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REPORT OF THE SIXTH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE INFORMATION SOCIETY IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Cartagena de Indias (Colombia), 18-20 April 2018





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A. ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

Place and date of the meeting

1. The sixth Ministerial Conference on the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean was held in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, from 18 to 20 April 2018 and was convened by the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), by virtue of resolution 691(XXXV) and in follow-up to the Mexico City Declaration, adopted at the fifth Ministerial Conference on the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean, held from 5 to 7 August 2015.

Attendance²

- 2. The Conference was attended by representatives of 23 member countries of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC): Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Plurinational State of Bolivia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uruguay.
- 3. Germany and Spain attended as observers. The following associate member of the Commission was also represented: British Virgin Islands.
- 4. Representatives of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, specialized bodies, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and the private sector, whose names appear in the list of participants, also attended.

Chair

5. The meeting was chaired by Colombia and the following countries served as Vice-Chairs: Brazil, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Mexico, Trinidad and Tobago and Uruguay.

B. AGENDA

- 6. The Conference adopted the following agenda:
 - 1. Election of officers
 - 2. Adoption of the agenda
 - 3. Opening statement and panel discussions

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See Report of the fifth Ministerial Conference on the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean (Mexico City, 5-7 August 2015) (LC/L.4106).

² See annex 2.

- 4. Keynote presentations
- 5. Other matters
- 6. Consideration and adoption of the proposed digital agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean (eLAC2020) and the draft Cartagena de Indias Declaration

C. SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

Opening session

- 7. At the opening session, statements were made by Mario Cimoli, Deputy Executive Secretary a. i. of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC); Yolanda Martínez, Coordinator of the National Digital Strategy of Mexico; and David Luna, Minister of Information and Communications Technologies of Colombia.
- 8. The Deputy Executive Secretary a.i. of ECLAC underscored the importance of information and communications technologies (ICTs) for development and regional integration in Latin America and the Caribbean. He said that ECLAC had first addressed the issue of inclusion; then it had focused on the digital market, the Internet of things and cloud computing, after recognizing the significant impact of ICTs on people's lives. Those technologies entailed a profound change in production methods, daily life, security and the job market, among other areas. He considered it a great achievement that representatives of 23 Latin American and Caribbean countries were participating in the Conference and underscored the need to promote the concept that those technologies were closely linked to development.
- 9. The Coordinator of the National Digital Strategy of Mexico said that ICTs were indispensable to achieving the 2030 Agenda and closing the digital divide in the region. Latin America and the Caribbean faced challenges of inequality and the Agenda was a significant frame of reference to overcome them. She said that 17 of the region's countries had a digital agenda. Connectivity had increased and 84% of the region's population was expected to have access to 4G networks by 2020. In Mexico, Internet access was recognized as a constitutional right. Emerging technologies were already a reality and the challenge was incorporating them into the country's digital transformation. People were the most important element of the digital agenda. She said that it had been a privilege for Mexico to serve as Chair of the follow-up mechanism of the Digital Agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean over the previous three years.
- 10. The Minister of Information and Communications Technologies of Colombia welcomed participants to the sixth Ministerial Conference on behalf of the President and people of Colombia, and thanked ECLAC for its support, as well as Mexico for the work done within the framework of the follow-up mechanism over the previous three years and for the support provided to Colombia for the organization of the Conference. He said that the purpose of the Conference was to share opinions, contribute to the implementation of the digital agenda and renew the regional partnership. Latin America and the Caribbean were on the right track, but had to continue the efforts being made in that regard. He also said that emerging technologies would increase productivity and development.

