

PORT ACTIVITY IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN IN 2007

Port activity in Latin America and the Caribbean increased by nearly 60% between 2000 and 2007 in terms of metric tons of cargo moved and nearly 130% in terms of containers, growing to 1.6 billion metric tons and roughly 32 million TEUs. Based on data provided in the ECLAC Maritime Profile. This issue of the FAL Bulletin presents the main analytical data on port trends in the region. The authors are Ricardo J. Sánchez and Maricel Ulloa, Natural Resources and Infrastructure Division of ECLAC. For further information, please contact Ricardo J. Sánchez at Ricardo.SANCHEZ@cepal.org.

1. Regional conditions

Ports in Latin America and the Caribbean handled 1.6 billion metric tons of cargo in 2007. This figure indicates total cargo moved through ports, whether on coastal or ocean-going vessels, or internationally and domestically traded, for all types of incoming and outgoing cargo. The figure comes from the ECLAC Maritime Profile (<http://www.cepal.org/perfil/default.asp?idioma=IN>), based on information from the countries.

Table 1 indicates port activity since 2000 for a group of 283 ports for which information is available. However, the figure may be slightly higher due to the absence or partial reporting of data from some ports. There may also be variations in the data due to subsequent corrections to the values reported each year.

As illustrated in the table, based on the same sample of ports, the region had annual average growth of 6.9% between 2000 and 2007.

Between 2002, the year in which the region's economy began to recover, and 2007, annual average growth was 7.29%.

The top 10 ports in the region accounted for 36.7% of the total in 2000 and 38.8% in 2007, having reached a high of 39% in some of the intervening years. The top 20 ports accounted for 48.9% of total tons moved (283 ports) in 2000 and 52.5% of total tons in 2007. The top 50 ports accounted for 75.2% of total tons in 2000 and 76.6% in 2007.

Table 2 shows container transfer trends for 100 ports between 2000 and 2007. At the beginning of the period, the ports handled 13.92 million TEUs, which more than doubled to 30 million TEUs by 2007. Annual average growth in containers was much higher than annual average growth in metric tons from 2000 to 2007. Indeed, container transfers grew 12.6% annually between 2000 and 2007 and nearly 15% annually in the second half of the period (2002-2007).

Table 1
TOTAL PORT ACTIVITY IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006 ^a	2007 ^a	Average interannual variation	
									2007/2000	2007/2002
283 ports	1 022.99	1 117.52	1 147.57	1 243.66	1 362.17	1 423.30	1 490.70	1 631.63	6.90%	7.29%
Top 10	375.71	405.05	431.84	472.84	518.56	556.42	578.58	633.18	7.74%	7.95%
Top 20	500.12	555.90	570.50	631.46	696.50	739.41	780.42	856.89	8.00%	8.48%
Top 50	769.20	833.76	858.58	926.70	1 020.27	1 078.67	1 145.86	1 249.64	7.18%	7.80%
Top 10/283	36.7%	36.2%	37.6%	38.0%	38.1%	39.1%	38.8%	38.8%		
Top 20/283	48.9%	49.7%	49.7%	50.8%	51.1%	52.0%	52.4%	52.5%		
Top 50/283	75.2%	74.6%	74.8%	74.5%	74.9%	75.8%	76.9%	76.6%		

Source: R.J. Sánchez, based on the Maritime Profile, NRID/ECLAC.

Note: Values in millions of metric tons.

^a Preliminary figures.

Table 2
PORT CONTAINER ACTIVITY IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006 ^a	2007 ^a	Average interannual variation	
									2007/2000	2007/2002
Top 100	13.92	14.97	16.34	18.10	21.63	24.51	28.30	31.93	12.59%	14.34%
Top 10	6.29	6.79	7.59	8.65	10.43	11.94	14.21	16.07	14.35%	16.18%
Top 20	9.62	10.40	11.32	12.74	15.41	17.76	20.64	22.87	13.17%	15.09%
Top10/Top100	45.1%	45.4%	46.5%	47.8%	48.2%	48.7%	50.2%	50.3%		
Top20/Top100	69.1%	69.5%	69.3%	70.4%	71.3%	72.5%	72.9%	71.6%		

Source: R.J. Sánchez, based on the Maritime Profile, NRID/ECLAC.

Note: Values in millions of TEUs.

^a Preliminary figures.

