



Final Report of the Regional Meeting on Public Policies for the Promotion and Support of SMEs

*XLI Regular Meeting of the Latin American Council
Caracas, Venezuela
25 to 27 November 2015
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LATIN AMERICAN
AND CARIBBEAN
ECONOMIC SYSTEM

MINCOMERCIO
INDUSTRIA Y TURISMO



Final Report

Economic and Technical Cooperation

*Regional Meeting on Public Policies for the Promotion and Support of SMEs
Cartagena, Colombia
23 and 24 April 2015
SP/RRPPA-PYMES/IF-15*

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RAPPORTEUR'S REPORT

1. The "Regional Meeting on Public Policies for the Promotion and Support of SMEs," organized by the Permanent Secretary of the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA), through the Regional Latin American and Caribbean Programme for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SELA-SMEs Programme), jointly with the Vice-Ministry of Entrepreneurial Development, Ministry of Trade, Industry and Tourism (MINCIT) of Colombia and the Cartagena Chamber of Commerce (CCC), took place on 23 and 24 April 2015 in Cartagena, Colombia.

2. According to the Work Programme for 2015, as approved by the Latin American Council of SELA, the objectives of this activity are as follows: i) Gather and disseminate information on best practices in designing and implementing public policies in order to bolster the participation of SMEs in regional value chains, which serve to support the efforts undertaken by concerned Member States; ii) Promote meetings among different stakeholders, both public and private, for the implementation and evaluation of public policies for SMEs; iii) Provide analytical tools and training to government officials in designing and implementing public policies for SMEs; iv) Gain knowledge about the various successful methodologies applied by the countries of the region, as well as at the international level, for designing and implementing policies, and evaluating the results achieved; v) Promote exchanges among officials and entrepreneurs of SMEs as regards strategies to make better and more efficient public policies; vi) Identify institutional mechanisms to favour a permanent public-private dialogue; and vii) Collect and disseminate information about legislations on SMEs in the region. The agenda for the meeting is included in Annex I.

3. Participants in the event included representatives of governmental focal points for small and medium-sized enterprises from Barbados, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Dominican Republic, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay and Venezuela; as well as representatives of the Colombian Association of Small and Medium-sized Industries (ACOPI), BANCOLDEX, the Chamber of Commerce of Cartagena (CCC), the Chamber of Industries of Costa Rica (ICRC), the National Union of Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises of Chile (UNAPYME-Chile), the Caribbean Association of Medium and Small Enterprises (CASME), the SUCRE Regional Monetary Council and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). The list of participants is included in Annex IV.

I. DEVELOPMENT OF WORKS

4. The following authorities took the floor during the opening session:

- a. Antonio Leone Durante, Coordinator of the Regional Latin American and Caribbean Programme for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SELA-SMEs Programme). Permanent Secretariat of the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA) - (SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/Di No. 1-15). His speech is included in Annex II; and
- b. Adriana Rueda Pérez, Director of Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises of the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Tourism (MINCIT) of the Republic of Colombia

5. The INTRODUCTORY SESSION was moderated by Mr. Antonio Leone Durante, Coordinator of the Regional Latin American and Caribbean Programme for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SELA-SMEs Programme), who submitted the agenda for consideration of the delegates and participants. In addition, he noted that work, informative and supportive documents presented by the Permanent Secretariat, as well as the contributions of governmental focal points

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for small and medium-sized enterprises and SMEs business associations, are available on SELA's Web site.

6. Then, SELA's consultant, Mr Carlo Ferraro, took the floor to present the first base study prepared by the Permanent Secretariat, entitled "Public Policies to support MSMEs in Latin America and the Caribbean" (SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/DT No. 2-15), and its addendum. In his presentation, he referred to the importance and characteristics of SMEs in Latin America and the Caribbean, which represent 95% to 99% of companies in the region and have made a significant contribution in terms of employment and production. He noted that the region has made significant progress in the last two decades in terms of creation and development of public policy institutions and instruments for SMEs. Virtually all countries in the region include national institutions that support MSMEs, but they are designed and run by levels of government with little political weight, insufficient allocation of financial resources, few technically-qualified human resources and poor baseline information. In addition, Mr Ferraro said the institutional development is key to ensure the continuity of policies and to generate learning and implementation capacity.

As regards the role of the private sector, the consultant pointed out that this is key to generate investments and innovations that are needed to promote and produce changes in the productive structure. He added that the State can help define the role expected to be played by the private sector and the modalities of its participation in the design and implementation of public policies for SMEs. Similarly, Mr Ferraro stressed the importance of some relevant issues to move forward with the development of SMEs in the region, among which are: regulatory frameworks for MSMEs; institutional development; human and financial resources; the analytical framework (instruments, strategies and objectives); and the monitoring and evaluation of results. He also pointed out the importance of identifying topics of interest (productive articulation, development banking, shared guarantee systems, business development centres, innovation, among others), the dissemination of information on events, dialogues among institutions from different countries and the exchange of successful experiences among countries (South-South cooperation as well as other forms of cooperation).

7. Afterwards, the Director (a.i.) of Studies and Proposals of SELA, Mr Daniel Stagno, took the floor to present the second base study prepared by the Permanent Secretariat, entitled "Methodological considerations for developing an index of public policies for small and medium-sized enterprises in Latin America and the Caribbean" (SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/DT No. 3-15). The presentation "Index of public policies for SMEs in Latin America and the Caribbean: methodological considerations" (SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/DT N° 3 - 15 Add) began with a brief discussion of the growing gaps between the per capita income of Latin American and Caribbean nations and other developing countries, especially those from Southeast Asia. In addition, the gap in the per capita income was associated with the chronic lag in total factor productivity in the region. After this introduction, Mr Stagno presented the Index of Public Policies for SMEs in Latin America and the Caribbean, a tool specifically designed to identify challenges and opportunities for the promotion of productivity and competitiveness of SMEs in Latin America and the Caribbean (based on the methodology previously developed by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development). The presentation included a conceptual analysis of the Index, in which the various dimensions of the tool were addressed. Subsequently, the presentation turned to the review of some indicators used to determine the status of SMEs in the various countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. Then, Mr Stagno specified mechanisms to weigh and aggregate indicators. Finally, he expounded the mechanism proposed by SELA for parallel valuation of indicators between the public and private sectors, as well as for conciliation and homogenization of assessments obtained.