Opening statement and panel discussions (agenda item 3)

- 11. The opening presentation was given by Mario Cimoli, Deputy Executive Secretary a. i. of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).
- 12. The Deputy Executive Secretary a.i. of ECLAC presented the document *Data, algorithms and policies: redefining the digital world* and said that the theme was cross-cutting and crucial as it would change labour markets, business models and services, among other factors. In a world characterized by uncertainty, a global transformation was under way that encompassed the exchange of goods, data and knowledge, as well as national and multilateral regulation, among other aspects. That transformation was also a source of tensions, such as the weak momentum of the global economy, the high level of unemployment in Europe, wage stagnation and greater inequality, as well as increasing migratory flows. With respect to the third generation of digital agendas, he emphasized the need for a transition from the consumer Internet to the industrial Internet through a regional digital market and the use of advanced technologies, such as the Internet of things, blockchains and artificial intelligence. Moreover, while business models in the United States and Europe had changed and were more flexible and intangible, business activity showed that there was no clear division between sectors. In the mining industry, for example, data and artificial intelligence, as well as infrastructure, were fundamental. Complementarity, scalability and integration were needed at the regional level.

Panel 1: Digital agendas as a mechanism for integration and sustainability

- 13. Panel 1 was moderated by Mario Cimoli, Deputy Executive Secretary a.i. of ECLAC, and panellists included Juan Sebastián Rozo, General Vice-Minister of Information and Communications Technologies of Colombia; Carolina Vázquez, Minister of Science, Technology and Telecommunications of Costa Rica; José Antonio Marcondes de Carvalho, Vice-Minister of Environmental, Energy, Science and Technology Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brazil; Diego Pastorín, Director General of the Office of the President of Uruguay; Catherine Hughes, Minister of Public Telecommunications of Guyana; and María Ines Baqué, Secretary of Digital Government and Innovation of the Ministry of Modernization of Argentina.
- 14. With respect to digital agendas, the integration and consistency of public and structural policies were fundamental. Access to ICTs had driven democratization in a world characterized by dramatic changes. Technologies should not be an end in themselves, but instead be used to create wealth and well-being, improving the quality of life and increasing interaction with people. To that end, each country needed a vision of governance, the legitimacy of government actions and transparency. In that process, strict criteria had to be fulfilled with respect to follow-up and coordination among the different ministries, with an emphasis on interoperability. The penetration of digital technology should not be limited to the most populated areas. While continuing to bear in mind the specificities of each country, efforts should aim for the establishment of regional infrastructure and greater regulatory compatibility to favour sectors such as e-commerce in the region.

Panel 2: Digital economy and innovation

15. Panel 2 was moderated by Nicolás Grosman, Leader for Latin America at McKinsey Global Institute (MGI), and panellists included Fabricio Gómez Mazara, Member of the Board of Directors of the Dominican Institute of Telecommunications (INDOTEL); Irvin A. Halman, General Administrator of the National Authority for Government Innovation of Panama; Pedro Less, Director of Public Policy and Government Affairs for Latin America at Google; Wilson Peres, Senior Economic Affairs Officer of

ECLAC; Annalisa Primi, Head of Structural Policies and Innovation of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Centre; and José Juan Haro, Director of Regulation and Wholesale Business for Latin America of Telefónica.

As a result of the digital revolution, the user occupied a central role and felt empowered. But how was the worker affected? The response was that the phenomenon of digitization was perceived in different ways: in Europe, with pessimism, and in the United States and the emerging economies of Asia, with optimism. The groups with the least training were the most exposed to job losses. Although ICTs had an equalizing effect, connectivity had to increase given that the greatest risk was being left behind. Digitization alone would not reduce inequality, and efforts were needed on other fronts, such as technological innovation, research and development and planning for the future. Regulation in Latin America should no longer focus on the past, and content was even more important than infrastructure. Regulations had to be harmonized, taking into account the opinions of stakeholders and promoting legal certainty. Lastly, digital technology was important but there were other factors to consider, for example, the production structure was not diversified enough to achieve development.