Note that annual average growth for the top 10 ports surpassed 16% for the period 2002-2007, and over one dozen ports grew by more than 25% annually during the same period (Balboa, Cartagena, Lázaro Cárdenas, Itaguaí-RJ/Sepetiba, Acajutla, Caldera-Costa Rica, Corinto, Esmeraldas, Ilo, Salaverry, Porto Alegre, Natal, Chimbote).

Container traffic is more concentrated among ports than traffic in tons, with the top 10 ports in the region accounting for 45% of total container operations in 2000 and 50% in 2007 and showing sustained growth during the period. The top 20 ports (20%) accounted for 69% of the total for containers in 2000 and 72% in 2007. In support of this observation, interannual growth rates for the top 10 and 20 ports are always higher than the overall growth rate.

In 2007 Latin America and the Caribbean moved more than 7.5% of the world total. Asia topped the regional ranking, handling over 50% of the world's port container traffic. Table 3 presents the respective information for each region in the world.

Table 3
GLOBAL CONTAINER ACTIVITY BY REGION IN 2007

Region	TEUs moved as percentage of total
Asia	50.29
Europe	15.30
Africa	1.88
North America, not incl. Mexico	9.77
Latin America and the Caribbean	7.22
India	2.99
Australia	1.75
Other	10.79

Source: ECLAC, Maritime Profile.

2. Activity by country and port

Table 4 presents information on port operations by country between 2001 and 2007, measured in thousands of metric tons, and the ranking of the top 24 countries in the region according to this criterion.

Based on the 2007 figures, Brazil topped the list, having moved over 750 million metric tons of cargo through its ports.

Table 4
2007 RANKING OF COUNTRIES IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN BY PORT ACTIVITY IN TONS

Country	Rank 2007	Tons 2001	Tons 2002	Tons 2003	Tons 2004	Tons 2005	Tons 2006	Tons 2007	2007/2002
Brazil	1	506 206 884	529 005 051	570 790 055	620 720 545	649 418 781	692 833 468	754 716 655	7.37%
Mexico	2	244 398 720	254 612 568	264 854 129	264 530 477	282 720 117	284 554 337	n.d./n.a.	n.d./n.a.
Chile	3	77 790 442	79 787 099	86 667 405	92 836 291	102 452 950	105 793 243	112 626 221	7.14%
Colombia	4	78 382 651	73 271 059	79 182 333	91 901 197	97 150 783	102 610 410	112 455 740	8.95%
Argentina	5	69 748 774	73 346 294	80 462 303	99 084 864	103 155 395	130 077 317	102 208 047	6.86%
Panama	6	23 364 317	19 834 982	32 222 257	43 900 307	49 041 957	49 851 285	52 052 450	21.28%
Ecuador	7	27 230 799	28 242 084	29 575 033	37 357 340	33 580 136	35 472 100	34 723 154	4.22%
Dominican Republic	8	15 967 297	16 312 481	16 097 011	14 718 034	14 986 977	15 054 992	23 068 455	7.18%
Peru	9	15 666 693	16 060 874	16 271 380	17 066 538	18 124 337	19 080 342	20 791 819	5.30%
Jamaica	10	15 563 900	16 962 635	17 479 294	16 998 223	18 623 549	20 277 497	20 002 049	3.35%
Guatemala	11	13 272 006	14 221 026	14 639 900	13 194 487	16 224 874	16 749 236	15 967 516	2.34%
Costa Rica	12	6 731 124	9 574 325	10 362 240	10 794 000	11 050 800	12 706 100	13 615 225	7.30%
Venezuela (Bol. Rep. of)	13	11 478 728	9 823 373	8 110 837	11 207 200	10 122 901	11 407 399	11 580 543	3.35%
Uruguay	14	5 578 972	5 347 095	6 443 171	7 671 483	8 415 525	9 997 640	10 253 037	13.91%
Honduras	15	6 876 040	7 090 700	7 658 200	8 765 100	9 273 300	9 464 319	9 901 528	6.91%
El Salvador	16	2 478 504	2 534 520	2 918 340	3 195 741	3 608 728	4 425 931	4 372 380	11.52%
Guadeloupe	17	3 015 318	2 919 048	2 871 421	2 741 486	2 973 169	3 136 679	3 435 967	3.31%
Nicaragua	18	2 363 019	2 095 000	2 149 360	2 328 100	2 505 070	2 706 612	2 938 307	7.00%
Barbados	19	-	949 961	1 003 517	1 189 474	1 202 335	1 308 300	1 314 716	6.71%
Netherlands Antilles	20	786 537	803 117	807 602	808 643	895 404	914 849	984 872	4.16%
Saint Lucia	21	605 175	575 074	601 610	790 136	726 255	743 811	792 700	6.63%
Belize	22	701 921	724 510	737 533	703 203	701 715	675 486	722 796	-0.05%
Trinidad and Tobago	23	3 898 256	5 059 524	6 744 386	6 254 377	6 519 504	13 238 838	n.d./n.a.	n.d./n.a.
Bolivia (Plur. State of)	24	549 206	251 068	620 223	625 432	n.d./n.a.	n.d./n.a.	n.d./n.a.	n.d./n.a.

