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1. INVESTMENTS IN PORTS IN THE PROVINCE OF BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA.

The Minister of Agricultural and Production Matters of the province of Buenos Aires, Argentina, Debora Giorgi, listed some of the infrastructure work programmed for ports of the province of Buenos Aires. She referred to a private investment of USD \$50 million for the first stage, and USD \$50 million for a second stage so that Dock Sud can transform into the first port that can receive international level vessel containers of 700 meters in length.

She also referred to the work that is being developed by the provincial Executive in partnership with the National Government, for the application of a plan in the port of Bahia Blanca, the AMBA project will develop four railway stages and access to the port. Also the design of a logistic zone and the incorporation of a tax free area will be advanced, towards the port of Bahia Blanca and also in the delegation of Coronel Rosales.

With reference to the Port of La Plata, the provincial Minister considered that this terminal “is an attractive alternative to the overload of the port in the city of Buenos Aires.” The Minister detailed that work is being done with the port of La Plata, such as widening the canal, lengthening the breakwater, the link of the free area zone, and also a logistics zone. These projects will also be advanced in zones and ports important to the framework of the agricultural sector, such as Quequen and San Nicolas. The Minister also indicated that the objective of this work is “competitive ports” so that “production in our territory is of the most efficient form possible for the rest of world and vice versa, in addition to being efficient in the import of primary materials and be the generator of production.

http://www.mp.gba.gov.ar/historial/08_enero.php

2. COMPANIES FROM SIX COUNTRIES INTERESTED IN MONKEY POINT, NICARAGUA

Mr. Virgilio Silva, President of the Empresa Nacional de Puertos, EPN, stated that the deep waters port project in Monkey Point, in the South Atlantic, will cost approximately \$350 million dollars, is of interest to companies from six countries, and the bid will be made public for the execution of the work at the latest March or April.

The parties first interested in the port of Monkey Point was Dubai, Venezuela, and Spain, but according to Silva, investments from Argentina, Mexico, Brazil, and Iran are also interested. The official assured that the project will be promoted in specialized fairs in the United States and in Brazil, in order to interest more companies of the megaproject. Silva indicated that he will travel with businesses from Argentina, Mexico, and Spain to Monkey Point, so that they can see the area where the port will be constructed. He added that there is a firm bid from Mexico to invest USD \$ 50 million in port equipment for Monkey Point and another Mexican company will travel within the coming days to assess the investment in a highway towards what will be the port.

If Mexico constructs the highway, the port investment will be smaller than the port infrastructure, asserted the official. The port of Monkey Point will permit the country to have the first deep water port in the Nicaraguan Atlantic and will allow commerce to be exported and imported without the use of ports in Honduras and Costa Rica.

The President of the EPN stated that the companies from Dubai have travelled three times to be informed of the project and in April will travel again to Nicaragua. Silva stated that some companies have travelled to see and understand the judicial framework of the project, but the country does not have a law of ports. He also stated that currently they are in the process of assigning the development of a law of ports to an American company so that it can be approved within the next five or six months by the National Assembly.



The EPN board stated that it is working on the terms of reference for the construction bid in the Monkey Point port. Silva stated that they have spoken with many ship owners interested in reaching this new port, including one of the largest in the world such as Maersk, able to support between 10 and 15 million dollars to invest in Monkey Point.

In addition to the modern port, the Monkey Point project includes construction of a two lane highway towards El Rama and a railway that will reach the port of Corinto. According to the EPN, the shortage of a Caribbean port, Nicaragua will receive USD \$ 150 million per year plus the cost of local commerce used by Puerto Cortes in Honduras and Puerto Limón in Costa Rica.

<http://www.elnuevodiario.com.ni/economia/8704>

3. FRANCE AND SURINAME NEGOTIATE A JOINT PORT OPERATIONS

France and Suriname may begin a combined business of operation which will solve the difficulties in its overseas possession of Guyana. The project has been discussed for months and is based on an investment of USD \$ 50 million dollars to expand bays, detailed John Defares, director of ports of Suriname. The official detailed that the negotiations are awaiting the complementary conditions from Suriname, including the creation of highway infrastructure.

To date the Government of Suriname and the European Union will conduct feasible studies for the rehabilitation of the East – West highway, stated the source, in addition to the plan also benefiting the Brazilian state of Amapa and will be finished in 2009.

