of the organisation may be honoured with resources from the payment of current year quotas and overdue quotas of Member States.

DECISION N° 620**AUDIT REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
OF THE PERMANENT SECRETARIAT AT 31 DECEMBER 2024**

THE LATIN AMERICAN COUNCIL,

HAVING SEEN:

Article 15 (5) and Article 31 (7) of the Panama Convention; and

The Financial Statements of the Permanent Secretariat at 31 December 2024 and the Audit Report that form part of document "Audit Report on the Financial Statements of the Permanent Secretariat at 31 December 2024" (SP/CL/LIO/DT N.º 6-25).

DECIDES:

Sole Article: To approve the Audit Report on the Financial Statements of the Permanent Secretariat for the fiscal year from 1 January to 31 December 2024, conducted by the firm MARTINEZ – PERALES & ASOCIADOS.

DECISION N° 621**APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025**

THE LATIN AMERICAN COUNCIL,

HAVING SEEN:

Article 34 of the Regulations of the Permanent Secretariat, which stipulates, *inter alia*, "in selecting the external auditor, an attempt will be made to rotate the position among the Member States, as far as it is possible, and considering the financial implications;" and

The tenders from auditors received at the Permanent Secretariat, contained in the document "Audit proposal for the year 2025" (SP/CL/LIO/DT N° 7-25).

DECIDES:

Sole Article: To entrust Eduardo Romero Meléndez & Asociados with the audit of the financial statements of the Permanent Secretariat for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2025, under the regulations governing the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System.

DECISION N° 622**APPOINTMENT OF THE BUREAU OF THE LATIN AMERICAN COUNCIL****THE LATIN AMERICAN COUNCIL,****HAVING SEEN:**

Articles 9 and 14 of the Panama Convention; and

Article 23 of the Rules of Procedure of the Latin American Council.

WHEREAS:

The Panama Convention establishing SELA is a broad and flexible instrument that allows for adapting the objectives and functions of the organisation to the changing realities of the international environment and for setting priorities according to the needs of Member States.

There is a need for an equitable participation of the region in the composition of the Bureau of the Latin American Council.

Decision N°594 of the Latin American Council, with its Annex.

DECIDES:

Article 1: To elect the Government of the Republic of Colombia as Chair of the Latin American Council and the Government of the Republic of Cuba as Rapporteur for the period of sessions of 2026.

Article 2: To elect the Government of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay as First Vice-Chair and the Government of the Republic of Barbados as Second Vice-Chair of the Latin American Council for the period of sessions of 2026.

D E C L A R A T I O N

E. DECLARATION

ENDING THE ECONOMIC, COMMERCIAL AND FINANCIAL BLOCKADE IMPOSED BY THE UNITED STATES AGAINST CUBA"

The Latin American Council of the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SEL), gathered in the Ministerial Session of its 51st Regular Meeting in Caracas on 10 and 11 December 2025.

RECALLING,

The mandate given by the Member States of SEL to the Permanent Secretariat (Article 4, Decision No. 377) to submit an annual report on the enforcement of the Helms-Burton Law and the imposition of economic sanctions by the United States of America against Cuba; that such sanctions by the United States not only adversely affect a Member State of SEL, but also seek to impose certain rules on the international community as regards its economic relations with Cuba;

Decision No. 112 of the Latin American Council, "Imposition of Economic Measures of a Coercive Nature," as well as Decisions Nos. 356 and 360, which reject the implementation of unilateral measures that may affect the free development of international trade, in violation of international law and the most basic principles of regional coexistence; Decisions 377, 390, 401, 421, 432, 438, 444, 453, 463, 477 and 482 of the Latin American Council, on the "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States of America against Cuba;"

The Declaration "Ending the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States of America against Cuba," adopted by consensus by the Member States of SEL at the following Regular Meetings of the Latin American Council: XXXV, on 29 October 2009; XXXVI, on 28 October 2010; XXXVII, on 21 October 2011; XXXVIII, on 18 October 2012; XXXIX, on 28 November 2013; XL, on 28 November 2014; XLI, on 28 November 2015; XLII, on 27 October 2016; XLIII, on 30 November 2017; XLIV, on 27 November 2018; XLV, on 27 November 2019; XLVI, on 17 November 2020; XLVII on 30 November 2021; XLVIII on 30 November 2022; XLIX, on 6 December 2023; and L on 11 December 2024; all held in Caracas, Venezuela;

The relevant resolutions adopted by the United Nations General Assembly over the past 33 years, whereby an appeal is made to put an end to the economic, commercial and financial blockade of the United States of America against Cuba;

BEARING IN MIND

The need to reaffirm, among other principles, the sovereign equality of all States, non-interference in the countries' internal affairs, and the freedom of trade and navigation, as established in numerous international legal instruments;

The declarations issued by Latin American and Caribbean Heads of State or Government at the Summits of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States concerning the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial blockade against Cuba;

The concern among Member States about the continued enactment and enforcement of laws and regulations, such as that enacted on 12 March 1996, known as the "Helms-Burton Law," the extraterritorial impact of which affects the sovereignty of other States, the legitimate interests of entities or persons under their jurisdiction, and the freedom of trade and navigation;

The declarations and resolutions arising from different intergovernmental forums, bodies and governments that reflect the rejection by the international community and public opinion to the enactment and implementation of such measures;

That during 2025 the persecution and prosecution of Cuba's international financial transactions continue to be one of the most distinctive features of the application of the blockade. In addition to constituting the main impediment to the economic and social development of the country, the blockade is the most significant obstacle to a greater expansion of Cuba's commercial links with the world and affects international cooperation with some countries;