Source: R.J. Sánchez, based on the Maritime Profile, NRID/ECLAC.

Note: Preliminary figures obtained based on information from the countries. The figures may change as updates are sent to trans@cepal.org.

Between 2002 and 2007, average annual growth rates in metric tons were disparate, with Panama posting the highest annual growth at 21.3%, followed by Uruguay with 13.9%, El Salvador with 11.5%, Colombia with 9%, and Brazil with 7.4%.

In the case of container transfers, the data in TEUs is presented in Table 5. Once again, Brazil topped the regional ranking, with over 6.5 million TEUs, followed by Panama with over 4 million, Mexico with 3.06 million, Chile with 2.7 million, and Jamaica with 2 million. Panama and Mexico were noteworthy because most operations were transshipments.

Nicaragua had the highest average annual growth rate for the period 2002-2007, at 41.6%, followed by Colombia at 30.8%, El Salvador at 28.1%, Saint Lucia at 17.6%, and Panama at 17%.

Lastly, table 6 ranks the top 30 container ports in Latin America and the Caribbean between 2001 and 2007 and provides the annual average rate of change between 2002 and 2007.

Latin America and the Caribbean have eight ports in the "Million Club," the worldwide group of ports that handle over one million TEUs per year (Santos, Colón—all the terminals on the Atlantic side of the Panama Canal, Kingston, Balboa, Buenos Aires, Freeport, Manzanillo—Mexico, and El Callao). Valparaíso, Puerto Linón-Moin, and Puerto Cabello are approaching one million TEUs.

Tubarão, in Brazil, is the only port in the region that moves more than 100 million tons per year. It had average annual growth of 6.8% between 2002 and 2007. Itaquí handles very close to this volume.

Table 5
2007 RANKING OF COUNTRIES IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN BY PORT ACTIVITY IN TEUS

Country	Rank 2007	TEU 2001	TEU 2002	TEU 2003	TEU 2004	TEU 2005	TEU 2006	TEU 2007	2007/2002
Brazil	1	2 950 969	3 530 717	4 231 286	5 151 506	5 658 326	6 195 029	6 553 821	13.17%
Panama	2	1 590 085	1 851 626	1 991 659	2 428 762	2 774 579	3 029 871	4 074 480	17.09%
Mexico	3	1 353 098	1 563 028	1 684 441	1 902 560	2 133 213	2 676 691	3 062 440	14.40%
Chile	4	1 210 979	1 275 216	1 470 254	1 710 841	2 104 738	2 466 818	2 721 616	16.37%
Jamaica	5	983 400	1 065 000	1 137 798	1 356 034	1 670 800	2 150 408	2 016 792	13.62%
Argentina	6	1 321 327	1 076 517	1 333 840	1 273 762	1 369 521	2 024 949	1 838 526	11.30%
Colombia	7	446 165	450 113	610 614	760 998	1 015 711	1 433 556	1 720 966	30.76%
Bahamas	8	570 000	860 000	1 057 879	1 184 800	1 211 500	1 463 000	1 634 000	13.70%
Venezuela (Bol. Rep. of)	9	990 978	780 762	588 432	921 205	1 071 654	1 266 817	1 326 129	11.18%
Peru	10	536 402	578 633	627 902	809 781	993 844	1 087 278	1 177 955	15.28%
Costa Rica	11	577 621	602 568	679 679	714 360	762 108	828 781	976 621	10.14%
Dominican Republic	12	583 390	541 932	480 650	537 316	355 404	366 255	883 785	10.28%
Guatemala	13	528 398	677 715	720 673	744 059	770 080	822 855	852 774	4.70%
Ecuador	14	504 423	556 475	522 945	565 369	632 238	671 575	683 235	4.19%
Honduras	15	406 359	413 843	470 567	555 595	553 013	593 766	636 435	8.99%
Uruguay	16	301 641	292 962	333 871	424 791	454 531	519 218	596 487	15.28%
Trinidad and Tobago	17	352 758	385 233	396 368	449 468	467 712	472 075	514 557	5.96%
Guadeloupe	18	122 375	109 152	109 871	108 487	154 263	154 493	168 839	9.12%
El Salvador	19	17 721	41 840	65 576	92 857	103 483	123 329	144 458	28.12%
Barbados	20	67 203	68 259	70 146	82 059	88 759	98 511	99 626	7.86%
Netherlands Antilles	21	78 439	80 741	81 212	82 087	89 229	90 759	97 271	3.80%
Nicaragua	22	-	10 291	10 936	16 983	18 951	47 802	58 614	41.61%
Saint Lucia	23	22 836	23 067	38 465	43 947	60 727	47 096	51 803	17.56%
Belize	24	27 074	30 312	33 789	35 565	36 388	37 527	39 191	5.27%
Aruba	25	57 544	54 450	51 926	53 500	57 054	n.d./n.a.	n.d./n.a.	n.d./n.a.