8. After the presentations of the Permanent Secretariat, the moderator invited delegates and participants to take the floor and hold a debate on the issues addressed in the documents submitted.

9. SESSION I: PRODUCTIVE ARTICULATION OF SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES (SMEs). It was moderated by Ms Adriana Rueda Perez, Director of Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises of the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Tourism of Colombia, who after introducing the subject, passed the floor to the speakers.

10. Colombia: Javier Gómez, Executive of INNPULSA MIPYME Colombia, made a presentation entitled "Fund for Modernization and Innovation of Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises" (SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/Di No. 2-15). This Fund supports the increase in productivity and growth of MSMES in Colombia through non-refundable co-financing. He explained in detail the procedure to access such funds and the different lines of support, particularly for the development of productive chains and sectoral strengthening, providing concrete examples among Colombian SMEs and benefiting 34,804 of these companies.

11. Trinidad and Tobago: Michael Gordon, Manager of the Enterprise Development Division of the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development, made a presentation entitled "Productive Articulation – Productive Linkages" (SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/Di No. 3-15), in which he explained the overall context of public policies of Trinidad and Tobago for micro and small-sized enterprises and the support provided by the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development. He expounded the key areas of focus and core principles in the field of productive linkages and the main limitations in the development of these activities. He explained the importance of some key factors for the development of productive linkages, such as the Enterprise Investment Fund; the National Integrated Business Incubator System; programmes for technical assistance, exchange and support to entrepreneurs; databases and portals to support and promote MSMEs; and the MSME diaspora network. Finally, he stressed the importance of cooperation and coordination for productive linkages in terms of policies, programmes and companies.

12. Guatemala: Abel Cruz, General Coordinator of the SMEs Support Programme of the Ministry for Development of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises of the Ministry of Economy of Guatemala, made a presentation entitled "SMEs in Guatemala" (SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/Di No. 4-15), in which he provided details about the main axes underpinning the policies on SMEs, aimed at promoting competitive economic development and sustainable rural development. In addition, he explained the vision and mission of the Vice-Ministry for Development of Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, and the diversity of programmes being developed to support entrepreneurship, job creation, rural development, competitiveness, internationalization of SMEs and promotion of financial services fostered at the regional level in the country. He referred to specific cases of companies supported by the various programmes being implemented, as well as the actions carried out by the Centre for Promotion of Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (PROMIPYME) and the participation of the public, private and academic sectors.

13. Then, the moderator thanked speakers for their presentations and invited delegates and participants to take the floor and hold a debate on the matter.

14. SESSION II: INNOVATION, COMPETITIVENESS AND PRODUCTIVITY OF SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES (SMEs). It was moderated by Mr. Michael Gordon, Manager of the Enterprise Development Division of the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise

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Development of Trinidad and Tobago, who after making a brief comment on the subject, passed the floor to the speakers.

15. CASME: Edward Chin-Mook, President of the Caribbean Association of Small and Medium Enterprises, made a presentation entitled "Innovation, Competitiveness and Productivity of SMEs in the Caribbean" (SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/Di No. 5-15). He started by providing a context of the economic situation of Caribbean countries and their characteristics in terms of growth, productivity, innovation and competitiveness. Then, Chin-Mook dealt with Jamaica' policies towards SMEs and its institutional support structure.

16. Ecuador: María Gabriela Cornejo W., Zonal Director for Development of MSMEs and Crafts of the Ministry of Industry and Productivity of Ecuador, made a presentation entitled "Innovation, Competitiveness and Productivity of SMEs" (SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/Di No. 6-15). In her presentation, she explained the current situation of the SME sector in her country, which encompasses more than 70,000 small and medium-sized enterprises and generates more than one million jobs. MSMEs account for 90% of economic establishments in Ecuador; 42% of these enterprises specialize in trade, and 41.4% in the sector of services. She gave details about the legal framework to implement public policies for SMEs in Ecuador, particularly those policies aimed at promoting changes in the productive matrix, the elements for systemic competitiveness and the various policies implemented to support the country's productive transformation. She also listed some of the elements available to SMEs for developing innovation, competitiveness and productivity.

17. Uruguay: Rafael Mendive, National Director of Crafts, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (DINAPYME) of the Ministry of Industry, Energy and Mining, delivered a presentation entitled "Innovation, Competitiveness and Productivity. Some Notes from the Uruguayan Experience" (SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/Di No. 7-15). He pointed out that his country attained an average growth of 5.1% between 2004 and 2014, with the main factor being the dynamism in investment, the growth in productivity and the favourable international context, which are indispensable conditions for raising living standards of citizens. As an incentive to innovation, efforts have been made to increase public funding as well as the coverage of recipient enterprises, so as to contribute in a better way to recognize the heterogeneity of businesses and to set up instruments that can meet the diversity of SMEs. Mendive pointed out that, for a sustained development of infrastructure and services for the transformation of Uruguay into a regional logistics hub, the country requires to increase activities related to innovation, such as knowledge-intensive services, technology dissemination, training for work, and financing of technological modernization, among others. He said that, as part of the issues related to financing, the public guarantee system has been expanded, by incorporating private banking into new lines of financing for MSMEs. Finally, Mendive pointed out that Uruguay will soon count on a Cabinet for Competitiveness, according to a project being developed for the National Competitiveness System, which will govern a number of already existing agencies and others that are being planned.