Panel 3: Emerging technologies for productivity and digital transformation of governments

- 17. Panel 3 was moderated by Martin Hilbert, Associate Professor at the University of California, Davis, and panellists included Thiago Camargo Lopes, Secretary of Digital Policies of the Ministry of Science, Technology, Innovation and Communications of Brazil; Gunther Grathwohl, Counselor of the Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs and Energy of Germany; Juan Llanos, Senior executive and expert in blockchains; Andrea Escobedo Lastiri, Government and Regulatory Affairs Senior Executive at IBM Mexico; and Pedro Campo, IoT Ecosystem Developer at WND Group.
- 18. The region faced great challenges, but was well prepared to tackle them. ICTs had undergone three phases: first, communication between people; second, data (with big data); and third, artificial intelligence. The transition from an information society to a knowledge society had occurred. It was important to foster the digital economy, artificial intelligence, blockchains and Industry 4.0, especially with respect to SMEs. The technologies of the future were already a reality. The Internet of things facilitated more efficient and affordable services with greater scalability. In addition, the global scale of industrial production made interoperability imperative. Blockchain technology was new and innovative, and could establish trust and collaboration among parties. It comprised open and closed blockchains. Quantum computing was still in the development stage, but with time, it would help to address difficult problems. Artificial intelligence would strengthen the relationships between people as well as the relationship between people and machines. A sound and flexible regulatory approach was needed to avoid slowing down innovation.

Panel 4: Culture and digital skills

19. Panel 4 was moderated by Daniel Korn, Director of Corporate Affairs at Microsoft Latin America, and panellists included Alberto Jácome Espinosa, Vice-Minister of Information and Communications Technologies of Ecuador; Cristina Cárdenas, General Coordinator of @PRENDE.MX; Grover Pinto, Developer of Computer Systems at the Electronic Government and Information and Communications Technologies Agency (AGETIC) of the Plurinational State of Bolivia; Mike Ribble, Director of technology at the Manhattan Ogden Public Schools; Sebastián Siseles, Director of the International division at Freelancer; and Axel Leblois, President and Executive Director of G3ict.

20. New technologies, particularly cloud computing, could encourage social inclusion and development, as it provided people and communities with access and promoted fairness. It also helped persons with disabilities. Some countries faced difficulties in finding workers with the necessary skills. As a result, governments needed to play an active role in ensuring that people acquired those skills. Digital education plans had been put in place to promote emerging technologies and personal data protection. Arts and sciences were interconnected and digital citizenship entailed people's use of technology as a tool. Strengthening connectivity and infrastructure was also fundamental. Lastly, technologies should be accessible to all and Internet access should be a right.

Panel 5: Regional digital market

- 21. Panel 5 was moderated by Piero Guasta, Adviser of the General Directorate for International Economic Affairs (DIRECON) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Chile, and panellists included César Vilchez, Undersecretary of Digital Technologies, Secretariat of Digital Government, Presidency of the Council of Ministers of Peru; Nicolás Evers, Planning and Development Manager, National Telecommunications Commission (CONATEL) of Paraguay; Carolina Limbatto, Senior Analyst, Cullen International, Consultant with CAF-Development Bank of Latin America; Bernadette Lewis, Secretary General of the Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU); and Pablo Bello, Executive Director of the Inter-American Association of Telecommunications Operators (ASIET).
- 22. At that critical point in time for social and economic development in Latin America and the Caribbean, the region had to close the economic gap deriving from insufficient productivity by promoting digitization and automation, especially in SMEs. An ambitious agenda that encouraged connectivity had to be adopted, to facilitate trade in services, establish consumers' trust in digital commerce and strengthen data privacy. It would be a good idea to adopt the European standard of data protection, which was already widespread across the globe. There was a need for collaboration, regulatory harmonization and participation of all stakeholders, particularly the academic sector and telecommunications companies. Previously, government efforts were fragmented and carried out ministry by ministry, but now a global, inclusive and citizen-centred approach was required.