Source: R.J. Sánchez, based on the Maritime Profile, NRID/ECLAC.

Table 6
2007 RANKING OF PORTS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN BY PORT ACTIVITY IN TEUS

Country	Port	Rank 2007	TEU 2001	TEU 2002	TEU 2003	TEU 2004	TEU 2005	TEU 2006	TEU 2007	2007/2002
Brazil	Santos	1	892 802	1 068 606	1 385 421	1 749 539	2 236 580	2 445 941	2 532 900	18.84%
Panama	Colón (MIT, Evergreen, Panamá Port)	2	1 210 852	1 450 000	1 512 365	1 943 712	2 094 700	2 027 785	2 222 736	8.92%
Jamaica	Kingston	3	983 400	1 065 010	1 137 798	1 360 623	1 671 820	2 150 408	2 016 792	13.62%
Panama	Balboa	4	358 868	377 774	457 134	465 091	663 781	988 583	1 833 778	37.16%
Argentina	Buenos Aires (incl. Exolgan)	5	962 965	745 658	897 123	1 138 503	1 255 000	1 567 000	1 709 000	18.04%
Bahamas	Freeport	6	570 000	860 000	1 057 879	1 184 800	1 211 500	1 463 000	1 634 000	13.70%
Mexico	Manzanillo	7	458 472	638 507	708 417	829 603	872 386	1 249 630	1 409 614	17.16%
Peru	Callao	8	480 706	521 382	553 138	725 490	887 035	938 119	1 022 246	14.41%
Chile	Valparaíso	9	291 403	300 331	319 368	388 353	377 275	614 841	845 234	23.02%
Costa Rica	Puerto Limón-Moin	10	577 621	564 357	622 404	647 616	672 020	765 672	842 903	8.35%
Venezuela (Bol. Rep. of)	Puerto Cabello	11	620 523	506 106	385 702	598 251	734 202	844 220	831 732	10.45%
Colombia	Cartagena (incl. S.P.R., El Bosque, Contecar)	12	188 543	132 719	278 628	397 186	549 860	711 529	795 380	43.06%
Mexico	Veracruz	13	543 327	548 422	571 867	591 736	620 858	674 872	729 717	5.88%
Colombia	S.P.R. Buenaventura	14	200 073	252 234	255 536	294 224	384 344	622 233	723 796	23.47%
Brazil	Itajaí	15	243 554	334 726	441 867	564 012	642 375	685 644	668 521	14.84%
Chile	San Antonio	16	413 900	438 570	524 370	639 762	773 024	676 300	650 697	8.21%
Brazil	Rio Grande	17	346 321	438 196	522 980	572 326	666 834	595 802	607 275	6.74%
Ecuador	Guayaquil	18	474 050	516 508	468 599	516 557	567 608	603 693	597 622	2.96%
Uruguay	Montevideo	19	301 641	292 962	333 871	424 791	454 531	519 218	596 487	15.28%
Brazil	Paranáguá	20	281 891	269 882	309 924	378 834	420 318	493 787	595 261	17.14%
Dominican Republic	Cauceño	21	-	-	-	-	-	-	574 441	n.d./n.a.
Honduras	Puerto Cortes	22	338 932	352 984	399 839	466 697	468 563	507 946	553 139	9.40%
Chile	Talcahuano/San Vicente	23	208 151	196 976	205 123	219 859	272 258	414 298	492 917	20.14%
Venezuela (Bol. Rep. of)	La Guaira	24	304 119	215 555	150 844	261 036	269 114	341 846	415 963	14.05%
Mexico	Altamira	25	206 864	225 937	256 417	297 017	324 601	342 656	407 657	12.53%
Brazil	Rio de Janeiro	26	252 071	271 589	325 222	344 439	326 177	335 145	387 809	7.38%
Guatemala	Santo Tomas de Castilla	27	201 090	300 657	312 457	328 464	316 474	313 777	376 666	4.61%
Trinidad and Tobago	Port of Spain	28	271 156	290 175	298 000	350 468	322 466	324 939	358 541	4.32%
Brazil	São Francisco do Sul	29	176 222	258 826	281 057	305 331	280 915	260 486	316 050	4.08%
Mexico	Lázaro Cárdenas	30	-	134	1 646	43 445	132 479	160 696	270 240	358.07%