18. Then, the moderator thanked speakers for their presentations and invited delegates and participants to take the floor and hold a debate on the matter.

19. SESSION III: ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES (SMEs). This session was moderated by Ms. Rosmery Quintero, President of the Colombian Association of Small and Medium-sized Industries (ACOPI). After making a brief comment on the subject, she passed the floor to the speakers.

20. Costa Rica: Ronald Mejías, of the General Direction of Support to Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (DIGEPYME) of the Ministry of Economy, Industry and Trade, delivered a presentation entitled "Strategy for Development of SMEs and Entrepreneurship in Costa Rica" (SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/Di No. 8-15). He dealt with the legal framework and public policies on SMEs in Costa Rica, as well as the various actors that make up the MSMEs sector in the country. He also referred to the institutional offers available to entrepreneurs and SMEs. Mejías said that the strategic objective of promoting SMEs is fostering a culture of entrepreneurship and strengthening micro, small and medium-sized companies through the coordination of technical, business and financial instruments that may increase their productivity, so as to allow them for establishing linkages to improve their access to markets in order to be competitive and sustainable. DIGEPYME addresses this strategy from two axes: support to entrepreneurship and promotion of entrepreneurial culture. The company's activity is seen from the perspectives of the national, regional and local programmes. Mejías pointed out that the linkages are promoted with a view to the development of suppliers, public procurement, promotion of partnerships and facilitation of access to markets, through the operation of the Integral Business Development Centres. He mentioned that there is a National Registry of SMEs that works through a Single Window to support SMEs, thus facilitating the formalization of small and medium-sized enterprises.

21. Peru: Alejandro Bernaola Cabrera, Director-General of Innovation, Technology Transfer and Business Services of the Ministry of Production, made a presentation entitled "Entrepreneurship in MSMEs" (SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/Di No. 9-15), in which he mentioned that there are more than one million SMEs in Peru, accounting for 99.45% of the total number of enterprises in the country. He pointed out that between 2007 and 2013, 108 companies turned from micro-sized into large enterprises and that 6% of the micro-enterprises became small-sized businesses. Bernaola explained that there is a plan for productive diversification based on three axes: i) Promotion of productive diversification; ii) Adaptation of regulations and administrative simplification; and iii) Expansion of productivity. These axes are fundamental factors for the formulation of national entrepreneurship policies, since they involve instruments to support businesses and the ecosystem for innovation and entrepreneurship (Innovate Perú and StartUp Perú), which allow for redefining the way of thinking of entrepreneurs, young university students, academics, government officials and other actors, for the purpose of generating a culture focused on innovation, entrepreneurship and growth.

22. Mexico: María Sol Rumayor Siller, Director-General of the Business Development Programme of the National Entrepreneurship Institute (INADEM), delivered a presentation entitled "Entrepreneur Support Network" (SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/Di No. 10-15), explaining the background of this initiative, its presidential guidelines, its conceptualization, its attention mechanism and the networks of partners and collaborators on which it is supported. She said that the Entrepreneur Support Network is a strategy to coordinate and link policies and support programmes for entrepreneurs and MSMEs, both in the public and private sectors. She provided examples of the various forms of support to entrepreneurs, which include: incubators, business registration, design of corporate image, financial education, micro-credits, registration of trademarks, free Web pages, regulations for online sales, discounts for national deliveries, and free electronic billing, among others. She also referred to the network of collaborators, who are entrepreneurs with a business idea and may get linked via a technology platform with university students in the last semesters of their careers, so that they can voluntarily provide support and guidelines on the basis of the knowledge they have gained throughout their studies.

23. Jeliel Darius, Coordinator of the Center for Business and Entrepreneurial Development (CDEEE) of the Ministry of Trade and Industry of Haiti, made a presentation entitled "System to

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support SMEs and Entrepreneurship" (SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/Di No. 11-15). He noted that, according to recent figures, 96% of the companies are established individually and 98% of them are private. He added that in order to obtain a credit for an SME, a series of requirements and conditions must be met, including product guarantees, joint liability, and proof of the existence of an already established business, among others. In the present-day market, some 233.186 micro and small-sized enterprises have been benefited, and 237.166 direct jobs have been generated. In addition, the Ministry of Trade and Industry has been reinforced as an institution so as to improve the support to companies and consumer protection. The objectives of Haiti's Center for Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Development are: Training and capacity building, promotion of entrepreneurship, development of value chains and facilitation of loans, credits and other financing mechanisms. Haiti also counts on a Support Service to Enterprises and Suppliers Development Programs, which are intended to establish a system to optimize the development of suppliers in productive chains, in addition to a Support Programme for Micro-Enterprises, whose objective is to provide financial and technical support to SMEs in order to ensure market access.

24. Vincent Philbert, Head of the Competitive Business Unit of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), made a presentation entitled "Developments of the OECS with the Private Sector" (SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/Di No. 12-15). He referred to two consultations carried out on the integration of the OECS and Belize within the CSME. He highlighted some characteristics of SMEs within this context, namely: the fact that many enterprises are family-owned, the weakness in terms of management and business capabilities, low capitalization and low innovation levels, and the weakness in the links between enterprises and networks. He said that some challenges for SMEs are the lack of availability of sustainable business opportunities and the high costs and peculiarities of regional transport and shipping. As for the OECS, he pointed out that the organization executes a subregional programme for development of the private sector in various components of training and orientation, product development, credit support, incubation and financing programmes for micro-enterprises, and improvement of the environment for access to the regional market, among others. Philbert added that the OECS and the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank have implemented programmes to improve competitiveness of SMEs in the region, encourage productive sectors to promote production and generate jobs.