Panel 6: Regulatory challenges of the digital ecosystem

- 23. Panel 6 was moderated by Germán Darío Arias, Commissioner of the Communication Regulation Commission (CRC) of Colombia, and panellists included Arturo Robles, Commissioner of the Federal Telecommunications Institute of Mexico; Robert Pepper, Head of Global Connectivity and Technology Policy at Facebook; Sonia Agnese, Senior Analyst at Ovum; Gonzalo Navarro, Executive Director of the Latin American Internet Association (ALAI); Sebastián Cabello, Head of Latin America at GSMA; Sergio Scarabino, Area Chief at the International Telecommunication Union (ITU); and Christian O'Flaherty, Senior Development Manager for Latin America and the Caribbean of the Internet Society (ISOC).
- 24. Connecting the 50% of the population that did not already have access to the Internet was a challenge. That would require the development of Wi-Fi, owing to its large scale. The standardization and harmonization of spectrum use would also be very beneficial. Competition reduced costs and education conveyed the value of being connected to the Internet. Regulation in the digital economy would have to be cross-cutting and multisectoral, which called for coordination at the highest level to harmonize public policies. It was important to establish clear rules and principles. For example, in social networks, the interests of users should take precedence over those of businesses with respect to personal data collection.

Keynote presentations (agenda item 4)

- 25. Six keynote presentations were given during the conference, by David Luna, Minister of Information and Communications Technologies of Colombia; Alejandro Olaya Dávila, Director General of the Administrative Department of Science, Technology and Innovation of Colombia (COLCIENCIAS); David Mata, Founder and Chief Investment Officer of Block Bits Capital and Chief Product Officer of Prizm Labs; Raúl Katz, President of Telecom Advisory Services LLC; Greg Wyler, Founder of OneWeb; Misha Dohler, Professor of Wireless Communications at King's College London; and Robert Pepper, Head of Global Connectivity and Technology Policy at Facebook.
- 26. The presentations focused on the analysis of the disruptive effects of digital technologies and how those were affecting organizations' behaviour at an unprecedented rate, touching all sectors of the economy and society, and bringing about changes in production systems, business models and governance.
- 27. The Minister of Information and Communications Technologies of Colombia said that the sixth Ministerial Conference was fundamental for sharing opinions and seeing how countries were working together to implement the digital agenda. In Colombia there was not just government policy but also State policy relating to infrastructure and citizen participation to ensure that technologies were used in education, employment, regions and government transformation. Digital penetration was high in the major cities, but not outside them. The fact that Colombia was a leader in open transactions stemmed largely from the use of new technologies. New technologies were also valuable enablers with respect to education and persons with disabilities. Challenges included connectivity, productivity and e-commerce, which required greater consumer trust, as well as emerging technologies such as blockchains and artificial intelligence. Those challenges had to be faced together.
- 28. The Director General of the Administrative Department of Science, Technology and Innovation of Colombia (COLCIENCIAS) said that his department was responsible for State policy relating to technological development, research, innovation and financing of scientific projects. Despite Colombia's rich biodiversity (forests made up 53% of the total land surface), almost one third of the territory was inaccessible because of the conflict in that country. A programme called Colombia Bio had been created to rediscover biodiversity and scientific expeditions had begun, including in maritime areas. ICTs had been used to help identify new species, as well as endemic species and others subject to conservation measures. The biodiversity register was open to the public and up to that point had almost five million biological data records. He concluded by saying that information technologies played a substantial role in biological conservation.
- 29. The Founder and Chief Investment Officer of Block Bits Capital and Chief Product Officer of Prizm Labs described blockchains as a disruptive technology that could establish trust among its users and incorporate transparency into the process. With that encryption-based technology, data could not be erased once it had been incorporated into what would be the equivalent of a ledger. Cryptocurrencies had become an investment vehicle; the most famous one was bitcoin. Nonetheless, given their high stock market volatility and the fact that banks had been reluctant to accept them owing to regulatory issues, they were not widespread investment assets, despite high valuations. He added that Latin America and the Caribbean did not yet play a significant role in computer programme development, but with blockchains —as was often the case with disruptive technologies— the usual rules no longer applied and any country could participate and play an important role.
- 30. The Founder of OneWeb said that the goal was to close the digital divide, and especially to provide rural populations with affordable digital access. He said that the lack of digital access limited economic opportunities as well as opportunities for civic participation. He spoke of the work done by his company in

