



**REPÚBLICA DE PANAMÁ**  
— GOBIERNO NACIONAL —

**MINISTERIO DE  
RELACIONES EXTERIORES**

Embajada de Panamá en  
Bélgica

**MARCH-APRIL 2022**

# Panama Notes

**EMBASSY OF PANAMA TO BELGIUM, LUXEMBOURG, SLOVENIA,  
CROATIA AND MISSION TO THE EUROPEAN UNION**



**PANAMA: A LOGISTICS AND  
TRANSPORTATION HUB**

# MESSAGE FROM THE AMBASSADOR



## Welcome to the March edition of the Panama Notes!

Panama continues to fulfill its commitments on climate change and its transition to cleaner energy, which is why we are pleased to share with you the beginning of the construction of the natural gas power plant. This will help Panama not only with the generation of cleaner energy, but also with the economic recovery post covid-19.

Panama continues to uphold its commitment to strengthen democratic institutions, encourage freedom of expression and the inclusively promote economic growth with its participation in the Fourth Summit of the Alliance for Development in Democracy.

We sincerely hope you enjoy this edition of the Panama notes, and we will see you in the next edition!

**HE Mrs Yavel Francis Lanuza**



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Gisselle Gonzalez



MARCH - APRIL, 2022

# GATUN NATURAL GAS GENERATOR BEGINS ITS CONSTRUCTION PHASE



An international energy group began construction of a power plant in Panama on March 22, that will operate on natural gas, with an investment of \$1 billion, said President Laurentino Cortizo, who celebrated the “strategic” investment.

“It represents an economic injection to our country, and it is strategic for the future of our energy matrix. An investment of 1 billion dollars, which will generate more than 3,000 direct jobs and thousands of indirect jobs,” said the president, who participated in the ground-breaking ceremony.

The Gatun generator will be built on Telfers Island, in the province of Colon, in the Panamanian Caribbean, and will be able to produce 670 megawatts of energy. It should be operational in early 2024.

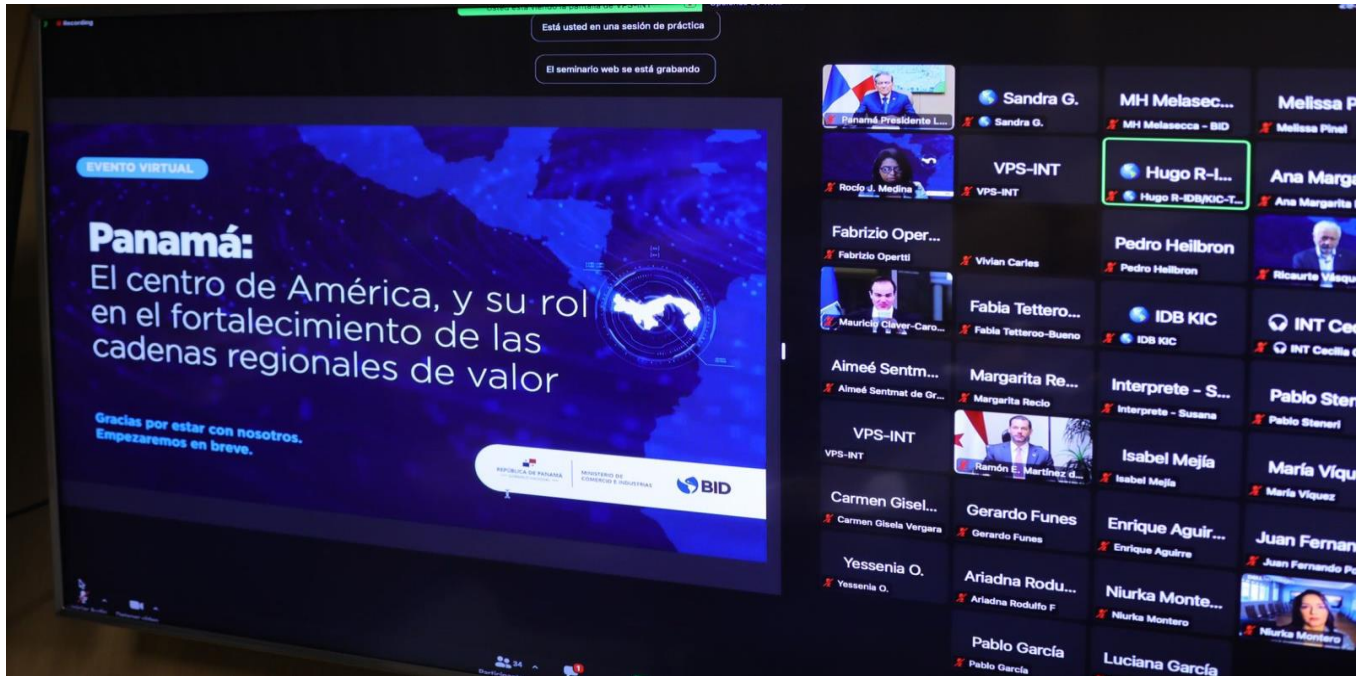
The project is being managed by the Gas Panama Energy Group, made up of the London-based firm InterEnergy Group, with 51% of the stake, and the US subsidiary AES Panama, with 49%. Both firms are already operating in the country in the field of electricity generation.

