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## **XXXI Meeting of IIRSA Technical Forum**

### **Report**

*December 5, 2017*

*San Martín Palace*

*Ceremonial Venue for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Argentine Republic*

*Arenales 761*

*Buenos Aires, Argentina*

On December 5, 2017, the city of Buenos Aires, Argentina, hosted the XXXI Meeting of COSIPLAN IIRSA Technical Forum, which was attended by delegations from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela, as well as by representatives of civil society organizations, of the UNASUR General Secretariat and of COSIPLAN-IIRSA Technical Coordination Committee. The meeting agenda and the list of participants are attached as **Annexes 1 and 2**, respectively.

The meeting was opened by Mr. Atilio Alimena, National Director of International Territorial Integration Planning, Argentina's Ministry of the Interior, Public Works and Housing, who welcomed and thanked the National Coordinations for their participation and the CCT Secretariat for its collaboration throughout the year's activities. Next, Mr. Mariano Wagner, First Secretary at Argentina's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship, took the floor and also expressed his gratitude to the delegations for their participation and, together with Mr. Gustavo Beliz, IDB-INTAL Director, expressed his hope that these meeting days would be fruitful. Subsequently, the items on the agenda were addressed as summarized below.

### **Communication Activities in 2017**

In 2017, COSIPLAN produced a significant number of materials and a huge amount of information that reflect the efforts made by the governments in integrating their infrastructure. The CCT Secretariat presented the main results in terms of their dissemination.

#### **I. COSIPLAN Publications**

Three annual reports were drafted, namely the COSIPLAN Activity Report 2017, the COSIPLAN Project Portfolio Report 2017, and the Integration Priority Project Agenda (API) Progress Report 2017. It was highlighted that the API report was substantially different from the ones issued in previous years because it presented the five-year review work and the new arrangement of the Agenda. With regard to the Activity Report, a section containing the COSIPLAN Ministers' views on the Council's main achievements and their vision for the future was included.

Two technical documents – the Progress Report 2017 on the Agua Negra Binational Tunnel PTI Implementation Plan, and the study “Input for Drafting a Strategy to Facilitate South American Rail Integration,” coordinated by Uruguay’s Ministry of Transport and Public Works– and the Strategic Action Plan 2012-2022 Updated as of 2017 were also published.

All of these documents were being translated into English and were available at the COSIPLAN website.

## **II. Interactive Information Platforms**

Mention was made of the improvements introduced into the website, which help consolidate it as the Council’s main dissemination tool. The domain name [www.cosiplan.org](http://www.cosiplan.org) was acquired in 2017, and the COSIPLAN website would also be accessible at [www.iirsa.org](http://www.iirsa.org).

COSIPLAN has six interactive platforms that are interconnected and enable users to learn about the progress made in the different areas of work. Some of these platforms, that received a total of more than 120,000 visits in 2017, are the [Project Information System \(SIP\)](#), [Exporta Fácil](#), the [Integration and Development Hubs](#) website and the [COSIPLAN Geographic Information System \(GIS\)](#).

Two new platforms were developed in 2017: “[South American Border Crossings](#),” enabling the monitoring of the authorized South American border crossings as identified by the countries; and the [Agua Negra Binational Tunnel Integration Territorial Program \(PTI\) Management System](#), enabling the monitoring of the 116 actions contained in the PTI Implementation Plan.

Furthermore, two videos were shot: a tutorial video on the SIP that shows, in a simple manner, how to conduct searches in the system and make the most of it, and a video about the Integration and Development Hubs website presenting its purpose and functionalities.

## **III. Dissemination Activities**

More initiatives were undertaken to further disseminate the COSIPLAN products and its website. Among them are the posting of 37 videos related to the activities conducted during the year to the [Youtube channel](#), the development of a newsletter and a subscription form, coordination with the communications areas of the Ministries to disseminate five face-to-face meetings through the press and social media, and the design of a COSIPLAN website banner for its inclusion in the websites and social media of the Ministries.

The Brazilian delegation appreciated the efforts of the CCT Secretariat concerning the development of knowledge products and technological platforms, and proposed that each country should send a list of public, academic, social and private-sector institutions interested in the COSIPLAN work to incorporate them into the contact database so as to send them the newsletter. This would ensure reaching a largest part of society and a wider dissemination of the Council’s activities.

The presentation is attached as **Annex 3**.