25. Diana Ortiz, Head of Business Management of the Chamber of Commerce of Cartagena, delivered a presentation entitled "Entrepreneurship: At the Hub of Opportunities" (SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/Di No. 13-15). In her presentation, she referred to the different types of entrepreneurship: subsistence enterprises, average wealth accumulation enterprises, and dynamic companies and high-impact businesses, which make a difference because of their growth, profitability and sustainability. She underscored the importance of the productive nuclei and linkages for strengthening the entrepreneurial ecosystem and provided details about a variety of specific initiatives and projects that the Chamber of Commerce has been fostering in order to support the development of MSMEs.

26. Then, the moderator thanked speakers for their presentations and invited delegates and participants to take the floor and hold a debate on the matter.

27. SESSION IV: REFLECTION PANEL FOR BUSINESS ASSOCIATIONS. This session was designed as a discussion space in order to reflect and exchange ideas, experiences and views on public policies for SMEs and MSMEs, particularly as regard the participation of the private sector in defining, implementing and assessing policies, factors that limit or hinder public-private partnerships for the development of small and medium-sized enterprises, and the mechanisms for broader and better relations for the exchange of experiences among SMEs in Latin America and

the Caribbean. Participants in this panel included: i) ACOPI: Rosmery Quintero, President of the Colombian Association of Small and Medium-sized Industries; ii) UNAPYME-Chile: José Luis Ramírez Zamorano, Secretary-General of the National Union of Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises in Chile; iii) CICR: Noelia De León, Deputy Treasurer and Coordinator of the SME Commission of the Chamber of Industries of Costa Rica and President of the Forum for Women Entrepreneurs of Costa Rica; and iv) CASME: Edward Chin-Mook, President of the Caribbean Association of Medium and Small Enterprises (CASME, Jamaica).

28. SESSION V: INTERNATIONALIZATION OF SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES (SMEs): This session was moderated by Mr. Martín Torres, Coordinator of the Marketing Desk of the National Council for Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (CONAMIPYME), of the Under-Secretariat of Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) of Honduras. Torres took the occasion to deliver the presentation "Under-Secretariat of Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs)" (SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/Di No. 14-15), during which he provided details about the main achievements of this institution in 2014, its institutional structure and operations, and the goals projected by the Programme for the Productive and Competitive Development of MSMEs in Honduras for 2015. In this connection, he underscored the creation of 9,208 new jobs, the attention given to 4,056 MSMEs, the relations with 192 collaborative networks for the implementation of programmes and projects, the conduction of various training activities, the contributions of seed capital and the reception of international cooperation resources for SMEs support programmes. In addition, he delved into the achievements of the business development centres for MSMEs and their economic and social impact. He concluded his presentation by passing the floor to the speakers scheduled for this working session.

29. Brazil: Flavio Martins Pimentel, Coordinator of the Department for Expanding Markets. Secretariat of Micro and Small-sized Enterprises of the Presidency of the Republic of Brazil, made a presentation entitled "Internationalization of Micro and Small-sized Enterprises" (SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/Di No. 15-15), in which he referred to the legal and institutional framework of micro and small-sized enterprises in Brazil, and provided some figures on the exports made by MSMEs, which accounted for 0.9% in 2014. She also highlighted the main difficulties for MSMEs in foreign markets and referred to Foreign Trade Single Windows as a national initiative for MSMEs, as a mechanism specialized in simplifying the procedures for these companies, as they offer a catalogue of producers and services, as well as simplification of tariff procedures, thus reducing the logistical difficulties for exports.

30. El Salvador: Ileana Rogel, Executive Director of the National Commission for Micro and Small Enterprises (CONAMYPE), made a presentation entitled "National Policy for the Development of Micro and Small-sized Enterprises" (SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/Di No. 16-15), in which she explained the background and the context of the policies on SMEs in El Salvador, as well as the conceptual approach, the principles and the legal and institutional framework for the development of those policies. She noted that microenterprises account for almost 99% of the business sector of the country (some 496,365 SMEs), which are estimated to generate about 700,000 direct jobs and contribute 35% of the GDP. Ms Rogel referred to the various challenges facing the development of MSEs policies in El Salvador and the importance of considering cross-cutting approaches to SMEs, particularly regarding the gender equity and equality, territoriality, citizens' participation, business and environmental management, and adaptation to climate change. Moreover, she detailed the complexity and diversity of legal instruments and the institutional framework for the development of public policies for SMEs in El Salvador, making emphasis on the financing institutions, the legalization and taxation and the business development services, as well as the education and training services. She also dealt with the conformation and structure of the National System of

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SMEs the and scope in the areas of financing, legalization and taxation, market access, business development services, education and training, the business associations, the competitiveness, technologies and innovation.

31. Barbados: Sonja Trotman, Chief Executive Officer of the Barbados Investment and Development Corporation (BIDC), made a presentation entitled "Internationalization of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises" (SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/Di No. 17-15). She presented some general indicators of Barbados, as well as some practical definitions for SMEs. Until 2009, there were more than 11,000 small businesses, accounted for 24.8% of the work force and had more than 32,000 employees. The government has a large number of initiatives and benefits for SMEs, mostly in relation to financing, training and legal status. Since the 1990s, the policy of the Government of Barbados has focused on developing local enterprises. The Barbados Investment Development Corporation has managed to provide services, assist entrepreneurs, and support expansion programmes, among other things. Out of the total exports from Barbados over the last three years (US\$ 553.6 million), 35% corresponds to companies in the SMEs sector. Some of the setbacks for internationalization are the poor management structures and systems, inadequate financing, limited production capacity, high costs, limited and little trained staff, little information and language barriers, among other factors which make it difficult to develop producers and insert them into foreign markets.