“The Gatun Generating Plant will contribute to stabilizing the electricity tariff, allowing in the future, to reduce the cost significantly,” Cortizo said.

The Gatun Generating Plant will replace the thermal plants that have already been removed from the Panamanian electricity system, moving Panama towards a much cleaner and more efficient energy matrix.

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# PANAMA: A LOGISTICS AND TRANSPORTATION HUB



The President of the Republic, Laurentino Cortizo Cohen, highlighted the potential of Panama as the main logistics center in Latin America at the opening of the high-level multisectoral forum, held on February 3, organized by the National Government in alliance with the Inter-American Bank of Development (IDB).

The President indicated that Panama offers a unique value proposition as the main logistics center in Latin America, in which he highlighted the exceptional connectivity thanks to its geographical position, the Canal and logistical assets. "Panama has the best air and maritime connectivity in Latin America and the Caribbean,

with ports on the coasts of two oceans, a transcontinental railway, airports, logistics parks, special economic zones, and free zones," said the Chief Executive during the opening of the forum "Panama: The Center of America and its role in strengthening regional value chains".

Meanwhile, the president of the IDB, Mauricio Claver-Carone, reaffirmed his confidence in the country. "We are experiencing the largest realignment of global supply chains in history. This opened up a unique opportunity to attract more and better investments, and Panama is in a privileged position to achieve this".

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**BLOCKCHAIN  
Summit LatAm**

## PANAMA WILL HOST THE

# BLOCKCHAIN SUMMIT LATAM 2022

**The country was selected to present the Blockchain Summit LatAm 2022 in order to promote it as a digital hub for the region.**

Panama was recently selected as the venue for the Blockchain Summit LatAm 2022, to be held between July 6 and 8.

Through an official statement the organizer stated that the objective of the inclusion of the Panamanian country is to turn it into a digital hub for Latin America, through the transfer of information and the development of new businesses.

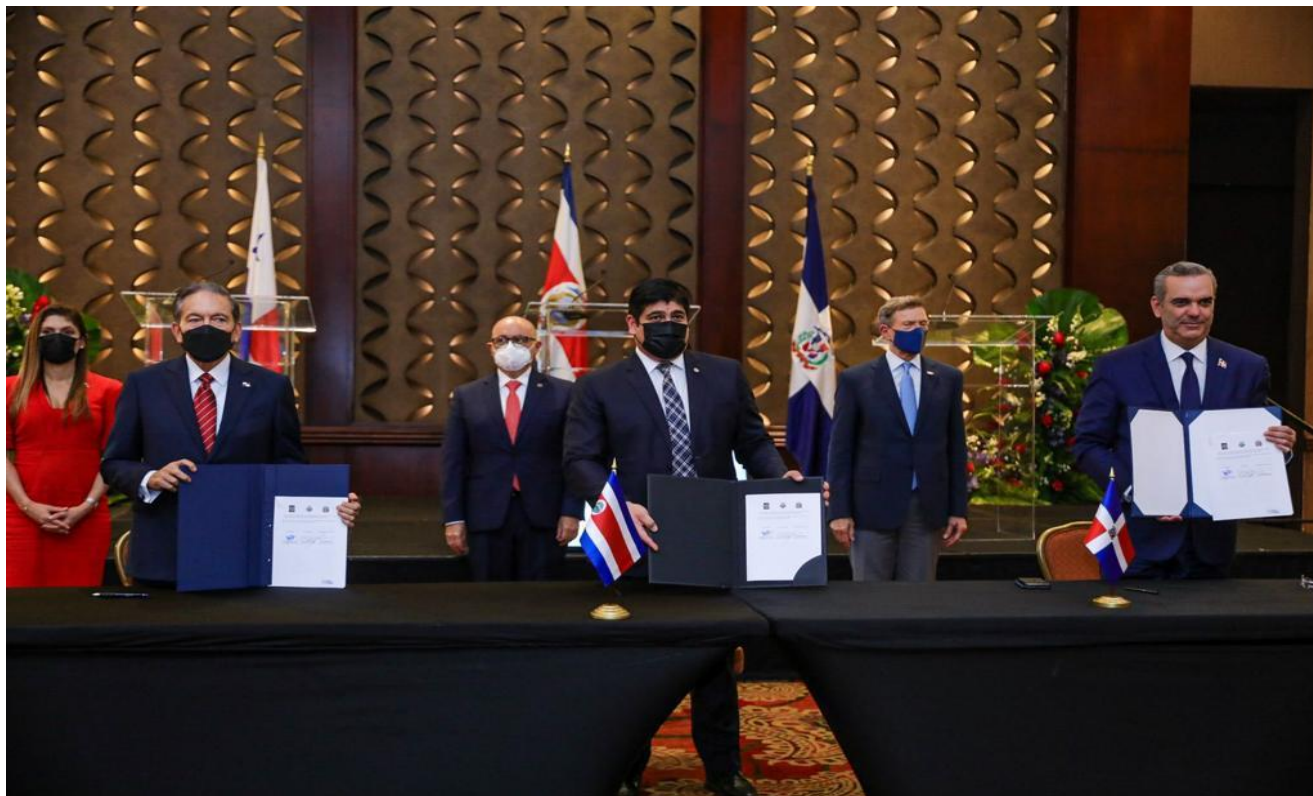
The event, which will be held in its sixth version, is organized in conjunction with the Chamber of Digital Commerce and Blockchain of Panama, and will feature a series of conferences, expert panels, workshops, business rounds and conversations where case studies will be analyzed along with successes and public policies.