The interest from France derives from the low depth of Guyanese ports which hinders the attraction of ships with large drafts. Guyana is a French department of Ultramar since 1946, and the territory is claimed by Suriname.

<http://www.prensalatina.com.mx/Article.asp?ID=%7B97BCF887-15AB-434D-B0DE-650A01184A5C%7D&language=ES>

4. PANAMÁ: PORTS MOVED 4 MILLION OF TEUS

The Panama port system moved in 2007 4 million TEU (containers 20 long feet) or a growth of 32.2 % in comparison to 2006. This movement illustrates revenue of approximately USD \$36 million, as ports pay to the State of Panama 9 dollars for each container moved. The financial contributions to the State could be higher, as port terminals also move cars and machines, which have another tariff, stated Carlos Raul Moreno, Sub Administrator of the Panama Maritime Authority.

The Ports of Balboa and Cristobal, managed by the Panama Ports Company (PPC), continue being the ports with the most growth percentage between other freight terminals. Alejandro Kouruklis, PPC Manager, attributes this growth to the investment made in 2007 in both ports, “which facilitated growth of the clients.” As an example, Kouruklis mentioned the Maersk case, which last year began with a weekly arrival of a postpanamax ship – in addition to the vessels of APL, MOL and ZIM. In Cristobal, the Seaboard Marine, Melfi Marine and Container Cost Line, amount to 106.2 % growth. PPC executes an investment of USD\$ 30 million in Balboa, corresponding to phase 4 and 200 million in Cristobal, for the first phase. “At the end of January we will receive 4 new port cranes for a total of 18 port cranes in Balboa and this is how we can support our client’s growth,” the PPC manager added.

Also, bidding specifications were already given for the ports of Aguadulce, Colon Island in Bocas del Toro and a dock in Almirante, which will await companies interested in investing in them. Panama Maritime Authority Manager, Fernando Solorzano, explained that they are looking for port



modernization in order to generate employment. He assured that the administrative concessions are for developing activities and that the ports will continue to be that of the PMA, and not be privatized.

<http://www.maritimoportuario.cl/new/ver-noticia.php?pagina=5015>

5. URUGUAY PRESSURES INTERNATIONALLY TO OBTAIN DREDGING OF THE RIVER UP TO FRAY BENTOS

The government of Uruguay will respond to the needs and emergencies of Botnia (a company which Argentina considers pollutant) pressuring internationally to ensure that the Martin Garcia canal is dredged which is the key entrance to Nueva Palmira and even to the port of Fray Bentos, in the Uruguay River. To that end, he signed an agreement with the Organization of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), creating an office of the agency in accordance with the agreement on November 20, 2007 in the Foreign Affairs of Uruguay. Specifically it intends "to promote the development of river systems." That is: "To continue the maintenance dredging of the Martin Garcia canal to 32 feet; start dredging the river until Fray Bentos, Uruguay, to a minimum depth of 26 feet, for viable projects that make up the complex Coastal ports."

"In a communication from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Uruguay (No. 129/07) it was announced that on November 20 of last year, Foreign Minister Mr. Reinaldo Gargano, signed "with Mr. Albert F. Di Liscia, UNIDO Representative and Head of the Regional Office in Uruguay, an agreement between the Government of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay and the Organization of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) on the establishment of a Regional Office of the UNIDO in Uruguay."

In other documentation UNIDO identifies the needs of dredging in terms of the consequences of forestry development in Fray Bentos. It argues that: "If you look at the morphology of the Lower Rio Uruguay, we can see that between 0 km and about 108 kilometers in the vicinity of the General San Martin Bridge, upstream of the Port of Fray Bentos, the river presents a very wide mainstream, however from there and higher waters, the branches of the riverbed diversity with abundant formation of islands."

The document highlights: "This also reflects the depths of the river and the needs of dredging, while in the first 108 miles between Nueva Palmira and Fray Bentos, it is necessary to dredge four steps between Fray Bentos and Concepcion del Uruguay and is necessary to dredge at least twelve steps and much higher volume. This leads us to think that only up to 108 kilometers of the river would be worthwhile to consider the possibility of further deepening the dredging previously mentioned," upholds UNIDO.

It adds: "The necessity for greater depth in this stretch of the Uruguay River between 0 km and 108 km will be justified within the intense port development of short term mass production, of the forest development plan of Uruguay, and particularly the forest areas predicted for the year 2010 of more than 10 million metres cubed, which will demand port infrastructure for its export.