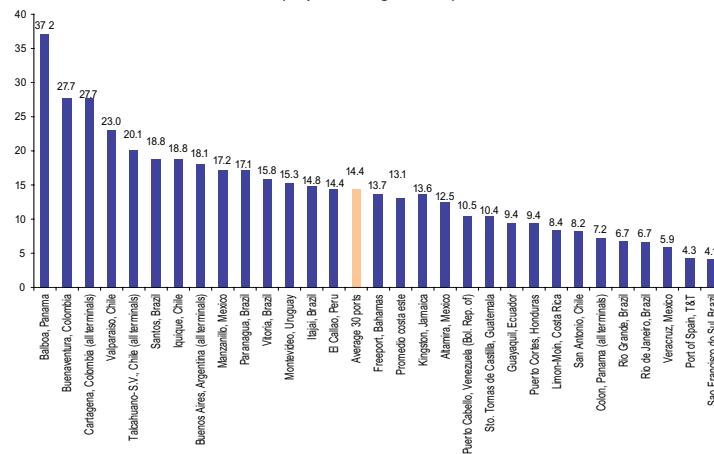
Source: R.J. Sánchez, based on the Maritime Profile, NRID/ECLAC.

Table 7
2007 RANKING OF PORTS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN BY PORT ACTIVITY IN TONS