The co-founder and CEO of LatAmTech, Cristóbal Pereira, indicated: “We selected Panama because we consider it a digital, technological and financial hub for the development of the blockchain and cryptocurrency industry in the region.”

“For the Chamber of Digital Commerce and Blockchain of Panama it is a pride to be able to lead the organization of events of this magnitude in our country, which position us as a benchmark in the region, where the implementation of blockchain generates greater relevance as Panama is a strategic point. for trade and a financial Center for Latin America”, said Rodrigo Icaza, executive director of the Chamber and member of the organizing committee.

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# IV SUMMIT OF THE ALLIANCE FOR DEVELOPMENT IN DEMOCRACY



The presidents of Costa Rica, Carlos Alvarado; Dominican Republic, Luis Abinader; and Laurentino Cortizo Cohen, of Panama, held the IV Summit of the Alliance for Development in Democracy (ADD) on Monday March 21st. The main agenda of the meeting was the strengthening of democratic institutions, freedom of expression, the promotion of inclusive economic growth, new job opportunities, environmental conservation, and irregular migration. The leaders reiterated their willingness to work decisively to promote concrete actions for the economic growth of our peoples, based on respect for human rights, sustainability, and democratic values.

President Cortizo Cohen stated that the objective of this tripartite alliance is the institutional strengthening linked to the administration of justice, the fight against corruption, the fight against organized crime, drug trafficking and money laundering and to promote the social and economic development of our countries.

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# PANAMA DELIVERED INSTRUMENTS OF RATIFICATION OF CONVENTIONS 129 AND 183 TO THE ILO



The Government of the Republic of Panama officially delivered before the International Labor Organization (ILO), the instruments of ratification of Conventions 129 and 183, on labor inspections in the agricultural area and on the protection of maternity at work, which highlights the country's commitment to comply with international labor standards, to ensure the welfare and safety of human beings and promote decent work, with equal opportunities.

The Minister of Labor and Labor Development, Doris Zapata Acevedo, stated before the Director General of the ILO, Guy Ryder, Panama's mission to maintain international standards in labor regulations and stressed that the commitment to the development of the agricultural sector is focused on growth with social welfare and decent work. She indicated that this great challenge will be accompanied by labor inspections that will identify deficiencies and

help in the process of building safer and more sustainable workplaces in Panama's agricultural work.

Upon receiving the instruments of ratification, the Director General of the ILO stated that with the ratification of these conventions Panama complies with the 4 Governance Conventions that strengthen areas such as: labor inspections, employment policy and tripartite consultation, which also represents a breakthrough in the standardization of international labor regulations.