32. Then the moderator thanked speakers for their presentations and invited delegates and participants to hold a debate on the ideas expressed.

II. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This session was moderated by Antonio Leone, Coordinator of the Regional Latin American and Caribbean Programme for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SELA-SMEs Programme), and counted with the participation and support of SELA's Consultant Carlo Ferraro and Daniel Stagno, Director of Studies and Proposals of SELA.

The main conclusions were aimed at identifying proposals for further progress in strengthening public policies to support MSMEs in Latin America and the Caribbean, so as to continue with the work started in workshops on public policies to support micro, small and medium-sized enterprises held in 2014 in La Paz, Bolivia; Tegucigalpa, Honduras; and Port Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.

The proposals referred to the following issues: 1) modalities for networking among supporting institutions; 2) training; 3) innovation; 4) internationalization; (5) quantitative information for decision-making; and 6) other matters:

1. Networking among supporting institutions: In order to strengthen networking among supporting institutions in the region, the following lines of action were identified:

- Disseminate information about events in which the institutions are involved.
- Identify the main issues in which: a) institutions can provide technical assistance in cooperation schemes among developing countries, given their dominance of best practices; and (b) the institutions requested technical assistance to address bottlenecks and problems that require attention.
- Exchange of successful experiences among institutions of the region.
- Develop bilateral links on specific topics where there is recognized learning.

- Some countries, particularly those of the English-speaking Caribbean, referred to issues such as guarantees and handling of instruments to strengthen the design of legislations, for instance, by means of bilateral links with countries such as Mexico on specific issues.
 - The assembly of dynamic platforms and forms of communication to facilitate networking upon returning to their respective countries after these meetings.
 - The Latin American Support Network proposed by Mexico can be a starting point for a common basis for sharing issues such as investments, legislations and other topics of interest, which would be at the disposal of the citizens and the SMEs. Regionalize the supply of links, exchanges and inter-agency support and put them at the disposal of countries, thus building an institutional image and links in accordance with the interest and formalization of agreements.
 - The example of the Pacific Alliance and its regular meetings can serve as a model to discuss issues through the network and disseminate activities such as policy dialogues.
 - Inform the authorities in the respective countries and share presentations and proposals with them.
2. Training: The following issues related to education and training were identified:
- Training of human resources for the productive articulation in networks, clusters and productive conglomerates, among others. Particularly, the representatives of the Caribbean countries identified weak links and confidence problems in the work to develop networks and clusters.
 - The creation of Business Development Centres (BDCs) and Small Business Development Centres (SBDCs).
 - Training on forms of entrepreneurial training for MSMEs Chambers intended to promote improvements in representativeness, quality in the formulation of proposals and to make progress in the construction of the public-private dialogue.
3. Innovation
- Incorporate the issues of innovation into the work agendas of some countries where the issue turns out to be important, by identifying countries with best practices that could provide assistance and advice.
 - While the issue of innovation is important, it is necessary to include questions on innovation in surveys and modalities for data collection.
 - It is necessary to capitalize on the best experiences in the region, taking into account the different capacities and available infrastructure.
4. Internationalization: The following issues were identified:
- Productive and commercial integration.
 - Country image and country brand.
5. Quantitative information for decision-making, statistics and indexes.
- Participants in the meeting talked about the need to increase the availability of statistics on SMEs in the region. At present, the statistics available in multilateral organizations and the entities dedicated to research usually have several years of delay. In general terms, statistics on SMEs are incomplete and scattered, which makes it difficult to design public policies

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coupled with the high structural heterogeneity shown by micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in the region.

- In addition, participants discussed on the need for implementing statistical tools that allow for quantifying the “quality” of the environment in which SMEs operate in the region. In this connection the discussion addressed the importance of having tools such as the Index of Public Policies for SMEs in Latin America and the Caribbean. Statistics on the environment for SMEs will complement the statistics on distribution and operations of SMEs and will provide decision-makers with a comprehensive vision of the challenges and opportunities in outlining policies for SMEs.
6. Other matters: Participants also made proposals to move ahead with other issues such as the following:
- Decentralization of instruments to support SMEs.
 - Incorporation of aspects concerning the territory into the design and implementation of policies. Territorial anchoring, the local dimension, strengthening of local governments, municipalities, etc.
 - Evaluation and monitoring. Analyse the systems available, considering the importance of the preparation of a baseline and other elements that are used in successful experiences. Identify countries that offer themselves as pilots to implement methodology.
 - Compilation of legislations and regulations on MSMEs in the countries.
 - Simplification of procedures.
 - Work on the basis of subregional schemes according to productive economic and cultural affinity as a way to avoid dispersion and search for more specific results.
 - Shape up a hemispheric agenda on issues related to SMEs which are essential for all national support institutions and international organizations.
 - Project on guarantees in several countries of the Caribbean, which shows a growth in partnerships.
 - Certification systems for SMEs trainers.
 - Harmonization between agencies and organizations supporting the sector.
 - To provide a toolbox of best practices with proven efficiency.
 - Establish modalities and best practices that are useful for organizing the representatives of the sector.
 - Promote training in organizations fostering entrepreneurial culture.

III. CLOSING SESSION

The closing session of this regional meeting was in charge of Antonio Leone, Coordinator of the Regional Latin American and Caribbean Program for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SELA-SMEs Programme), of the Permanent Secretariat of the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA).

