



Webinar Summary

The Contract for the International Carriage of Goods by Sea

*Organized by the Colombian Maritime Law Association **ACOLDEMAR**
on June 10, 2025*



ACOLDEMAR's webinar exceeded all expectations!

Introduction

The central theme — *The Contract for the International Carriage of Goods by Sea* — was examined in depth, generating a technically robust discussion enriched by insightful contributions from the audience.

Brief Overview

The international legal regime governing contracts for the carriage of goods by sea presents significant gaps and is marked by a high degree of normative fragmentation.

Under the current legal framework, there are multiple systems such as the Hague Rules, the Hague-Visby Protocol, the Hamburg Rules, and the Rotterdam Rules, the latter of which are not yet in force; unlike the air, rail, and road transport sectors,



which benefit from more uniform legal frameworks, maritime transport remains fragmented.

At the regional level, several countries have ratified different international conventions, while others have incorporated elements of these instruments into their domestic legislation.

The Rotterdam Rules seek to codify and harmonize numerous aspects left unaddressed by prior conventions. They establish uniform regulations concerning the rights and obligations of the parties involved — namely the shipper, carrier, holder, and consignee — and provide modern solutions for the use and legal recognition of electronic transport documents, thereby enhancing legal certainty for their circulation.

Among the strengths highlighted by the speakers were the Rules' balanced, pragmatic, and cooperative approach, which aims to benefit all stakeholders in maritime commerce. They also emphasized the Rules' responsiveness to the realities of transport markets and their adaptability to the digital environment.

Among the situations that were explored as possible difficulties for the ratification of the Rotterdam Rules, speakers referred to the lack of political consensus, the perception among industry actors that there is no urgent need for reform in this area, the sector's inherent fragmentation, and a wait-and-see attitude adopted by major economies.

Nonetheless, the Rotterdam Rules are widely acknowledged as having the potential to modernize and unify the legal regime governing maritime transport in today's globalized context.

ACOLDEMAR is proud to have contributed to advancing the dialogue on this critical issue for maritime law and practice in Colombia and the broader Latin American region.

Acknowledgments

We extend our special thanks to Professor Norman Martínez, Director of the IMO International Maritime Law Institute (IMLI), and were honored to announce his appointment as an Honorary Member of ACOLDEMAR during the event.



We are equally grateful to our distinguished guest speakers, José Angelo Estrella Faria and Manuel Alba, as well as our expert panelists — Diego Esteban Chami, Javier Cardoso, Joaquín de Obarrio, and Manuel Quiroga Suito — whose perspectives were instrumental in the success of the webinar.

We also commend the exemplary moderation by Javier Franco, who guided the discussion with rigor, dynamism, and balance.