It also highlights that "it should be noted that the entire set of existing port infrastructure in the country is insufficient to mobilize roughly half of these annual volumes of wood, for which is imperative to expand the ports, particularly in Fray Bentos, and support the development of private port companies."

That is not all, UNIDO refers to the cellulose industry indirectly but asserts the need for dredging. The agency said: "We believe that very soon the need for deep dredging at 28 feet of the stretch of the Lower Uruguay River from 0 km and the Port of Fray Bentos will convert this and other ports to develop, those interior to the navigable waterways, with openwork admissible in Rio de la Plata."



"The development of ports and waterways of lower Uruguay must also be supported by an extensive renovation project and improvement of the rail network in the north of the Black River that flows to Fray Bentos and its connection with the railway system in Mesopotamia in Argentina, which also is developing a massive development plan resulting from forest and industrial timber, which ports in the region of Fray Bentos may provide a very important logistics transportation service.

<http://www.analisisdigital.com.ar/noticias.php?ed=1&di=0&no=74384>

6. MEXICAN PORTS REDUCE SECURITY TARIFFS.

In order to improve competitiveness in Mexican ports, the Coordinación General de Puertos y Marina Mercante (CGPMM) decided to reduce the Security Tariff which came into effect on February 1, 2005, by 17%.

The tariff was implemented due to the international obligations that Mexico acquired through the creation of the Ship and Port Facilities Security Code (ISPS Code), which originated due to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 in the United States.

Although the cost was slightly lower than the average registered in other ports of Latin America, lower levels of payment were considered in order to allow the entry of more shipping lines and a greater number of routes. As such, Mexico will compete effectively within the international markets which it participates in.

On the other hand, independent of the tariff decrease, Mexico still maintains compliance to the international maritime conventions it has committed to, which the nation is immersed in.

The previous looks to improve user services in Mexican ports, without deteriorating the level of security reached in the implementation of international laws of the ISPS Code and within which Mexico has been described as a country that has consolidated maritime port security matters.

<http://mx.invertia.com/noticias/noticia.aspx?idNoticia=200801311955> TRM 64187060

7. CONGRESS OF PERU APPROVES TO FREE THE ENAPU TO OBTAIN INVESTMENTS.

After several months of discussion and a unanimous multiparty vote, the Transport and Communications Commission of Congress gave the green light to the bill Strengthening and Modernization of the National Ports Peru (Enapu), giving a major step forward to improve the competitiveness of port terminals in the country, mainly of Callao.

The ruling authorizes Enapu to invest in infrastructure and equipment of each of the ports at its own expense, as required according to the Port Development Plan, which will begin on a priority basis in Callao. Also, the port company is exempted from the regulations of the National System of Public Investment (SNIP) and the National Council of Procurement and Contracting State (Consucode), in addition to being outside the scope of Fonafe (National Fund for Financing Business State), like Petroperú.



In another article, Enapu is authorized to form consortium port companies, which will promote investment to strengthen, develop and modernize as a priority the public ports of Ilo, Paita, Salaverry, Chimbote, Pisco, Iquitos and Yurimaguas.

The initiative also suggests that by proposal of the directory, the Junta General de Accionistas will approve the application of the net profits of the company in investment projects of the Port of Callao terminal and other owned ports. These utilities also will be earmarked for the creation of a pension fund.

Congresswoman Susana Vilca, president of the Transport Committee, stressed the importance of adopting ruling in the face of privatization. "The State must protect its ports and banish the idea that they are bad and inefficient and that only foreigners can operate," said the parliamentarian. The news was well received by the secretary general of Fentenapu, Adolfo Granadino, who hopes that the ruling will be adopted in the short term by the Standing Committee of Parliament. The official stated, "There is much to do in Enapu, such as the purchase of other gantry cranes that will empower the Port of Callao."

However, the bill has not been well received by the business sector. The president of the Peruvian Association of Port Operators, Carlos Vargas, is not in favour of such a measure. He felt that a state enterprise should have the necessary controls to enable it to guarantee investment and be efficient. "It is not good to go from one extreme to another," he stated, while asking the congressmen who will see the issue for final approval to be aware that it so much flexibility is not desirable.

For its part, the president Confiep, Jaime Caceres, stated that if the purpose is for Enapu to lie outside the norms of Fonafe, SNIP and Consucode to expedite the modernization of ports, it is difficult to oppose but the ideal is that the private sector assume the tasks of Enapu.