A N N E X I

AGENDA

REGIONAL MEETING ON PUBLIC POLICIES FOR THE PROMOTION AND SUPPORT OF SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES

Venue: *Cartagena, Colombia - Hotel Dann (Laguito, Calle 1a # 1-60)*

Date: *23 and 24 April 2015*

Background

The design and implementation of public policies should be aimed at providing the SMEs sector with a set of tools galvanizing their own development. Such policies should help achieve a substantial improvement in business competitiveness and productivity, based on better and more infrastructure, ready access to information for decision-making, better management of the knowledge available, guaranteed access to technology, encouragement of innovation, legal and administrative reform for business facilitation, as well as more and better options to ensure access to credit and markets. In this connection, public policies could facilitate access to useful strategic tools for the development of SMEs and contribute to economic development, social inclusion and environmental protection.

In 2014, three Regional Training Workshops on public policies to promote and support SMEs were held. One of them was conducted in Bolivia and was aimed at South American countries; the second one was held in Honduras and was directed to South American countries; and the third one was in Trinidad and Tobago, involving Caribbean countries.

At those meetings, presentations were made about the various mechanisms and methodologies applied by the countries of the region as regards the design, implementation and evaluation of public policies. As a result, a proposal was made to create a network for dissemination and exchange of information among representatives of States, in order to have permanent consultations on issues of interest for the institutions involved in the events and exchange successful experiences. The information from these three workshops was compiled and analyzed by a consultant and included in the conclusions and recommendations of the document "Public Policies to support MSMEs in Latin America and the Caribbean" (SP/CL/XL.O/Di No. 20-14).

In the design and implementation of public policies for SMEs, different sectors (productive, academic, technological, governmental and financial) should participate, coherently inter-related, as they are responsible and decisive agents in the development process. The participation of different sectors is a cross-cutting issue with respect to other subjects, to be analyzed at this meeting on SMEs, such as partnerships, productivity, innovation, empowerment and internationalization.

The Work Programme of SELA for the year 2015 provides for the conduction of a "Regional Forum on Public Policies to promote and support SMEs," which is expected to bring together all those officials responsible for the issue of SMEs in the Member States of SELA and analyze the aforementioned and other relevant issues for the development of SMEs in Latin America and the Caribbean.

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Objectives

According to the Work Programme for 2015, as approved by the Latin American Council of SELA, the objectives of this activity are as follows: i) Gather and disseminate information on best practices in designing and implementing public policies in order to bolster the participation of SMEs in regional value chains, which serve to support the efforts undertaken by concerned Member States; ii) Promote meetings among different stakeholders, both public and private, for the implementation and evaluation of public policies for SMEs; iii) Provide analytical tools and training to government officials in designing and implementing public policies for SMEs; iv) Gain knowledge about the various successful methodologies applied by the countries of the region, as well as at the international level, for designing and implementing policies, and evaluating the results achieved; v) Promote exchanges among officials and entrepreneurs of SMEs as regards strategies to make better and more efficient public policies; vi) Identify institutional mechanisms to favour a permanent public-private dialogue; and vii) Collect and disseminate information about legislations on SMEs in the region.

Participants

This activity is aimed at the governmental focal points for small and medium-sized enterprises from SELA Member States, representatives from SMEs business associations and experts in this field.

AGENDA

Thursday, 23 April 2015

Morning

8:30 – 9:00 REGISTRATION

9:00 – 9:30 OPENING SESSION

Eng. Antonio Leone Durante, Coordinator of the Regional Latin American and Caribbean Programme for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SELA-SMEs Programme). Permanent Secretariat of the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA)

Adriana Rueda Pérez. Director of Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises of the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Tourism of Colombia (MINCIT)

9:30 – 11:30 INTRODUCTORY SESSION

Moderator: Antonio Leone Durante, Coordinator of the Regional Latin American and Caribbean Programme for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SELA-SMEs Programme)

Presentation of the studies:

Paper No. 1: "Public Policies to support MSMEs in Latin America and the Caribbean" (SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/DT N° 2-15), Carlo Ferraro, SELA's Consultant

Paper No. 2: "Methodological considerations for developing an index of public policies for small and medium-sized enterprises in Latin America and the Caribbean" (SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/DT N° 3-15). Daniel Stagno, Director of Studies and Proposals of SELA

11:30 – 11:45 COFFEE BREAK

11:45 – 1:00 GENERAL DEBATE

1:00 – 2:30 **FREE TIME FOR LUNCH**

Afternoon

2:30 – 3:30 **SESSION I: PRODUCTIVE ARTICULATION OF SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES (SMEs)**

Moderator: Adriana Rueda Perez, Director of Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises of the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Tourism

- Colombia: Javier Gómez, Executive of INNPULSA MIPYME Colombia
- Trinidad and Tobago: Michael Gordon, Manager of the Enterprise Development Division, Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development
- Guatemala: Abel Cruz, General Coordinator of the SMEs Program Support of the Ministry of Development of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

3:30 – 4:00 GENERAL DEBATE

4:00 – 4.15 COFFEE BREAK

4:15 – 5:15 **SESSION II: INNOVATION, COMPETITIVENESS AND PRODUCTIVITY OF SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES (SMEs)**

Moderator: Michael Gordon, Manager of the Enterprise Development Division, Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development. Trinidad and Tobago

- CASME: Edward Chin-Mook, President, Caribbean Association of Small and Medium Enterprises.
- Ecuador: María Gabriela Cornejo W., Zonal Director for Development of MSMEs and Crafts of the Ministry of Industry and Productivity
- Uruguay: Rafael Mendive, National Director of Crafts, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (DINAPYME). Ministry of Industry, Energy and Mining

5:15 – 5:45 GENERAL DEBATE

16**Friday, 24 April 2015****Morning****9:00 – 11:00 SESSION III: ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES (SMEs)**

Moderator: Rosmey Quintero, President of the Colombian Association of Small and Medium-sized Industries (ACOPI)