Rwanda to expand digital access, which had improved the lives of the population considerably. Around 54% of the global population still had no digital access and that gap had to be narrowed. He added that satellite technology had helped to expand access, and that the cost was falling. The goal for 2022 was connectivity for all schools across the world and availability of the necessary devices for all students and teachers. The inhabitants of rural communities would thus be empowered. With respect to energy, he spoke of the importance of solar panels that could be installed easily. The aim was connectivity for all by 2027. To face disasters such as hurricanes, the company was building a system that could restore communications and connectivity immediately.

- 31. The President of Telecom Advisory Services LLC spoke of the management of production digitization, on the basis of an observatory project developed in Colombia. He underscored the need for Latin America to move from the digitization of consumption to the digitization of production. The latter was fundamental to an increase in multifactor productivity in the context of a widening gap between the countries of the region and OECD countries. The faster the pace of production digitization, the stronger the productivity and economic growth. He said that the first wave of digitization had decentralized production chains. The second wave, which occurred with the Internet, had redefined production processes. The third wave comprised advanced technologies (artificial intelligence and robotics) that reshaped companies. Nonetheless, the adoption of new technologies did not always lead to a significant increase in productivity, meaning that a gap was created. Thus, special attention had to be paid to SMEs. Human capital formation and private sector participation were fundamental to the digital transformation.
- 32. The Professor of Wireless Communications at King's College London, referring to the Internet, said that first all computers had been connected, then all mobile telephones, and then the Internet of things had been created. Questions were raised about what the future would bring. The answer was a new Internet that could transmit professional knowledge and physical skills to different parts of the world; it was known as Industry 4.0. However, the latter empowered machines, whereas the goal was to empower people. He gave an example of patients in rural areas of China —where there was a high incidence of colon cancer—being treated by doctors in Beijing, thanks to technology. With respect to big data, emphasis had to be shifted from data to action. He added that artificial intelligence lacked the ability to imagine or create, and that it should be used to humanize work. He recommended a bold approach for growth in the software sector, which was open to all countries. Innovation was needed on the regulatory front. With respect to education, he described the concept of the circular knowledge economy, in which older persons taught young people and young people taught older persons. Lastly, he underscored the need to encourage creativity and empathy.
- 33. The Head of Global Connectivity and Technology Policy at Facebook referred to a study carried out with *The Economist* on the Inclusive Internet Index, including 86 countries and 54 indicators. Those indicators were grouped into four categories: availability, affordability, readiness and relevance. The aim was for all people to be connected, and it was noted that connectivity had increased considerably and that the gap had been reduced between 2G and 4G, which was necessary for mobile wireless Internet. Unfortunately, there was still an overall gender gap in Internet access. The value of the Internet was recognized, but there were concerns about data privacy and security. In the region, 42% of households were connected to the Internet. In Argentina, there was a high level of Internet access and the gap was in favour of women, as was the case in some other countries. The level of development of local or relevant content varied considerably from one country to the next. With respect to 4G technology, the product was connectivity and the distance no longer mattered. He underscored the importance of stronger competition and connectivity. He also stressed the need for trust and reasonable regulations focused on closing the gap.

Consideration and adoption of the proposed digital agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean (eLAC2020) and of the draft Cartagena de Indias Declaration (agenda item 6)

34. The countries participating in the sixth Ministerial Conference on the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean, in plenary session, adopted the Digital Agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean (eLAC2020),³ the text of which is reproduced in annex 1 of this report.

