



Speech by Econ. Eduardo Piña, Specialist of the Direction of Studies and Proposals of the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA)

Economic and Technical Cooperation

*Subregional Workshop to validate the results of the Public Policy Index for MSMEs in Latin America and the Caribbean (IPPALC): Pacific Alliance, Argentina, Ecuador and Uruguay
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Ms. Sandra Acero, Director of Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism of Colombia;

Mr. Lizandro Gutiérrez, Coordinator of the SME Technical Group of the Pacific Alliance;

Ms. Rebeca Vidal, Chief Executive of the Directorate for Productive and Financial Development of CAF-development bank of Latin America;

Representatives of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD);

National Coordinators, who honour us with their presence today;

On behalf of the Permanent Secretary of the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA), Ambassador Javier Paulinich, I warmly welcome you to this "Subregional Workshop to validate the results of the Public Policy Index for MSMEs in Latin America and the Caribbean (IPPALC): Pacific Alliance, Argentina, Ecuador and Uruguay" and wish to thank the Government of Colombia, in particular the Direction of Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism, for their receptivity and support in carrying out this activity. I also wish to thank you all for your participation and interest in working with us in such a beneficial project for Latin America and the Caribbean.

First of all, I would like to underscore the joint efforts and provide a brief account of the road that we have travelled so far.

Since 2015, we at SELA have undertaken the task of promoting the implementation of this index as a contribution to the assessment and diagnosis of the decision-making processes associated with public policies aimed at SMEs and as part of a comprehensive strategy to support our member countries with a view to boosting their economic dynamism.

Thus, in May 2017, after several regional meetings in 2016, we managed to launch this pilot project for the Member States of the Pacific Alliance, Argentina, Ecuador and Uruguay, in a joint effort involving the OECD, CAF and SELA.

Since then, the technical work started, focusing first on the review of the evaluation tools, in order to ensure that the main needs and priorities of participating countries are met, and second, on a commitment to work closely with the national bodies for the timely provision of information.

In terms of monitoring, this activity will be an opportunity to present and validate the conclusions and analyses obtained after the national workshops so as to assess the results at the regional level.

Once these stages were undertaken, it was possible to conduct the national workshops, during which we were able to know first-hand part of the reality of our countries, come closer more appropriately to information and verify the professionalism of the work carried out.

As a result of the arduous effort, we are gathering today in order to review and validate the national scores obtained within the framework of the methodology of the index. This meeting represents a key opportunity to discuss the information provided and boost the accuracy of the results.

4

This workshop is the conclusion of our working meetings, and now we will prepare for the presentation of the final version of the index, scheduled for the first quarter of the year 2019. We hope it will serve as a consultation document to guide future decision-making.

I would like to conclude this brief opening speech by thanking you all and your local authorities for the engagement and commitment demonstrated in all phases of this project. Their great readiness and unreserved support have been vital to the success achieved.

It only remains for me to wish you the greatest success during these days of active discussion that we are about to begin, which will certainly contribute to the strengthening of our MSMEs.

Thank you very much.