



COSIPLAN
Presidencia Pro Tempore
Uruguay 2014 – 2016

XXIX Meeting of IIRSA Technical Forum

April 6, 2016

Radisson Montevideo Victoria Plaza Hotel
Montevideo, Uruguay

REPORT ON THE MEETING

On April 6, 2016, the city of Montevideo, Uruguay, hosted the XXIX Meeting of COSIPLAN-IIRSA National Coordinators, which was attended by delegations from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay, as well as by representatives of the UNASUR General Secretariat and 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 the by Mr. Pablo Genta, National Director of Planning and Logistics under the Ministry of Transport and Public Works of Uruguay, on behalf of the COSIPLAN Presidency Pro Tempore (PPT), who welcomed the participants. In response, the delegations thanked the President Pro Tempore for his work and effort during his tenure. Next, Mr. Sergio Galilea, Undersecretary of Public Works of Chile, stressed his country's commitment to the COSIPLAN-IIRSA efforts; in this context, he announced that a course on basic rural roads and paving would be offered on August 16-18. Rural roads are domestic ways of integration that complement the efforts made at the regional level. The course will be open to the UNASUR Member States and the Central American countries.

During the opening session, the PPT presented the objectives of the meeting:

- i) Assess the progress made in the activities that are being carried out in the context of the COSIPLAN-IIRSA Work Plan 2016;
- ii) Present the activities scheduled for 2016 for each action set forth in the PAE by the countries coordinating them, analyze them and agree upon them: Integration Territorial Programs; Disaster Risk Management; Course on Freight Transport and Logistics; South American Integration through Ports and Waterways; Air Integration; Border Integration; Trade Integration through Postal Services for MSMEs.

Subsequently, the progress made in the activities set forth in the Work Plan 2016 was presented.

Design of the Agua Negra Binational Tunnel Integration Territorial Program (PTI)

Argentina and Chile delivered a presentation on the “Agua Negra Binational Tunnel” PTI and on the work plan 2016. The actions underway and completed under the coordination of the National Teams of both countries and with the support of the Technical Coordination Committee were explained (Annex 3)

The PTI identified a series of actions that will lead to the improvement of physical connectivity, the protection of the cultural heritage and biodiversity, and the enhancement of economic and productive activities such as mining, industry, and tourism, among others. The Argentine Provinces of San Juan and La Rioja and Chile’s Coquimbo Region are the areas under the direct influence of the PTI.

The aim is to move from PTI planning to implementation by means of an Action Plan. This Action Plan is the fundamental instrument for managing the PTI and for making its planning process effective. It is made up of plans, programs, and projects, as well as of the actions and activities associated with each of them.

Argentina and Chile said that once the tunnel is completed, there will be two headquarters for control purposes, each one including officials from both countries (integrated control). At present, traditional controls are performed at both office facilities.

Design of a PTI associated with the Multimodal Transportation in the Laguna Merín – Lagoa dos Patos System Project

Brazil and Uruguay expressed their interest in making headway with the design of the Laguna Merín-Lagoa dos Patos waterway PTI. Uruguay informed that these two lakes are connected by a channel and allow navigation by limited draft vessels, but nonetheless they could be used for freight transport and fishing and tourism activities. To consolidate the waterway, some investments in infrastructure are vital, basically concerning dredging of the Merín lake and the São Gonçalo channel, which connects both lakes. The Strategic Environmental and Social Evaluation (EASE) Methodology was applied, as a result of which a potential for local and regional production activities in the areas of direct influence of the lakes was identified. On the basis of this logistics platform, the production of goods and tourism activities, among others, could be promoted, leading to a positive impact on the area. For all these reasons, Uruguay regards the design of the PTI as a priority on its agenda.

In turn, Brazil stated that this work involves several ministries and other public institutions, such as ANTAQ (National Agency of Waterway Transportation), and that the working groups would be established in the next few days. The Ministry of Transport has a strategic waterway plan, whereby the strengthening of river transportation is a State policy, and thus the country recognizes the importance of integrating with Uruguay and the other countries. The objective is to balance the national transportation matrix, i.e. road, river and rail transport.

The next activity would be a videoconference to present the work methodology and the expected results on the basis of the Agua Negra Tunnel experience, and to jointly move forward in the preparation of the work plan.