Closing session

- 35. At the closing session, statements were made by David Luna, Minister of Information and Communications Technologies of Colombia; Mario Cimoli, Deputy Executive Secretary a.i. of ECLAC and Patricia Llombart, Ambassador and Head of the Delegation of the European Union.
- 36. The Minister of Information and Communications Technologies of Colombia thanked Mexico for its work within the framework of the follow-up mechanism. He stressed that ICTs played an important role in solving structural problems that hampered the region, such as corruption and inequity. He also underscored the importance of emerging technologies in terms of integration, for example in the case of persons with disabilities. In concluding, he expressed his firm support for net neutrality and personal data protection.
- 37. The Deputy Executive Secretary a.i. of ECLAC said that the Conference had been very productive, and that the participation of representatives from 23 Latin American and Caribbean countries showed the importance of the theme in the region. He also underscored the innovative nature of the meeting, which had highlighted the spirit of regional integration. It was motivated by digital technologies, which represented a unique opportunity for the countries of the region. Lastly, he said that ECLAC was continuing its steadfast efforts to achieve development, equality and integration.
- The Ambassador and Head of the Delegation of the European Union in Colombia said that the 38. European Union had been supporting and participating in the Ministerial Conferences on the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean because it considered them fundamental to cooperation in that field. It was the right time to promote a stronger partnership between the European Union and the Latin American and Caribbean region in a new trade, economic and geopolitical environment characterized by uncertainty and changing alliances. The single digital market of the European Union could help to shape the digital market in Latin America if the region decided to adopt a similar vision and strategy. She said that digital technology was not only a technical issue but also politically important, and that a favourable policy environment was needed. The European Union was leading the charge in areas such as net neutrality, data protection regulation and the right to be forgotten. Since 2015, the concept of net neutrality had incorporated the criterion of non-discriminatory treatment. In those areas, European laws were considered examples of good practice. She added that the European Union collaborated with Latin America on a number of research and connectivity projects, and firmly supported the region's efforts to create its own regional digital market. The European Union had provided financial support as well as assistance in research and development for projects carried out within the framework of Horizon 2020. It supported the region's efforts to create its own regional market through eLAC2020. In closing, she recalled the common agreement on the need to manage digital transformations to the benefit of citizens.

³ LC/CMSI.6/5.

Annex 1

CARTAGENA DE INDIAS DECLARATION

We, the representatives of the Latin American and Caribbean countries meeting at the Sixth Ministerial Conference on the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean, in Cartagena de Indias (Colombia), from 18 to 20 April 2018,

Recalling resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, by virtue of which the United Nations General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and their targets,

Reiterating the principles and objectives agreed upon at the World Summit on the Information Society, with a view to building an inclusive information society and promoting the potential of knowledge and information and communication technologies in the service of sustainable development,

Considering that, by virtue of General Assembly resolution 70/125 of 16 December 2015, on the overall review of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, the international community further reaffirmed its commitment to the outcomes of the Summit and the need for governments, the private sector, civil society, international organizations, the technical and academic communities and all other relevant stakeholders to continue to work together to implement the World Summit on the Information Society vision beyond 2015,

Taking into account the provisions of paragraph 68 of General Assembly resolution 70/125, in which the regional commissions of the United Nations are invited to continue their work in the implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society action lines and to contribute to reviews thereof,

Recalling the Bávaro Declaration, adopted in the Dominican Republic in January 2003; the Rio de Janeiro Commitment and Plan of Action for the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean (eLAC2007), adopted in Brazil in June 2005; the San Salvador Commitment and Plan of Action for the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean (eLAC2010), adopted in San Salvador in February 2008; the Lima Declaration and the Plan of Action for the Information and Knowledge Society in Latin America and the Caribbean (eLAC2015), adopted in Peru in November 2010; the Montevideo Declaration and the Plan of Work 2013-2015 for the implementation of eLAC2015, adopted in Uruguay in April 2013; and the Mexico City Declaration and the Digital Agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean (eLAC2018), adopted in Mexico in August 2015,