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# BLOOMBERG NEW ECONOMY GATEWAY EVENT IN PANAMA



Bloomberg announced that the first **Bloomberg New Economy Gateway** regional convening will be held **Wednesday, May 18 and Thursday, May 19** in Panama City. The editorial program will focus on Latin America’s economic future as the region rebuilds from the devastation of Covid. In addition, **Bloomberg New Economy Gateway Latin America** will examine the potential spillover from the war in Ukraine on developing nations that are now facing new threats from food shortages, rising energy prices and broken supply chains.

**Bloomberg LP Chairman Peter Grauer said,** “Bloomberg New Economy and the flagship Forum have evolved over four years to build cooperation between not just the East and West, but North and South. The first Gateway event in Panama this May will strengthen our year-round work in support of that vision, bringing top business executives and government leaders together to focus on Latin America’s growth.”

**The President of the Republic of Panama, Laurentino Cortizo Cohen said,** “Panama is a true gateway for trade, so we are a perfect place to host this first Bloomberg New Economy event in Latin America. We are delighted to be hosting dignitaries and executives from around the world and region.”

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# EASTERN TROPICAL PACIFIC MARINE

Panama, Costa Rica, Colombia and Ecuador at the last COP26 on Climate Change, held in Scotland, committed to expand the scope of protection of the Eastern Tropical Pacific Marine Corridor (CMAR), which includes Cocos Island in Costa Rica, Coiba in Panama, Malpelo and Gorgona in Colombia and Galapagos in Ecuador. The U.S. government has shown its interest in this protection zone, which it considers of great importance for the entire American region.

In this regard, the Minister of Environment Milciades Concepción participated in a virtual meeting with the current Undersecretary of Economic Growth, Energy and Environment José W. Fernández and Mónica Medina, Undersecretary for International Affairs on Ocean, Environment and Research of the United States, in which also participated the ministers of environment and diplomatic heads of the 4 countries.

The Minister of Environment, who in April assumes the Pro Tempore presidency of CMAR, which runs from April 2022 to April 2025, during his speech said that it is necessary to review the

regulatory framework of this initiative to strengthen it and make it sustainable over time, providing it with financial independence to carry out the work for which it was established 18 years ago.

For their part, the representatives of the US Department of State indicated that they hope to work together with CMAR to ensure the ecological sustainability of this valuable region for the entire continent.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Panama, Erika Mouynes, for her part, recalled the current disposition of the Government to accompany and promote actions generated through science, such as the extension of the Cordillera de Coiba Managed Resources Area and the recent publication of the National Ocean Policy.

**The Marine Corridor of the Eastern Tropical Pacific (CMAR) and was created to conserve biodiversity and promote the sustainable use of marine and coastal resources present in the Exclusive Economic Zones of Ecuador, Costa Rica, Colombia and Panama.**

[Click here for more information](#)

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# DIPLOMACY IN ACTION



Her Excellency Yavel Francis Lanuza, Ambassador of Panama and Head of Mission to the European Union, presented her Letters of Credence to the President of the Republic of Croatia, H.E. Zoran Milanovic at the Presidential Palace, on February 23, 2022, accrediting herself as Panama's non-resident Ambassador to the Republic of Croatia.



Ambassador Francis and President Zoran Milanovic had the opportunity to exchange views on bilateral issues, including trade and investment opportunities, and explored ways to enhance bilateral relations through the reactivation of the bilateral political consultation mechanism.

# DIPLOMACY IN ACTION



The SIECA's Ambassadors in Brussels met the Secretary-General of SIECA, Francisco A. Lima Mena. They had the opportunity to know more about a wide range of topics, including progress with the establishment of a Customs Union, trade facilitation and digital platforms.



# OUR GUEST OF THE MONTH

**WE ARE PROUD** to have as guest of the month:

## GISELLE CONZALEZ



The Panamanian, **Giselle González Villarrué**, who was the general director of the Panamanian State Radio and Television System, was elected Woman of the Year by the Worldwide Audiovisual Women's Association (WAWA), an association that brings together the most prominent women in the audiovisual industry.

In a virtual event that brought together more than 100 executives of the audiovisual industry the award ceremony of Worldwide Women's Association to recognize the most outstanding woman of the year. This year's winner, Panamanian Giselle González, said: "I am surprised. My heart is going to speak. I am excited because I never work for an award, I

work for the industry and now for my country".

Giselle González is currently the Culture Minister of Panama, she is a producer, programmer, and marketing expert. She has a degree in Social Communication, a postgraduate degree in television and a master's degree in marketing. She was senior programming manager of Medcom Panama and participated in the creation of the MEDCOM GO project.

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