

## **The Spirits Alliance of Latin America and the Caribbean strengthens cooperation to combat illicit trade and promote moderation**

- *The Spirits Alliance of Latin America and the Caribbean (ABELAC) is enhancing coordination among local associations and public-sector actors, consolidating a regional voice to promote effective actions against illicit alcohol.*
- *The sector supports sustainable development and the protection of traditions that give origin to the region's spirits, while promoting moderation and responsible consumption.*

**Santo Domingo, November 26, 2025.** The Spirits Alliance of Latin America and the Caribbean (ABELAC) reaffirmed its commitment to combating illicit trade and harmful alcohol consumption during its Third Regional Summit, held in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.

The event, organized in collaboration with the Association of Wine and Spirits Importers and Representatives (RIVLAS), brought together representatives of nine national associations, including ABBD (Brazil), CIVyL (Mexico), Prolicores (Colombia), Espirituosos Chile, Ronas de Guatemala (ANFAL), TTBA (Trinidad and Tobago), the Uruguayan Liquor Manufacturers Center, and the Regional Beverage Alcohol Alliance (RBAA), along with international partners World Spirits Alliance (WSA) and the International Alliance for Responsible Drinking (IARD).

Under the theme “Elevating Our Potential Together,” the Summit emphasized the importance of strengthening a regional voice to promote effective actions against illicit markets, enhance consumer protection, and highlight the productive traditions that give origin to Latin American and Caribbean spirits.

During the event, participants reaffirmed the role of the *Originating Spirits* movement as a platform that promotes the protection of geographical indications—such as Dominican Rum—and the recognition of traditional regional spirits, supporting their identity, connection with producer communities, and contribution to sustainable development.

Among the keynote speakers was Víctor “Ito” Bisonó, Minister of Industry, Commerce and MSMEs (MICM), who noted that “one of the best examples of public-private collaboration in the country is the fight against illicit trade, a State policy pursued with firmness, responsibility and long-term vision.” He explained that since 2021, the Interinstitutional Table Against Illicit Trade has coordinated efforts between the public and private sectors to protect health, fair competition, and formal employment.

Bisonó highlighted tangible results under the leadership of President Luis Abinader:

- Zero deaths from adulterated alcohol consumption in the last four years.
- More than 155 million illicit alcohol units seized and destroyed.
- 51 judicial convictions since 2021, including a 30-year sentence for adulterated alcohol trafficking.
- International recognition: the Dominican Republic rose to 50th place in the TRACIT 2025 Index and was removed from the U.S. 301 Report after three decades, due to strong intellectual property practices.

The program also included the panel “Public-Private Partnerships to Combat Illicit Alcohol,” featuring representatives from the Vice-Ministry of Domestic Trade, the General Directorate of Customs, the

Consumer Protection Sub-Directorate, and the Dominican Rum Producers Association (ADROPRON), who agreed that coordinated action is essential to protect consumers and strengthen fair competition.

Participants also visited the National Congress, where Manuel Cabral, Executive Director of RIVLAS, emphasized “the importance of maintaining ongoing dialogue between the private sector and the State to reinforce the sector’s competitiveness and sustainability.”

Jorge Padilla, Executive Director of ABELAC, stated that “this Summit demonstrated that when Latin America and the Caribbean act together, our voice carries real weight in global conversations and contributes to the region’s sustainable development.”

According to *The Global Economic Impact of Spirits 2024*, conducted by Oxford Economics, WSA, and IWSR, the industry generates USD 36 billion in gross value added, 2.3 million jobs and USD 16 billion in tax revenues in Latin America and the Caribbean. In the Dominican Republic, the sector contributes more than USD 1.1 billion in value added, supports 52,000 jobs, and provides over USD 800 million in tax revenues, driving social and economic development beyond production.

The day concluded with the Declaration of Santo Domingo, a joint commitment by ABELAC member associations to strengthen public-private cooperation in the fight against illicit trade, promote moderation and responsible education—including the use of tools such as the standard drink developed with FISAC Latino—and revalue geographical indications and traditional spirits as engines of sustainable development in the region.

#### **About ABELAC**

*Founded in June 2023, the Spirits Alliance of Latin America and the Caribbean (ABELAC) marks a milestone in the regional spirits industry. The alliance brings together global leaders including Suntory Spirits, Brown-Forman, Diageo, Moët Hennessy, and Pernod Ricard, with the goal of enriching the conversation and promoting initiatives that foster responsible alcohol consumption.*