- Costa Rica: Ronald Mejías, Director of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises of the Ministry of Economy, Industry and Trade
- Peru: Alejandro Bernaola Cabrera, Director-General of Innovation, Technology Transfer and Business Services of the Ministry of Production
- Mexico: María del Sol Rumayor Siller, Director-General of the Business Development Programme of the National Entrepreneurship Institute (INADEM)
- Haiti: Jeliel Antoine Darius, Coordinator of the Centre for Business and Entrepreneurial Development (CDEEE), Ministry of Trade and Industry
- OECS: Vincent Philbert, Head of the Competitive Business Unit of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)
- Colombia: Diana Ortiz, Head of Business Management of the Chamber of Commerce of Cartagena

11:00 – 11:30 COFFEE BREAK**11:30 – 12:00 SESSION IV: REFLECTION PANEL FOR BUSINESS ASSOCIATIONS**

- ACOPI: Rosmey Quintero, President of the Colombian Association of Small and Medium-sized Industries
- UNAPYME: José Luis Ramírez Zamorano, Secretary-General of the National Union of Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises in Chile
- CICR: Noelia De León, Deputy Treasurer and Coordinator of the SME Commission of the Chamber of Industries of Costa Rica and President of the Forum for Women Entrepreneurs of Costa Rica
- CASME: Edward Chin-Mook, President of the Caribbean Association of Medium and Small Enterprises (CASME, Jamaica).

12:00 – 2:30 FREE TIME FOR LUNCH**Afternoon****2:30 – 3:30 SESSION V: INTERNATIONALIZATION OF SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES (SMEs)**

Moderator: Martín Torres, Coordinator of the Marketing Desk of the National Council for Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (CONAMIPYME), Under-Secretariat of Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) of Honduras

- Brazil: Flavio Martins Pimentel, Coordinator of the Department for Expanding Markets. Secretariat of Micro and Small-sized Enterprises of the Presidency of the Republic
- El Salvador: Ileana Rogel, Executive Director of the National Commission for Micro and Small Enterprises (CONAMYPE)
- Barbados: Sonja Trotman, Chief Ejecutive Officer, Barbados Investment and Development Corporation (BIDC).

3:30 – 4:00 GENERAL DEBATE

5:00 – 5:30 **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Moderator: Antonio Leone Durante, Coordinator of the Regional Latin American and Caribbean Programme for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SELA-SMEs Programme)

Carlo Ferraro, SELA's Consultant

Daniel Stagno, Director of Studies and Proposals of SELA

5:30 **CLOSING SESSION**

Eng. Antonio Leone Durante, Coordinator of the Regional Latin American and Caribbean Programme for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SELA-SMEs Programme). Permanent Secretariat of the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA)

A N N E X I I

**SPEECH BY ANTONIO LEONE DURANTE, COORDINATOR OF THE SELA-SMEs PROGRAMME
OF THE PERMANENT SECRETARIAT OF THE LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN ECONOMIC
SYSTEM (SELA) AT THE OPENING SESSION**

Her Excellency Mrs Adriana Rueda, Director of Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises of the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Tourism of Colombia;

Her Excellency Mrs Diana Ortiz, Head of Business Management of the Chamber of Commerce of Cartagena;

Ladies and gentlemen:

First of all, I would like to extend to all of you a respectful greeting on behalf of Ambassador Roberto Guarnieri, Permanent Secretary of the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA), who asked us to convey his special thanks to the Ministry of Industry and Commerce of Colombia and the Chamber of Commerce of Cartagena for their collaboration and support in organizing this "Regional Meeting on Public Policies for the Promotion and Support of SMEs."

We feel overwhelmed by the beauty of Cartagena, renowned for its history and for having contributed to the independence of our countries by giving shelter to many patriots of those times.

The Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA) is a regional intergovernmental organization that was established on 17 October 1975 and groups 28 Latin American and Caribbean countries. Its main objective is to promote consultation and coordination among the Member States for the adoption of common positions in international forums as well as before the major economies in the world. In addition, it promotes cooperation and integration for the economic and social well-being of the peoples of our countries.

In this connection, it should be noted that one of the most important programmes that SELA has developed since the 1990s is related to the improvement of conditions for the promotion of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, which represent the core of the economy and job creation. According to estimates, more than 95% of manufacturing, trade and services in the region is provided by micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), generating 40% of employment.

As regards public policies for MSMEs in the region, it should be noted that they used to be oriented at improving the growth potential, reviewing concepts and theories on innovation and recognizing the importance of competitiveness of MSMEs within the process of productive transformation and growth of our countries.

At present, an important element introduced by the new approach to public policy in the current circumstances is related to the need to promote the development of an environment that is conducive to inter-business cooperation, encourages innovation processes within companies, contributes to the strengthening of technical capabilities and makes emphasis on the development and strengthening of enterprises and the improvement of the management capability of companies.

Thus, policies to support MSMEs point directly to the creation of conditions that promote a local environment conducive to the productive development of the country, rather than supporting directly and individually companies. However, it is clear that, after all, the primary objective of public policies in this area is to provide more dynamism to companies and economic and business, local, regional and national sectors, in order to raise their competitiveness and respond effectively to the dynamics of markets.

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In broad terms, the objectives of this meeting are as follows: gather and disseminate information on best practices in designing and implementing public policies; gain knowledge about the various successful methodologies applied by the countries of the region, as well as at the international level, for designing and implementing policies, and evaluating the results achieved; provide analytical tools and training to government officials in designing, implementing and establishing mechanisms that enable a permanent exchange among participants.

It should be noted that in 2014, as a prelude to this Regional Meeting, three training workshops on the same topic were held in the region. The first one took place in Bolivia and was aimed at the South American countries; the second was conducted in Honduras for the Central American countries; and the third was held in Trinidad and Tobago, exclusively directed to the Caribbean countries.