Recalling also resolution 708(XXXVI) adopted by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean at its thirty-sixth session, held in Mexico City in June 2016, which called upon all member States of the Commission to participate in the Sixth Ministerial Conference on the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean,

Recalling further that the development of a regional digital market could generate opportunities for innovation, jobs and growth, while stimulating investment, productivity and competitiveness,

Aware of the important role the Digital Agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean has played in promoting regional cooperation and integration in digital matters, while facilitating dialogue, experience-sharing, research, capacity-building and measurement,

Recognizing that the democratization of access to digital technologies is instrumental to the realization of the universal right to information and knowledge,

Recognizing also the work and commitment of the follow-up mechanism for the Digital Agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean which, since its formal establishment in 2008, has made significant contributions to the process, bringing to bear the vision of civil society, the private sector, the technical community and international agencies, making it necessary to continue the process of including multistakeholders and ensure their participation both in the Presiding Officers and the working groups and in the processes of the ministerial conferences,

Recognizing further that resilient infrastructure, particularly the deployment of broadband and the technologies necessary for Internet development, still forms the basis for digitization and innovation,

Recognizing also that firms' adoption of digital technologies and the promotion of entrepreneurship ecosystems enable the development of new processes, products and business models, with positive impacts in terms of promoting structural and technological change,

Recognizing further that digital technologies help to provide transparency by facilitating access to public information, combating corruption, and supporting citizen surveillance and accountability,

Observing that expectations and social demands require more transparent, accessible and innovative policies on digital government that promote value creation for citizens and businesses,

Recognizing the need to strengthen policies on culture, inclusion, development and the measurement of digital skills in order to ensure that the opportunities presented by digital technologies may be enjoyed by society as a whole,

Recognizing also the need to promote digital policies that leverage emerging technologies and the technological revolution under way to enhance the impact of these policies on the economy and well-being,

Recognizing further the importance of promoting a regional digital market strategy to benefit Latin American and Caribbean digital integration and expand the digital economy, drawing on the cultural and linguistic similarities in the region,

Reaffirming the importance of promoting governance of the information society to strengthen a global culture of trust in the Internet by fostering cybersecurity, harmonization and regulatory and institutional coherence, and a comprehensive gender perspective in digital policies,

Repudiating the unauthorized collection and improper and/or unauthorized use of personal data by any public or private entity, and fostering suitable mechanisms for ensuring the transparent treatment of personal data,

Agreeing to strengthen mechanisms of regional cooperation to provide the highest standards of information security and personal data protection where those data are managed by third parties, and recognizing the importance of mechanisms to strengthen access to public information and efforts to combat corruption,

We resolve to

- 1. Adopt the Digital Agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean (eLAC2020);
- 2. *Endorse* the composition of the Presiding Officers as follows: Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Mexico, Trinidad and Tobago and Uruguay;
- 3. Foster the digital ecosystem and the potential of the Internet to promote the sustainable development of the region by driving the digital economy, pursuing stakeholder engagement in an Internet governance that protects privacy, promoting access to public information, fostering information security, promoting a culture of trust in the use of digital media, and actively combating cybercrime, among other activities, and promoting the legal certainty that private sector users and governments require;
- 4. Reiterate the rejection expressed by the governments of Latin America and the Caribbean in the Montevideo Declaration of 2013, of any attempt to appropriate, without the consent of the respective countries of the region, geographical denominations in any language, generic top-level domain (gTLD) names referring to geographical areas, country names or historical, cultural or natural features, two- or three-letter country codes, or denominations of origin, which should be preserved as part of the heritage and cultural identity of the countries of the region, and urge the governments of the region to participate actively in multisectoral forums established for these purposes;
- 5. *Recognize* the work of other regional and international bodies and agencies in the area of policies on digital technologies and invite them to play an active part in the implementation of the Digital Agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean (eLAC2020), fostering coordination of efforts;
- 6. Commend Mexico on the leadership shown during its term as Chair of the follow-up mechanism for the digital agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean and on its role in the analysis of the advisability and feasibility of moving towards a regional digital market, in follow-up to the agreements contained in the Mexico City Declaration;
- 7. Acknowledge the work carried out by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean in its role as technical secretariat of Digital Agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean and the vital importance of those efforts for the continuity of the process;
- 8. *Thank* the people and the Government of Colombia for the outstanding organization of the Sixth Ministerial Conference on the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean;
- 9. *Also thank* the Government of Ecuador for its kind offer to host the Preparatory Meeting for the Seventh Ministerial Conference on the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean in 2019;
- 10. Further thank the Government of Brazil for its kind offer to provide continuity to the process of the Digital Agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean by hosting the Seventh Ministerial Conference on the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean in 2020.