## **Agua Negra Binational Tunnel Integration Territorial Program (PTI)**

The Argentine and Chilean delegations presented the work done within the framework of the Agua Negra Binational Tunnel PTI.

During 2017, two binational workshops were held. They were attended by more than 90 officials from Chile's central government and Coquimbo Region and from Argentina's central government and San Juan and La Rioja provinces, and involved the participation of the private sector, academia, and civil society organizations.

The focus of the workshops was to move forward in the implementation and monitoring of the 116 actions that would help prepare the territory and its inhabitants for the construction and opening of the tunnel. Of such actions, 47 are Native Actions, i.e. they were defined and prioritized as a result of the PTI design. The other 69 ones are Concurrent Planning Actions involving an amount estimated at US\$3 billion that are already part of government plans or programs.

The [PTI Management System](#) was developed to computerize the information about such actions and make their monitoring transparent. This system can be accessed by the public over the Internet, and contains a file for each PTI Action that provides information on the scope, costs, implementation time frames and geographical location.

After the progress of the works were reviewed, both delegations highlighted that the PTI was producing immediate results and had strengthened dialogue with all the sectors as well as contact with the people inhabiting the area of influence. Some concrete results involved important advances in the following areas: study on San Juan's and Coquimbo's tourism potential and integrated binational signage system; development of productive activities in the non-metallic mineral sector; study on freight transport diversion from the tunnel to the port of Coquimbo; design and construction of the border center on the Argentine side; study on electricity supply for the operation and services of the tunnel; initiatives to rescue indigenous peoples' knowledge; and a geological hazard map for the area of influence of the highways in Chile and Argentina.

The presentation is attached as **Annex 4**.

## **Disaster Risk Management**

The Chilean delegation reviewed the activities that had been carried out at COSIPLAN since 2015 in relation to disaster risk management in integration infrastructure, making reference to the development of the methodology and its application to the territory located in northern Chile and Southern Peru. It also spoke about the progress being made in Chile based on the development of two methods, a probabilistic one and a deterministic one. The latter involves economic advantages and is easier to apply than the former. Currently, a pilot plan reaching up to the municipal level is underway in Chile.

Next, the Argentine delegation stated that following the events that took place in Comodoro Rivadavia, it started a dialogue with the Ministry of Public Works of Chile so that the Chilean experience would be disseminated through training courses and exchanges so as to learn the methods for infrastructure preparedness and reconstruction in the event of natural disasters.

The Venezuelan delegation informed that a meeting of the UNASUR High Level Working Group for Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management would be held in March in Buenos Aires, and recommended that COSIPLAN should participate in it to present the activities underway and talk about any possible future coordinated actions.

Given the importance of natural and anthropic disasters, its economic effects, and costs for the population and countries affected, it has been agreed to move forward with the organization of courses on Disaster Risk Management targeted to South American officials, and that Chile, Argentina and INTAL assess the possibility of drafting working guidelines on this issue for 2018.

### **Project Portfolio Update and API Five-Year Review**

The CCT Secretariat presented the status of the Project Portfolio as of 2017. The active portfolio includes 409 projects underway for an investment of US\$150 billion and, so far, 153 projects had been completed with an investment of more than US\$48 billion.

In addition, it summarized the activities carried out throughout the year in connection with the first API Five-Year Review and the new arrangement of API into two agendas: one whose completion is expected for 2022 and another one whose final implementation date is 2027. API 2022 comprises 14 structured projects made up of 42 individual projects with an investment estimated at US\$11.087 billion, whereas API 2027 comprises 12 structure projects made up of 35 individual projects for an investment estimated at US\$12.009 billion.

The Argentine delegation stated that it is necessary to ensure project rigor and transparency in the future, which calls for up-to-date, quality information by using the possibilities provided by the COSIPLAN Project Information System and Continuous Monitoring System.

The Brazilian delegation stressed the need to promote greater convergence between the infrastructure projects and the actual trade flows. The rationale for the projects should not only involve local and social dynamics, but also logistics and trade flows, in an attempt to achieve an infrastructure-logistics-trade synergy, especially with a view to reinforcing private financing of public works.

The presentations are attached as **Annexes 5 and 6**.

### **Freight Transport and Logistics**

The Colombian delegation presented the activities carried out this year. The fifth edition of the Course on Design and Management of Freight Transport and Logistics Public Policies was run and, so far, there were 132 officials certified in the course, including officials from Central American countries. Furthermore, five online meetings of the Freight Logistics Expert Network were held, in addition to the face-to-face meeting of the Executive Technical Group, which took place in the city of Lima.

