



# VIII MEETING OF NATIONAL COORDINATORS

## Pilot Project Program Border Crossings **Summary and Conclusions**

**Jorge H. Kogan**

Infrastructure Vice-Presidency - DAPS  
Andean Development Corporation

Buenos Aires, June 29th, 2006

## Border Crossings INCLUDED IN THIS STAGE

- Cristo Redentor Complex (Chile – Argentina)
- Cúcuta – San Antonio – Ureña Complex (Colombia – Venezuela)
- Fray Bentos – Unzué Port (Uruguay – Argentina)
- Foz de Iguazú – Ciudad del Este (Brazil – Paraguay)
- Desaguadero – Desaguadero (Bolivia – Peru). This pass was initially included, but due to its advanced status it was discussed separately.

## BASIC CONDITIONS AGREED UPON BY MEMBER COUNTRIES FOR THE SELECTION OF PASSES

Governments involved should be politically committed to:

- Materializing multilateral agreements in concrete actions.
- Implementing the physical and functional binational integration of controls and processes.
- Re-creating in the passes under analysis the features inherent to a “desirable and possible pass” for the Region (from the study “Facilitation of...”, 2003).
- Forming highly qualified technical groups at the national level, to work in binational committees, compromising positions, finding solutions and reaching consensus.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDIES CONDUCTED BY CONSULTANTS

- Consultants were not expected to make a proposal of their own.
- Governments were given technical support for a draft project reflecting the agreements reached by both countries.
- IIRSA's National Coordinators are responsible for coordinating the proposals submitted by border agencies.
- All issues agreed upon by consensus will be implemented in the border pass under analysis, where the project will be executed.
- The consultancy team is made up of a general manager, a person responsible for each of the selected passes, and a technical support team composed of Customs, IT, legal, institutional and transportation experts.



## OBJECTIVES TO BE ACHIEVED WITH THE TASKS UNDERTAKEN IN EACH BORDER PASS

- Make a preliminary diagnosis and identify critical issues (as well as implementation proposals).
- Support bilateral and multilateral negotiations and agreements.
- Draft the documents required by the Technical Cooperation Management for project execution.

## WORK PLAN ADOPTED


- Answers to a questionnaire targeted to the heads of local agencies located in Border Crossings.
- Meetings in each capital city of the country between IIRSA's National Coordinators and the national agencies' heads responsible for control at borders.
- Visits to the border pass. Meetings with the heads of local control agencies and actors from the private sector (users).
- Field surveys.
- A report containing the consensus reached among the countries involved and a draft project underpinning bilateral negotiations and agreements.
- Support to binational meetings and negotiations.

## OBSTACLES FOR WORKING TO SCHEDULE AND ATTAINING ALL OBJECTIVES

- ❑ Control services in Border Crossings –regardless of the fact that they are provided by several agencies– must be viewed as a “single service”. Therefore, the integration process at Border Crossings demands a “supra-agency” national approach.
- ❑ Consensus reached by the countries over the border conditions required for task fulfillment at the time of border pass selection did not turn real, when a lack of a shared vision of the pass became evident.
- ❑ The role of seeking consensus, initially assumed by IIRSA’s National Coordinators, did not materialize as expected, with few exceptions, in part on account of the difficulties involved in the tasks.
- ❑ National agencies engaged in border controls that had offered to cooperate finally did not.
- ❑ During task performance, some unpredictable situations related to binational relationships or exogenous aspects cropped up, either delaying the commencement of works or preventing consensus.



## **PROGRESS MADE IN EACH OF THE FOUR Border Crossings INCLUDED IN THIS STAGE**

- Border Pass Cristo Redentor Complex (Argentina – Chile)**
  - Border Pass Ciudad del Este – Foz de Iguazú (Paraguay – Brazil)**
  - Border Pass Cúcuta – San Antonio (Colombia – Venezuela)**
  - Border Pass Unzué Port – Fray Bentos (Argentina – Uruguay)**
- 



# BORDER PASS Cristo Redentor Complex

## *Tasks Accomplished*

- ❑ Visits were made to the capital cities to discuss the scope of the works to be undertaken.
- ❑ The border pass was visited on several occasions to make a diagnosis of its operation, the condition of its infrastructure and the deficiencies affecting its performance.
- ❑ Implementation proposals were submitted to the border control agencies' authorities and IIRSA's National Coordinators for their consideration.
- ❑ Such proposals were redefined to adjust them to the requirements and restrictions made by control agencies' authorities and IIRSA's National Coordinators.
- ❑ The final proposal was given full approval by Argentina and a preliminary agreement by Chile to integrate cargo controls and improve existing controls of passengers.
- ❑ Argentina has made progress in the feasibility study of a border center to be built in Uspallata.



