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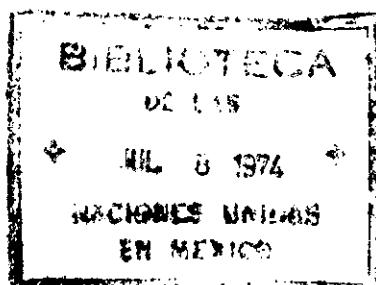
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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA



MEMORANDUM ON TRADE FACILITATION AND  
DOCUMENTATION IN LATIN AMERICA

74-6-0927

The Economic Commission for Latin America is active in the study and resolution of conceptual and implementation problems connected with the development of transport information systems. In addition to its intensive work on transport data banks and registers, on statistical, accounting and costing systems for transport enterprises, and on bibliographic documentation and data inventories for transport planners, the Commission has developed a number of projects which are at present underway on trade facilitation and documentation:

- (1) A joint project with the Institute for Latin American Integration (INTAL) of the Inter-American Development Bank designed to facilitate transcontinental intermodal transport in South America. Experiments on cargo traffic on new routes between the River Plate Basin sub-region and the Andean Group countries are being carried out. The infrastructure which can be utilized at present, including transshipment points, is being studied and a report will soon be available on this. The required documentation, inspections, insurance and liability requirements, customs guarantees and other operations in the originating, transit and destination countries are being studied firsthand and will be described in a second report to be issued mid-year. Governments and transport groups are being advised on measures which can be taken to facilitate this traffic, including the drawing up of a multilateral railway convention also covering intermodal and unitized cargo traffic. Information and encouragement is being given to the pertinent organizations regarding the establishment of combined transport operators for this traffic.

/(2) Action to

- (2) Action to develop national and sub-regional trade facilitation groups, which are at present concentrating on the terms of a draft convention on international intermodal transport, including the design of an intermodal transport document more appropriate for Latin America than the one which is being applied in several international trades and which is governed by rules rejected in many cases by the Latin American Governments as being unsuitable for the region. The Uniform Rules for a Combined Transport Document prepared by the International Chamber of Commerce are based on the draft Convention on the International Combined Transport of Goods (the TCM Convention), which was studied by the Latin American Governments at three sub-regional meetings in June 1972. The Governments requested the elimination of the draft convention from the agenda of the UN/IMCC Conference on International Container Traffic. The subject was discussed at this conference, however, and it was decided that UNCTAD, in collaboration with the regional economic commissions, should restudy the matter. Meanwhile, at the urging of European banks, insurers and transporters, the ICC issued its Uniform Rules.
- In addition to the preparation of proposals for a draft international intermodal transport convention, many of the Latin American trade facilitation groups are engaged in the following immediate tasks:
- (a) consideration of the design, content and functions of the intermodal transport document;
  - (b) study and implementation of the standardization of transporters' liability systems and customs guarantee systems;
  - (c) promotion of

(c) promotion of the formation of national or sub-regional combined transport enterprises, which would assume responsibility for the condition, delivery and avoidance of delay of the cargo during the entire door-to-door movement, and training of the operators of such enterprises.

Many of the Latin American trade facilitation groups have organized seminars on the facilitation of international trade and intermodal transport at which the interested private and public sectors are informed about the urgent need to formulate a Latin American position on the draft intermodal transport convention and the other issues mentioned here, and are invited to study these matters and advise the working groups accordingly before the regional meeting in September 1974. This work is being carried out along the lines set out by the Latin American Sub-Group of the Intergovernmental Preparatory Group for a Convention on International Intermodal Transport (Geneva, 29 October - 2 November 1973) and outlined in ECLA document E/CN.12/L.103: Transporte Intermodal internacional: los problemas inmediatos de América Latina y un programa de acción institucional.

- (3) A study of the economic and institutional implications of the various major technological options (containers, roll-on / roll-off, LASH and break bulk) for the transport of general cargo on selected trades between Latin America and other regions. The study focuses on the institutions and persons who intervene in the transport and supplementary services (banking, insurance, documentation, etc.) and the distribution of the costs to the user among these. The objective is to provide basic data for

to initiatives in other regions which would affect the participation of Latin American institutions and enterprises in the transport and other services related to international trade.

The Economic Commission for Latin America, particularly through its Divisions of Transport and Communications and of International Economic Relations, takes great interest in the development of co-ordinated activity in connexion with those concerns and will continue to offer technical assistance in this regard.