



LATIN AMERICAN
AND CARIBBEAN
ECONOMIC SYSTEM



Speech by Ambassador Javier Paulinich, Permanent Secretary of SELA, at the opening session

Economic and Technical Cooperation

XXVIII Meeting of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean: Cooperation for Intellectual Property

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Dr Selina Baños, Director General for International Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Panama;

Representative of the Registry of Intellectual Property of the Republic of Panama;

Representatives of the Member States of SELA;

Representatives of regional and international organizations;

Representatives of public and private institutions of the Republic of Panama;

Dr Sary Levy-Carciente, Consultant of the Permanent Secretariat of SELA;

Dr Octavio Espinosa, Lawyer and Consultant on Intellectual Property;

Distinguished speakers, participants, and special guests;

Ladies and gentlemen,

In my capacity as Permanent Secretary of the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA), I wish to warmly welcome you to this **“XXVIII Meeting of International Cooperation Directors for Latin America and the Caribbean: Cooperation for Intellectual Property”** and the **“Seminar on opportunities for international cooperation for Latin America and the Caribbean: Towards greater strengthening of regional cooperation”**.

These two activities we are opening today have been organized with the collaboration of the Government of Panama, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and with the support of the Pérez-Guerrero Trust Fund (PGTF) of the Group of 77, whom we wish to thank for the interest and trust placed in the Permanent Secretariat and, above all, for their willingness to host this regional meeting space in this beautiful city that 42 years ago witnessed the birth of SELA and gave rise to the Panama Convention establishing this intergovernmental Latin American and Caribbean organization.

I also wish to thank the representatives of international cooperation directorates and agencies of the Member States of SELA for their presence today, as well as the representatives of national intellectual property offices and regional and international organizations who kindly accepted our invitation to participate in these activities.

In addition, I wish to thank Dr Sary Levy, SELA's consultant on intellectual property issues, and Dr Octavio Espinoza, specialist in international cooperation and intellectual property, for their presence today.

As a matter of fact, we will have the opportunity to see the presentation by Dr Levy about the base document we prepared especially for this meeting, entitled “Achievements in cooperation initiatives in the areas of intellectual property, industrial property, copyright, trademarks and patents in Latin America and the Caribbean”, which I am sure will contribute to the discussion and exchange of ideas among participants.

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This activity has the following objectives:

- 1) Present a general assessment of the advances in the field of regulatory frameworks on intellectual property, industrial property, copyright, trademarks and patents in Latin America and the Caribbean;
- 2) Exchange best practices and lessons learned in the field of cooperation on intellectual property.
- 3) Identify opportunities for international, triangular and South-South cooperation that can be developed in the field of intellectual property; and
- 4) Promote cooperation and exchange of experiences among intellectual property offices from the Member States of SELA.

For the Permanent Secretariat, the issue of intellectual property is of vital importance, as it has a direct impact on the transformation of the productive system and is a key factor for the development of innovation and entrepreneurship, which in turn are factors that encourage and catalyse the creation of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises.

That is why in 2016 the Permanent Secretariat prepared a study on "Intellectual property" in the region, which is available on the portal of this meeting, and in June of this year it organized, within the framework of the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Programme for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SELA-SMEs Programme), the "Workshop to support entrepreneurs in the protection of intellectual property rights: Protection of trademarks and patents from the perspective of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMES)", which took place in Guatemala City with the support of the Ministry of Economy (MINECO) of Guatemala and the Guatemalan Chamber of Intellectual Property.

With this meeting we are opening today we hope to encourage inter-institutional and technical relations among international cooperation directorates and national authorities in charge of intellectual property in the Member States in order to identify spaces of joint work and mutual interest.

As regards the "Seminar on opportunities for international cooperation for Latin America and the Caribbean: Towards greater strengthening of regional cooperation", our interest is focused on making a survey of the main initiatives for international cooperation and official development assistance being promoted by bilateral and multilateral donors towards Latin America and the Caribbean; singling out the main initiatives for regional cooperation, South-South Cooperation and triangular cooperation being developed in the region; and identifying innovative sources of regional and international cooperation that could be used by our countries.

My interest, as Permanent Secretary of SELA, is to make this forum available to governmental focal points of international cooperation of the Member States and direct our work in the field of international cooperation towards the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other development commitments agreed upon by the region.

In fact, one of these priorities will be a greater rapprochement with donors, so that developed countries can move forward in fulfilling their commitment to allocate 0.7% of their GDP to official development assistance.

Thus, this meeting space will remain open for international cooperation directors of the Member States of SELA to deal with issues of their interest and of regional high priority on an annual basis.

Finally, I wish you all every success in your deliberations and once again I would like to thank the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Panama and the Pérez-Guerrero Trust Fund of the Group of 77 for their support in organizing this regional meeting.

Thank you very much.