## **BORDER PASS Cristo Redentor Complex**

### *Pending Tasks*

- Supporting the negotiations and execution of bilateral and multilateral agreements.
- Drafting the documents required for the Technical Cooperation Management, a task assumed afterwards by the IDB.

# **BORDER PASS Cristo Redentor Complex**

## ***Factors Hindering Progress***

- ❑ This border is seen by both countries as having several deficiencies in terms of infrastructure and operation and being in need of improvement.
- ❑ IIRSA's National Coordinators acted as "summarizers" of national positions.
- ❑ In this particular border pass, "nation-wide visions" –rather than the opinion of the border agencies concerned- could be discussed with a view to finding solutions.
- ❑ The IDB has played an active role, with counterpart funds allocated to the project.
- ❑ Another positive factor was the interest shown by the Argentine Customs to re-locate the precarious post currently operating in Uspallata.

# BORDER PASS Ciudad del Este – Foz de Iguazú

## *Tasks Accomplished and Pending Tasks*

### **Accomplished:**

- Capital cities were visited to discuss the scope of the tasks to be undertaken with the relevant border pass control agencies.
- The border pass was visited to make a diagnosis of its operation, the condition of its infrastructure and the deficiencies affecting its performance.
- Implementation proposals were made for the short- and medium-term.

### **Pending:**

- A meeting to be held with national control agencies to submit and discuss the proposals made.
- A binational agreement to be reached over the final proposals.
- Supporting bilateral and multilateral negotiations and agreements.
- Drafting the documents required for the Technical Cooperation Management.

# BORDER PASS Ciudad del Este – Foz de Iguazú

## *Factors Hindering Progress*

- There has been delays in the fieldwork to be carried out in the Brazilian side and at the border pass.
- Participation from control agencies in the tasks undertaken so far has not been very active.
- Agencies from both countries did not appear very willing to advance in the integration process of their controls.
- No discussion was brought over the commencement of the refurbishing works of Brazilian premises in the bridge-head, to be undertaken with *Receita Federal*, involving a long-term vision.
- Advanced status of a project to build a new bridge joining both cities.
- A new Customs operation system has been implemented in Paraguay, whereby operations are distributed among several dry (public or private) ports, thus hindering any attempt to integrate controls by both countries.

# BORDER PASS Cúcuta – San Antonio

## *Tasks Accomplished*

- ❑ Capital cities were visited to discuss the scope of the tasks to be undertaken with the relevant border pass control agencies.
- ❑ The border pass was visited to make a diagnosis of its operation, the condition of its infrastructure and the deficiencies affecting its performance.
- ❑ Short- and medium-term proposals (some of which were immediately implemented) were submitted to border control agencies during general meetings held in both countries. The proposals were modified based on the agencies' feedback.
- ❑ Proposals already modified were submitted to the national agencies involved in border controls and to IIRSA's National Coordinators in both capital cities.
- ❑ As part of the tasks performed, legal and institutional arguments as well as practical examples were presented to dispel all doubts about any potential conflict between the goal of integrating border controls and the concept of "sovereignty".



## **BORDER PASS Cúcuta – San Antonio**

### *Pending Tasks*

- Reaching a binational agreement on the final proposals. (There is a draft proposal regarding the operation of integrated passes).
- Supporting bilateral and multilateral negotiations and agreements.
- Drafting the documents required for the Technical Cooperation Management.