Meanwhile, the Lima Chamber of Commerce (FTC) said that the approved project is not the most efficient way to driver modernization of port infrastructure. "The competitiveness of Peru requires that congressmen think of the benefit of Peru and not only safeguarding their political interests", they said.

http://www.larepublica.com.pe/component/option,com_contentant/task,view/id,202844/Itemid,/

http://www.correoperu.com.pe/paginas_notas.php?nota_id=62419¬a_seccion=12&seccion=ECO_NOMIA&anterior=1

<http://blog.pucp.edu.pe/item/19033>

8. VENEZUELA DONATES 72 MILLON DOLARS TO NICARAGUA

Nicaragua will receive USD \$ 72 million dollars from the Venezuelan government that will be allocated to programs to eradicate hunger and energy and social projects, as announced today by the President Daniel Ortega. The representative of Nicaragua declared this upon his return from Venezuela, where he attended the Sixth Summit of the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA).

One of the projects to be undertaken will be the construction of a deep-water seaport in the town of Bilwi, the main port in the north of the Caribbean. Ortega said that the intentions of the Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, are to help Nicaragua develop its infrastructure.

<http://www.americaeconomica.com/portada/noticias/300108/nrnicaragua.htm>

http://www.nicaraguahoy.info/dir_cgi/topics.cgi?op=view_topic;cat=NoticiasGenerales;id=6953



9. JAMAICA. GOVERNMENT TO RE-TABLE AND PASS PORT SECURITY ACT THIS YEAR

Minister of National Security, Derrick Smith, has said that the Government will be taking measures to strengthen security at the nation's ports, including the re-tableting and passage of the Port Security Act by the end of the year.

The Minister, who was addressing an information fair organized by the Jamaica Customs Department yesterday (Jan. 26) at Dump Up Beach in Montego Bay, said that the legislation will, among other things, provide for the establishment of a single agency with responsibility for security at the ports and bonded warehouses.

"I intend to have discussions with my counterpart Minister Mike Henry in the Ministry of Transport and Works, so that, that bill could be looked at again, re-tableted and to ensure that it is passed into law by the end of this calendar year," he stated.

The move, he said is in keeping with Government efforts to curtail the illicit trade in drug and guns and appealed for all well-thinking Jamaicans to join in the fight.

"We as a nation need to continue to increase our actions against these smugglers who are clever and who are wealthy and who on many occasions, succeed in buying their way forward. We must keep at it because if we don't, not withstanding past efforts and not withstanding efforts at the international level, we will not be successful," the Security Minister noted.

He further commended the "hardworking custom personnel, those on the front line and those in the back room. Continue doing your work. We appreciate your efforts, not only in bringing in the revenue to the Government, but the role you play to minimize illicit items entering our country. I say to you, continue to be professional, continue to be honest and of the highest integrity. Keep up the good work."

The information fair, held under the theme: 'The fight against drug trafficking,' was the culmination of a week of activities by Jamaica Customs to mark International Customs Day.

Hundreds of persons attended the event, where they were sensitized about the work of the Customs Department and associated public and private sector agencies.

http://www.jis.gov.jm/security/html/20080128t080000-0500_14083_jis_gov_t_to_re_table_and_pass_port_security_act_this_year.asp

10. MAJOR SHIPPING NATION ACCEDES TO TWO UN MARINE POLLUTION TREATIES

The Bahamas, home to the world's third-largest registered fleet of ships, has acceded to two key International Maritime Organization (IMO) conventions that aim to discourage environmental pollution on the high seas, the United Nations agency announced today.

The Caribbean nation has acceded to the International Convention on the Control of Harmful Anti-fouling Systems on Ships 2001 (known as the AFS Convention) and to the International Convention on Civil Liability for Bunker Oil Pollution Damage 2001 (Bunkers Convention).

The AFS Convention requires parties to the pact to ban or restrict the use of harmful anti-fouling systems on ships flying their flag, operating under their authority or entering their ports, shipyards and offshore terminals. The Bahamas' accession means 28 States comprising 43.79 per cent of the global fleet of ships have now ratified the treaty, which will enter into force on 17 September.



The Bunkers Convention aims to ensure that prompt and adequate compensation is available to people who suffer damage caused by oil spills when carried as fuel in ships' bunkers. This pact enters into force on 21 November.

IMO is the UN agency with responsibility for the safety and security of shipping and the prevention of marine pollution by ships.

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=25498&Cr=ship&Cr1=marine>