The inclusion of Cuba in January 2021 in the unilateral list of States Sponsors of Terrorism generates severe consequences for the country's economy, mainly in the financial banking sector, reinforces the dissuasive and intimidating effects towards third parties in their commercial relations with Cuba, as it limits the obtaining of credits and the payment of goods and supplies essential for the country's development;

That between 2017 and 2020 the United States administration adopted more than 240 measures aimed at affecting the most sensitive sectors of the Cuban economy and creating despair among its people, which remain in full force;

That the analysis contained in the "Follow-up report on the application of the Helms Burton Law, 2018-2019," authored by the Permanent Secretariat of SELA, describes in depth the impact of the blockade on various economic sectors of the Republic of Cuba, as well as the extra-territorial nature of the measures and provisions adopted in this connection by the United States of America;

Estimated losses for the period March 2024 to February 2025 amounted to US\$7.556 billion as a result of the United States government's policy of maintaining maximum pressure on Cuba, the rigorous application of the economic, commercial and financial blockade as its fundamental axis, and the additional tightening measures applied in the last 12 months, which continued to involve unilateral measures with the greatest impact on the Cuban population and economy, thereby reproducing and aggravating the devastating effects of this unilateral coercive policy, the longest and most extensive in history;

That the blockade continues to be the main obstacle for the development of all the potentialities of the Cuban economy, for the implementation of the National Economic and Social Development Plan and the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals.

DECLARES:

1. The economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States of America against Cuba is incompatible with and in violation of International Law, contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, the rules of the international trading system and freedom of navigation;
2. The Latin American Council strenuously condemns the enforcement of any law or measure contrary to the International Law, such as the Helms-Burton Law; therewith, it calls upon the Government of the United States to put an end to its implementation;
3. The Permanent Secretariat must continue to examine this issue of special relevance for the

external relations of the region, in accordance with Decision N° 482, and keep the Latin American Council informed about its evolution by maintaining this item on its agenda;

4. The Latin American Council requests the Government of the United States to comply with the provisions of consecutive Resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly, and therewith, to put an end to the economic, commercial and financial blockade that remains in force against Cuba;
5. The Latin American Council of SELA, with Bolivia and Uruguay abstaining, Guyana and Peru expressing reservations, Paraguay opposing, and Ecuador dissociating itself, recalls and reasserts, together with the other countries present in person or virtually, Decision N° 112 of the Latin American Council in relation to the "Imposition of economic measures of a coercive nature" and Decisions N° 356 and 360, which refuse the application of unilateral measures that affect the free development of international trade and violate international law and the most essential principles of regional coexistence.

ANNEXES:
REMARKS AT THE OPENING OF THE MINISTERIAL STAGE

A N N E X I

**REMARKS BY HIS EXCELLENCY AMBASSADOR LESLY DAVID,
PERMANENT SECRETARY OF SELA**

His Excellency Yván Gil, People's Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela;

His Excellency Milton Rengifo Hernández, Ambassador of Colombia to Venezuela and Chair of the Latin American Council;

Honourable authorities of the Bureau of the Latin American Council;

Your Excellencies, Ambassadors and Representatives of the Diplomatic Corps;

Ladies and gentlemen:

Allow me to begin by reaffirming an inescapable truth that unites us: regional integration is not an option, but rather a historical and strategic necessity. Since SELA was founded more than fifty years ago, we have understood that our strength lies in the coordination of our economies and the solidarity of our peoples.

I am convinced of this process. I know that integration is the most powerful tool we have to combat global uncertainty. It is not just about economics, but about building collective unity even from our differences. Our region, with its more than 660 million inhabitants, demands a clear vision and coordinated action from us.

The Latin American and Caribbean region, despite its immense wealth, remains the most unequal region on the planet. Projected economic growth remains low, at around 2.3% for 2026, slowing economic and social recovery.

Millions of our citizens still live in poverty, and extreme poverty remains at worrying levels, affecting women, young people and vulnerable communities in particular.

The Work Programme presented by this Secretariat is our concrete response to these challenges. It is a roadmap that transforms good intentions into measurable actions.

The Permanent Secretariat once again solemnly undertakes to conduct each of the proposed activities, focusing on three fundamental areas:

1. Economic Recovery:

- We commit ourselves, among other activities, to making decisive progress in trade facilitation.
- We commit ourselves to convening the III China-Latin America and Caribbean Investment Cooperation Forum to attract the resources and technologies that will boost our productive economies.

2. Social Development:

- We are committed to prioritising the Poverty Eradication project, coordinating social policies that use cooperation as a lever for development.
- We are committed to promoting the III Virtual Workshop on Educational Strategies for the Integration of Migrant Women and Girls. This initiative is not only educational; it is an act

of social justice that seeks to ensure that migration is not a source of exclusion, but rather an opportunity for development with a gender perspective.

3. Digitalisation and Infrastructure:

- This thematic area, which is vital for regional competitiveness, focuses on promoting digital transformation and developing sustainable and "smarter" infrastructure in Latin America and the Caribbean. SELA recognises that modern infrastructure is an indispensable platform for the digital economy and that synergy between both areas is key to development.

The task is monumental, but the will that has been expressed today in this Council is the best guarantee of success. SELA reaffirms itself as a genuine space for addressing and developing public policy proposals at the service of our region.

I am grateful for your support.

Rest assured that the Permanent Secretariat will work tirelessly, with transparency and vision, to ensure that this *Work Programme for 2026-2029* translates into greater well-being for every man, woman and child in our beloved region.

Thank you very much!

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