

CCCP, MOTIVATED BY EDUCATION - OSCAR BENAVIDES

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The important bilateral relationship between Peru and Canada has deepened in large part due to the contribution of the Canada-Peru Chamber of Commerce. The Latin American Lawyer interviewed Oscar Benavides, vice-president of the CCCP and partner at Rodrigo Elías & Medrano, about his appointment to the institution, his career and goals during his tenure.

By Giselle Estrada Ramírez

The warm bilateral relationship between Peru and Canada is a key factor for both countries because, according to official data from the Canadian government, Peru is its second largest trading partner in South and Central America, where exports of Peruvian goods have increased more than six-fold in the last 20 years, reaching a record \$1.1 billion in exports in 2021. Likewise, in that year, Canadian foreign direct investment in Peru amounted to \$12.7 billion, mainly in mining, oil and gas and financial services, industries that benefited in the aftermath of the covid-19 pandemic.

The Canada-Peru Chamber of Commerce (CCCP) has contributed to friendly communication between the two nations, so meeting the leadership behind the organisation is an enriching opportunity. Following his recent appointment as vice president, The Latin American Lawyer caught up with Oscar Benavides

Oscar, congratulations on your new position! What excites you most about this appointment and how have you prepared for the role?

Thank you very much. Actually, I have been involved in the Canada-Peru Chamber of Commerce (CCCP) for many years. This is my second term as vice-president, thanks to the kind invitation of Jorge León, president of the CCCP.

My role will not change much, as I will continue to collaborate from the Board of Directors of the CCCP with the planning and organisation of the various events and programmes that the CCCP carries out.

However, in 2023 I will lead the CCCP group that coordinates the Peruvian delegation's participation in PDAC, the most important mining fair in the world. And as you know, Peru is a mining country par excellence. The CCCP has had the privilege, for more than 10 years, of coordinating the efforts to make Peru's participation in the PDAC a success.

Could you tell us, initially, what attracted you to the legal profession, and in particular to Mining and Transactional Law?

I honestly had no interest in becoming a lawyer until I entered university. When I was about to enter university, I had to fill out a survey indicating what career I might be interested in. For some strange reason, I put Law. Once at university, I realised that if I wanted to change that selection, I had to do some paperwork, which I never did. And so, one day I turned up at the law school and got hooked on the career.

My contact with mining law began at the law firm, where I have been since I was 18 years old. As soon as I started law school, I started my internship at the law firm and I continue here with great satisfaction.

How would you describe your new role, will it have more focus on mining activities or a specific sector?

Mining accounts for about 60% of Peru's exports. It is the industry that contributes the most to the public budget through the payment of taxes. Peru is a mining country and the CCCP cannot be left out of this.

The CCCP has always been known as a "mining chamber", because a large part of our members are linked to mining activity. That is why most of CCCP's programmes have a strong link to mining. This may not change in the coming years.

However, at CCCP we are very clear that the sustainable development of Peru depends on improving education in the country. For this reason, we place great emphasis on the development of programmes (undergraduate, postgraduate, specialisations, professional internships, language courses, camps, among others) that promote education, for which we have alliances with Peruvian and Canadian universities and technical schools, which we are expanding throughout the country...

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