These workshops enabled participants to collect useful information to recognize and gain knowledge about experiences in the design and implementation of public policies, including programmes and instruments, as well as best practices for the development of this important sector. In addition, this information was used to train participants on concepts, strategies, and implementation of these practices.

Finally, allow me to reiterate our thanks to the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism of the Republic of Colombia and the Chamber of Commerce of Cartagena for their invaluable support, as well as to the speakers and participants who responded enthusiastically to the invitation. We are sure that presentations and debates will help find ways towards a permanent work and new activities. I just want to add that it is important for SELA to identify, at the end of the meeting, which actions will be undertaken thereafter.

Thank you very much.

A N N E X I I I

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A N N E X I V

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/DT No. 1-15	Agenda
SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/DT No. 2-15	<p>"Public Policies to support MSMEs in Latin America and the Caribbean"</p> <p>Carlo Ferraro, SELA's Consultant</p>
SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/DT No. 2-15 Add	<p>"Public Policies to support MSMEs in Latin America and the Caribbean"</p> <p>Carlo Ferraro, SELA's Consultant</p>
SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/DT No. 3-15	<p>"Methodological considerations for developing an index of public policies for small and medium-sized enterprises in Latin America and the Caribbean"</p> <p>Daniel Stagno. Director (a.i.) of Studies and Proposals of SELA</p>
SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/DT N° 3-15 Add	<p>"Index of public policies for SMEs in Latin America and the Caribbean: methodological considerations"</p> <p>Daniel Stagno, Director (a.i.) of Studies and Proposals of SELA</p>
SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/Di No. 1-15	Speech by Antonio Leone Durante, Coordinator of the Regional Latin American and Caribbean Programme for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SELA-SMEs Programme). Permanent Secretariat of the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA). Opening Session
SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/Di No. 2-15	<p>"Fund for Modernization and Innovation of Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises"</p> <p>Colombia: Javier Gómez, Executive of INNPULSA MIPYME Colombia</p>
SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/Di No. 3-15	<p>"Productive Articulation – Productive Linkages"</p> <p>Trinidad and Tobago: Michael Gordon, Manager of the Enterprise Development Division of the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development</p>
SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/Di No. 4-15	<p>"SMEs in Guatemala".</p> <p>Guatemala: Abel Cruz, General Coordinator of the SMEs Program Support of the Ministry for Development of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises</p>
SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/Di No. 5-15	<p>"Innovation, Competitiveness and Productivity of SMEs in the Caribbean"</p> <p>CASME: Edward Chin-Mook, President of the Caribbean Association of Small and Medium Enterprises.</p>

SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/Di No. 6-15	<p>"Innovation, Competitiveness and Productivity of SMEs"</p> <p>Ecuador: María Gabriela Cornejo W., Zonal Director for Development of MSMEs and Crafts of the Ministry of Industry and Productivity of Ecuador</p>
SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/Di No. 7-15	<p>"Innovation, Competitiveness and Productivity. Some Notes from the Uruguayan Experience"</p> <p>Uruguay: Rafael Mendive, National Director of Crafts, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (DINAPYME) of the Ministry of Industry, Energy and Mining</p>
SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/Di No. 8-15	<p>"Strategy for Development of SMEs and Entrepreneurship in Costa Rica"</p> <p>Costa Rica: Ronald Mejías, General Direction of Support to Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (DIGEPYME) of the Ministry of Economy, Industry and Trade</p>
SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/Di No. 9-15	<p>"Entrepreneurship in MSMEs"</p> <p>Peru: Alejandro Bernaola Cabrera, Director-General of Innovation, Technology Transfer and Business Services of the Ministry of Production</p>
SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/Di No. 10-15	<p>"Entrepreneur Support Network"</p> <p>Mexico: María del Sol Rumayor Siller, Director-General of the Business Development Programme of the National Entrepreneurship Institute (INADEM)</p>
SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/Di No. 11-15	<p>"System to support SMEs and Entrepreneurship"</p> <p>Haiti: Jeliel Antoine Darius, Coordinator of the Center for Business and Entrepreneurial Development (CDEEE) of the Ministry of Trade and Industry of Haiti</p>
SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/Di No. 12-15	<p>"Developments of the OECS with the Private Sector"</p> <p>OECS: Vincent Philbert, Head of the Competitive Business Unit of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)</p>
SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/Di No. 13-15	<p>"Entrepreneurship: At the Hub of Opportunities"</p> <p>Colombia: Diana Ortiz, Head of Business Management of the Chamber of Commerce of Cartagena</p>

SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/Di No. 14-15	<p>“Under-Secretariat of Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs)”</p> <p>Honduras: Martín Torres, Coordinator of the Marketing Desk of the National Council for Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (CONAMIPYME), Under-Secretariat of Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) of Honduras</p>
SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/Di No. 15-15	<p>“Internationalization of Micro and Small-sized Enterprises”</p> <p>Brazil: Flavio Martins Pimentel, Coordinator of the Department for Expanding Markets. Secretariat of Micro and Small-sized Enterprises of the Presidency of the Republic of Brazil</p>
SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/Di No. 16-15	<p>“National Policy for the Development of Micro and Small-sized Enterprises”</p> <p>El Salvador: Ileana Rogel, Executive Director of the National Commission for Micro and Small Enterprises (CONAMYPE)</p>
SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/Di No. 17-15	<p>“Internationalization of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises”</p> <p>Barbados: Sonja Trotman, Chief Executive Officer, Barbados Investment and Development Corporation (BIDC)</p>
SP/RRPPPA-PYMES/Di No. 18-15	List of Participants
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