COSIPLAN Project Portfolio and Integration Priority Project Agenda (API)

Mention was made of the objectives of the update process proposed for 2016: i) complete the 2014-2016 schedule, including descriptors and the Continuous Monitoring System for all the Portfolio projects that are at the pre-execution and execution stages, as well as the module containing information on the completed projects; ii) fill out any empty fields and solve any inconsistencies in the information included in the individual projects files; and iii) specify the information on the projects at the pre-execution stage, reporting the current status in detail and identifying any obstacles to their implementation. The outcomes of the update process will allow the countries to make decisions concerning how to carry out further analysis of the Portfolio and improve the dissemination of the COSIPLAN activities favoring South American connectivity, as well as to promote the implementation of the projects that are at the Pre-execution stage (Annex 4).

To this end, the files in the Project Information System (PIS) should be completed with information that is as accurate as possible, making the most of the videoconferences by Hub. During the week of April 18, the countries will receive a communication with details on the tasks that they must complete before the videoconferences and their deadlines. Furthermore, the timetable for the videoconferences was confirmed. The aim is to present the results of this work in August to analyze future actions.

Integration and Development Hubs

The microsite on the Integration and Development Hubs, which has already been launched at our website, was presented. Its user-friendly and logical interface, resulting from innovative aspects such as the use of interactive maps and direct links to the PIS, was highlighted. A demonstration was made of how to have access through this microsite to all the information about the South American region's infrastructure projects; economic, social and environmental data on the Hubs; and the documents produced and activities carried out.

The reports on the socioeconomic and environmental characterization of the Southern, the Guianese Shield, the Central Interoceanic, and Peru-Brazil-Bolivia Hubs have already been completed and incorporate the observations made by the countries. They will soon be available on the website.

Disaster Risk Management Methodology Applied to Project Group 5 of the Central Interoceanic Hub

Chile and Peru made reference to the experience associated with the Binational Workshop held in Arica, Chile, on March 8 and 9, which was attended by nearly 65 Chilean and Peruvian professionals, who exchanged the lessons learned during the pilot application of the Methodology for Disaster Risk Management in Integration Infrastructure Projects, and identified some measures to be taken to reduce the risk of disasters (Annex 5)

Finally, they mentioned the next steps, namely: i) present the results at the GTE Meeting to be held in June in Lima; ii) move forward in the development and use of software for conducting a general assessment of the infrastructure in each COSIPLAN Project Group; iii) complete the estimation and characterization of the natural hazards and the vulnerability analysis for the 10 projects selected in the pilot application; and iv) identify risk reduction measures for jeopardized infrastructure.

Freight Transport and Logistics

Peru presented the main results of the first edition of the virtual course, which took place in 2015 and featured a very good performance of the officials certified. Next, comments were made regarding the call for the second edition of the course, which will be given from May 2 to June 26, to continue training officials from the different public sector agencies in the UNASUR countries concerned with the design of public policies, plans, programs and projects in the area of freight logistics. (Annex 6)

Subsequently, Peru put forth a proposal to establish a network of experts trained in the Virtual Courses as well as other experts appointed by the countries with the purpose of creating an information and updating network in the field of freight transport and logistics to advise COSIPLAN.

Lastly, the next GTE Meeting on Freight Transport and Logistics was confirmed to be held on September 14 in Bogotá, Colombia, to make further progress in the field.

Integration through Ports and Waterways

API 3: Northeastern Access to the Amazon River (BR-CO-EC-PE)

The countries involved informed that a videoconference will be held to move forward in the study on the navigability of the Putumayo river. To this end, they will use the terms of reference prepared in 2011 as a precedent. Brazil announced that it would form part of the work team in which Ecuador, Colombia, and Peru had been making progress, and undertook to share information on the matter.

API17: Improvement of the Navigation Conditions on the Rivers of the Plata Basin (AR-BO-BR-PA-UR)

A videoconference was confirmed to be held between the countries involved in this project, after the meeting of the Paraguay-Paraná Waterway Intergovernmental Committee (CIH). The UNASUR General Secretariat stressed that at the workshop held the previous year in Brasilia, it had been recommended that COSIPLAN should be in contact with the CIH so as to avoid the duplication of efforts and that, when deemed appropriate, should create a Working Group on this subject.