The Colombian delegation also stated that it had agreed with Peru to jointly coordinate this Executive Technical Group, based on the interest sparked by its progress in the field of logistics and on the importance that it was being attached at the national level.

The presentation is attached as **Annex 7**.

## Air Integration

The Brazilian delegation raised two fundamental issues concerning this subject. According to its approach, air integration should be expanded to include sectors other than airport authorities so as to widen the focus from the commercial interest of companies to other needs, such as the creation of regional hubs for the development of areas that are still poorly connected, thus encouraging the connection with new local airports.

Furthermore, multimodal transport should be strengthened, including air transportation, by thinking of airports as dry ports whose sustainability is based not only on the transport of passengers, but also —and most importantly in some cases— on the movement of cargo. This will result in companies becoming interested in including new connections and serving the needs of local communities. The connection of airports with railways, roads and waterways should also be considered.

## Planning for the Integration and Development of Border Territories

The Argentine and Chilean delegations presented the activities carried out throughout the year. They were focused on the implementation of the [South American Border Crossings](#) virtual platform, which contains information about the authorized South American border crossings as identified by the countries. Details were provided concerning the online meetings and the face-to-face meeting of the GTE held in August in Buenos Aires, which contributed to the progress in the development of this platform.

Next, the CCT Secretariat gave the participants a virtual tour of the platform, showing its functionalities and search possibilities. With regard to the information, it was stated that only 50 of the 88 border crossings identified at the August meeting had been entered into the platform, as one or both of the countries involved in the remaining 38 border crossings had not provided any information. It was stressed that the information from both bordering countries was needed to enter one border crossing in the system; for this reason, the countries that had not sent the information yet were requested to do so as soon as possible. Also, the National Coordinations were requested to review the data entered to ensure their consistency and to use the platform to identify any possible errors or suggest any modifications.

The need to define an information update methodology to prevent the data from becoming obsolete was emphasized. Finally, mention was made to the importance of disseminating the tool to the general public, especially in summer as far as possible, as this is the season when the flow of passengers is greater.

The delegations thanked the efforts made in implementing the platform, underscoring that these kinds of initiatives create commitment, trust, transparency and respect for the citizens, as well as efficiency through the use of technology. The work done by the countries' technical teams that collected and compiled the information was essential to make this possible.

The presentations are attached as **Annexes 8 and 9**.

## Participation of South American Social Organizations: Argentina-Brazil Border Integration

Representatives from the Border Inter-municipal Consortium (CIF) offered information on the activities that their organization is carrying out in the border area between Argentina and Brazil located in the Argentine province of Misiones. Among them, they mentioned the construction of the “Tourism Environmental Integration Park,” which was possible thanks to the collaboration of the countries’ public sector at the municipal and provincial levels, and the “Cooperative Borders” project. Furthermore, they informed that there are several integration academic projects (Cross-Border Regional Urban Integration and the Integrated Border Strategic Plan, among others).

The presentation is attached as **Annex 10**.

## Work Plan and Calendar of Activities 2018

Next, the Argentine and Bolivian delegations presented the Work Plan and Calendar of Activities 2018 proposed by IIRSA Technical Forum. After discussing the Work Plan and each of the activities, the delegations reached an agreement concerning both documents, which are attached as **Annexes 11 and 12**.

## List of Annexes

Annex 1: [Agenda of the XXXI Meeting of IIRSA Technical Forum](#)

Annex 2: [List of Participants in the XXXI Meeting of IIRSA Technical Forum](#)

Annex 3: [Communication Activities 2017 – CCT Secretariat](#)

Annex 4: [Agua Negra Binational Tunnel Integration Territorial Program \(PTI\) – Argentina’s National Coordination](#)

Annex 5: [Project Portfolio Update – CCT Secretariat](#)

Annex 6: [Integration Priority Project Agenda \(API\) Five-Year Review – CCT Secretariat](#)

Annex 7: [Freight Transport and Logistics – Colombia’s National Coordination](#)

Annex 8: [Planning for the Integration and Development of Border Territories – Chile’s National Coordination](#)

Annex 9: [South American Border Crossings Information System – CCT Secretariat](#)

Annex 10: [Argentina-Brazil Border Integration – Border Inter-municipal Consortium \(CIF\)](#)

Annex 11: [COSIPLAN Work Plan 2018](#)

Annex 12: [COSIPLAN Calendar of Activities 2018](#)