Country	Port	Rank 2007	Tons 2001	Tons 2002	Tons 2003	Tons 2004	Tons 2005	Tons 2006	Tons 2007	2007/2002
Brazil	Tubarão	1	68 233 349	75 192 316	76 568 035	84 433 217	98 671 433	94 363 909	104 672 667	6.84%
Brazil	Itaquai	2	63 599 157	64 941 689	68 475 599	76 958 192	85 900 389	93 833 729	98 808 524	8.76%
Brazil	Itaguaí-RJ/Sepetiba	3	39 131 955	42 805 354	51 035 544	59 286 049	67 056 126	75 393 271	87 719 912	15.43%
Brazil	Santos	4	48 161 593	53 474 268	60 077 073	67 609 753	71 902 494	76 297 193	80 775 867	8.60%
Mexico	Cayo Arcas	5	46 775 358	49 293 588	55 932 553	64 500 896	64 048 728	65 234 308	67 176 757	6.39%
Brazil	São Sebastião	6	46 937 491	52 774 256	52 050 716	53 135 930	47 710 896	47 686 623	50 337 378	-0.94%
Argentina	San Lorenzo/San Martín	7	26 680 941	26 279 165	29 263 870	28 906 875	35 175 628	35 704 251	40 489 948	9.03%
Brazil	Paranáguá	8	28 262 219	27 859 879	32 499 953	31 481 189	29 273 819	31 985 631	37 599 164	6.18%
Colombia	Santa Marta/Ciénaga Port Zone	9	17 733 936	28 175 201	21 901 351	27 119 855	29 936 888	30 496 575	35 142 833	4.52%
Colombia	La Guajira Port Zone	10	19 536 221	11 041 327	25 031 655	25 125 901	26 743 430	27 581 003	30 456 147	22.50%
Brazil	Aratu-ba	11	20 587 924	21 045 670	21 850 529	26 439 889	28 397 333	28 128 926	30 358 587	7.60%
Brazil	Angra dos Reis	12	18 181 915	14 738 809	14 261 864	14 296 174	14 008 281	19 590 533	29 506 396	14.89%
Brazil	Rio Grande	13	17 568 889	16 753 962	22 030 505	22 247 534	17 996 502	22 428 964	26 680 345	9.75%
Colombia	American Port Company	14	13 951 511	12 788 688	16 414 473	19 211 839	22 021 420	20 239 780	22 782 153	12.24%
Ecuador	Balao	15	16 357 515	15 201 672	16 607 225	22 377 872	22 284 718	23 245 909	21 919 942	7.59%
Brazil	Belém	16	13 363 942	13 318 857	16 772 691	20 059 857	20 565 401	21 135 906	21 174 322	9.72%
Mexico	Manzanillo	17	11 968 408	13 304 127	13 820 706	15 106 583	16 604 964	17 333 371	17 950 197	6.17%
Brazil	Rio de Janeiro	18	15 518 371	13 394 362	14 467 653	14 535 665	15 754 452	16 568 375	17 927 936	6.00%
Chile	Talcahuano/San Vicente	19	11 941 977	10 168 058	12 002 182	12 177 372	14 164 388	15 573 632	17 769 998	11.81%
Brazil	Vila do Conde	20	11 407 674	7 946 354	10 399 695	11 487 523	11 195 400	17 596 796	17 642 006	17.29%
Brazil	Praia Mole	21	18 955 574	20 232 741	19 405 101	20 099 374	17 765 493	17 103 130	17 568 665	-2.78%
Argentina	Rosario	22	2 263 889	10 710 926	11 664 882	11 524 350	13 459 992	12 402 641	17 451 391	10.26%
Brazil	São Francisco do Sul	23	13 975 627	15 023 855	15 591 082	16 034 663	16 982 539	17 118 188	17 099 224	2.62%
Brazil	Ponta Ubu	24	10 924 455	15 074 598	16 251 807	16 555 850	15 526 697	15 963 507	16 686 749	2.05%
Mexico	Veracruz	25	14 104 261	14 731 281	15 480 487	15 191 115	16 528 107	17 133 878	16 532 711	2.33%
Peru	Callao	26	11 336 762	12 112 582	12 525 357	12 973 163	13 740 675	14 727 698	16 399 133	6.25%
Colombia	Cartagena Port Zone	27	14 275 821	11 889 753	10 713 893	15 591 991	14 863 660	16 392 632	16 299 328	6.51%
Chile	Quintero	28	7 385 859	8 073 202	9 029 215	10 823 414	11 906 519	13 060 250	15 908 507	14.53%
Mexico	Mazatlán	29	2 158 002	2 366 842	2 760 199	2 856 723	2 979 666	1 361 778	15 480 783	45.59%
Mexico	Lázaro Cárdenas	30	14 706 378	14 454 325	15 938 214	14 219 799	17 417 169	17 399 445	15 337 578	1.19%

Source: R.J. Sánchez, based on the Maritime Profile, NRID/ECLAC.

Figure 1
AVERAGE ANNUAL GROWTH RATE OF THE 30 TOP PORTS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN, 2002-2007
(In percentage terms)



Source: R.J. Sánchez, based on the Maritime Profile, NRID/ECLAC.

3. Final thoughts

The importance of ports that function efficiently and the influence of these ports on economic development have been highlighted repeatedly in various studies by ECLAC and other colleagues and institutions around the world. On both matters, one of the main keys to success lies in the quality of the institutional framework and the ground rules for public-private partnerships in ports, as well as in the reduction of the transaction and coordination costs associated with the organization and efficient operation of clusters (or port communities) and in the professionalization of the port authorities (acting as “cluster managers”).

Along with foregoing, it is important to reassert the importance of enhancing all aspects of transport facilitation and logistics, by improving public and private processes and procedures, to significantly lower the overall logistical cost of conducting international trade and domestic shipping in the countries.

Note: Complete data for Latin America and the Caribbean are available in the report “Port Statistics 2000-2006,” which can be viewed on the Natural Resources and Infrastructure Division’s website: www.cepal.org/transporte.



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