Air Integration

On such a basis, the countries that coordinate this GTE will define a more specific working agenda to be submitted to the other countries for consideration and which will be dealt with at the next meeting.

The UNASUR General Secretariat recognized that this issue is very important to complete the physical integration of South America, and said that it remained at the disposal of this GTE to help it move on. It suggested that a work plan with specific objectives should be defined and that specific problems should be identified so as to subsequently establish actions on the basis of such needs.

After a fruitful exchange of views by the countries' delegations, it was agreed to continue working in this field and that Brazil and Guyana would jointly coordinate such work. This decision was taken with a view to improving the connection by air of the countries involved in the Guianese Shield Hub with the rest of South America. The study conducted the previous year had yielded enlightening results and, to complement it, it is necessary to continue with the work, including the private sector.

Border Integration and Facilitation

Argentina's and Chile's delegations emphasized the enhancement of border crossings and their synergies with the communities living in the surroundings, stressing the importance of the taking into account the impact that the development of cross-border connections would have on them. In this regard, the aim is to work with a view to favoring the positive aspects and preventing or mitigating the negative ones. (Annex 7)

They proposed a series of questionnaires on borders and their surroundings for the first half of 2016 with the purpose of defining a work plan harmonized at the bilateral or regional level. Agreement was reached on holding two videoconferences, one in May and the other one in July, to follow up on such topic and exchange ideas.

For the second half of the year, they planned a workshop with round tables to produce a consensual document on the different circumstances at the border, taking into account criteria concerning the territory and the social aspects of the communities involved.

The work to be done over the year is aimed at creating basic infrastructure and complementary services to make border traffic more fluid.

The UNASUR General Secretariat said that a special working group on border integration was created and that it would gather all the activities underway in all the UNASUR Councils on this topic as a way of supplementing this area.

Trade Integration through Postal Services

The progress made and the activities underway in relation to the work plan coordinated by Brazil and Peru were presented. These two countries talked about their experience in the implementation of *Exporta Fácil* in Paraguay with the active participation of officials from Brazil, Ecuador, Peru and Uruguay, in addition to the assistance that was being provided to Chile and other countries through virtual meetings. (Annex 8)

Finally, they stated that there is a need to continue strengthening the links of the GTE actions and the projects and activities of other institutions, such as UPU, UPAEP, the WTO, and the WCO.

The UNASUR General Secretariat informed that the executive secretariat of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) approached it to learn more about the activities being conducted in connection with *Exporta Fácil*. The UPU made a proposal concerning the signature of a framework agreement between UNASUR and UPU, which the General Secretariat will submit to the COSIPLAN Member States for consideration.

Regional Coalition for Transparency and Participation

The representative of this social organization lectured on the monitoring of COSIPLAN by the Coalition. (Annex 9)

In the field of achievements, the Coalition mentioned the participation of civil society organizations at COSIPLAN meetings and the implementation of the PIS as an instrument that gives transparency to the Project Portfolio. It also stressed the challenge posed by keeping the PIS information up to date and the difficulties regarding the measurement of cumulative social and environmental impacts.

Finally, it recommended that the implementation of projects with high environmental and social impacts should be followed up on, that the PIS should be strengthened in terms of data quality and public information, and that more room should be allowed for the participation of civil society.

Calendar of Activities

The calendar of activities for 2016 was revised and adjusted, and is attached as Annex 10.

List of Annexes

[Annex 1: Agenda of the XXIX Meeting of National Coordinators](#)

[Annex 2: List of Delegations that Participated in the XXIX Meeting of National Coordinators](#)

[Annex 3: Design of the Agua Negra Binational Tunnel Integration Territorial Program \(PTI\)](#)

[Annex 4: COSIPLAN Project Portfolio and Integration Priority Project Agenda \(API\)](#)

[Annex 5: Disaster Risk Management Methodology Pilot Application to Project Group 5 of the Central Interoceanic Hub](#)

[Annex 6: Freight Transport and Logistics](#)

[Annex 7: Border Integration and Facilitation](#)

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[Annex 10: Calendar of Activities 2016](#)