## **BORDER PASS Cúcuta – San Antonio**

### *Factors Hindering Progress*

- ❑ There is a strong integration-oriented awareness on the part of the population living at the border. This border is regarded as conflictive.
- ❑ Binational projects are under way to build a new physical interconnection (Agua Clara – Guarumito – La Fría Highway and Binational Bridge) in the project adjacent area and to integrate controls in the Paraguachón border pass.
- ❑ A binational agreement to create a Border Integration Area comprising urban centers in the project area.



## **BORDER PASS Cúcuta – San Antonio**

### *Factors Hindering Progress*

- ❑ Conflictive situations between Colombia and Venezuela have delayed the commencement of works.
- ❑ Not all central agencies have shown commitment to working in a joint and coordinated manner with their counterparts in the other country.
- ❑ IIRSA's National Coordinators have not participated equally in the tasks being performed.
- ❑ Both countries still have in force a procedural system whereby Customs operations are split in different private dry ports, thus thwarting any attempt to integrate controls.
- ❑ Venezuela has questioned and abandoned the Andean Community of Nations.

# BORDER PASS Puerto Unzué – Fray Bentos

## *Tasks Accomplished and Pending Tasks*

### **Accomplished:**

- Capital cities were visited to discuss the scope of the tasks to be undertaken with the relevant border pass control agencies.
- The border pass was visited to make a diagnosis of its operation, the condition of its infrastructure and the deficiencies affecting its performance.
- A series of implementation proposals were made.

### **Pending:**

- A binational agreement over the final proposals.
- Supporting bilateral and multilateral negotiations and agreements.
- Drafting the documents required for the Technical Cooperation Management.

## **BORDER PASS Puerto Unzué – Fray Bentos**

### *Factors Hindering Progress*

- ❑ There were delays in appointing IIRSA's National Coordinator in Uruguay; afterwards, a new government took office.
- ❑ A conflictive situation emerged at the border due to the construction of pulp mills and the blockade by protestors in the city of Gualeguaychú.
- ❑ Participation from control agencies in the tasks undertaken so far has not been very active.

## A SUMMARY OF RESULTS

- ❑ In two Border Crossings (Cristo Redentor Complex and Cúcuta – San Antonio – Ureña Complex), proposals have already been submitted, analyzed and adjusted with the countries involved.
- ❑ In the Cúcuta – San Antonio – Ureña Complex, works are still under the purview of the border pass authority, who is engaged in bringing the countries' positions closer and helping reach an agreement with a view to designing a project.
- ❑ In this case, any progress made will have to do with the relationship between both countries, the development of a new Guarumito – La Fría connection and an integration area that should include the border pass.
- ❑ It is to be underscored (in association with the works undertaken in the border areas and with the presentations) that some short-term implementation proposals are easy to adopt even without any binational agreement or any modification to the legal and regulatory frameworks in force.

## ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN

### After the works undertaken are concluded:

- ❑ In view of the progress made, the support given to the endeavors at the Cristo Redentor pass to execute the agreements reached and to the subsequent actions to materialize the project should continue on the basis of the renewed commitment by the governments involved.
- ❑ Likewise, the support given to the Cúcuta - San Antonio – Ureña project should continue.
- ❑ With regard to the other Border Crossings, current restrictions posed by the situation in Gualeguaychú – Fray Bentos and the real interest of the governments in the Ciudad del Este – Foz de Iguazú project should determine whether it is relevant to allocate further funds.

## ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN: ● ●

### How to continue with the Program

- ❑ In the light of these results, it is relevant to analyze whether it is more suitable to carry out the works simultaneously at several passes or else to focus in fewer projects and, once concluded (the “gathering evidence” effect), to devote attention to the others.
- ❑ Attain a true commitment from the governments by means of a formal request and creation of a focal unit/team concerned with the “border pass” project, as an active institutional counterpart assuming the responsibility of expressing a single national view in relation to the border pass.
- ❑ Foster an active participation of IIRSA’s National Coordinators and its counterparts, as defined in the Initiative’s project.
- ❑ Select -to the greatest extent possible- the Border Crossings over which the countries involved agree that immediate improvements are needed, following the experience with the Cristo Redentor Complex.
- ❑ Without prejudice to the above proposals and given the good results derived from having identified short-term actions, an alternative policy to preserve the Sectoral Process’ goals may be to resort to specific technical assistance aimed at enhancing efficiency at the pass.