Annex 2

DIGITAL AGENDA FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (eLAC2020)

A. BACKGROUND

- 1. In September 2015, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including its 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets. The Agenda notes that we are facing a time of immense opportunity and that the spread of information and communications technology (ICTs) and global interconnectedness has great potential to accelerate human progress, to bridge the digital divide and to develop knowledge societies. It also recognizes the importance of reinvigorating partnerships between governments, the private sector, civil society, the United Nations system and other actors in mobilizing the resources available for the implementation of the new Agenda and its Goals.
- 2. In December 2015, in the framework of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the overall review of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, the international community further reaffirmed its commitment to the Geneva Declaration of Principles, the Geneva Plan of Action and its action lines, the Tunis Commitment and the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, and recognized the need for governments, the private sector, civil society, international organizations, the technical and academic communities and all other relevant stakeholders to continue to work together to implement the World Summit on the Information Society vision beyond 2015.² The international community also invited the regional commissions to continue their work in the implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society action lines and their contribution to the reviews thereof, including through regional reviews.
- 3. The countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, gathered 15 years ago at the Regional Preparatory Ministerial Conference of Latin America and the Caribbean for the World Summit on the Information Society, held at Bávaro (Dominican Republic) in 2003, with the collaboration of ECLAC, launched a process of political dialogue that led to the adoption of the Plan of Action on the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean (eLAC2007) in 2005 in Rio de Janeiro; the Plan of Action eLAC 2010, in 2008 in San Salvador; the Plan of Action eLAC2015, in 2010 in Lima; the Plan of work 2013-2015 for the implementation of the Plan of Action for the information and knowledge society in Latin America, adopted in Montevideo in 2013, and the Digital Agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean (eLAC 2018) adopted in Mexico City in 2015.
- 4. In the Mexico City Declaration, adopted at the fifth Ministerial Conference on the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean, the countries approved the Digital Agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean (eLAC2018) and agreed to hold the Sixth Ministerial Conference on the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean in Colombia in 2018, in order to give continuity to this forum for cooperation, renew their commitment to a vision beyond 2018 and incorporate the emerging challenges of the digital revolution and its impact on public policy and sustainable development into the debate.

General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015.

² General Assembly resolution 70/125 of 16 December 2015.

- 5. During the Preparatory meeting for the Sixth Ministerial Conference on the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Santiago from 7 to 9 August 2017, the participating countries agreed on a preliminary version of the digital agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean (eLAC2020).
- 6. The Digital Agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean (eLAC2020) is intended to be a tool for catalysing the regional cooperation efforts on digital matters. The following is the digital agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean (eLAC2020), which includes 7 areas of action and 30 goals.

B. AREAS OF ACTION AND OBJECTIVES

1. Digital infrastructure

- Foster the development and implementation of broadband plans with concrete and measurable targets for the deployment of high-capacity networks, the efficient management of the spectrum for achieving mass access to communications services for the benefit of citizens, and promotion of the investment needed to provide these services under affordable and good-quality conditions, with particular emphasis on remote, rural and semi-urban areas, as well as other underserved areas.
- Goal 2: Promote policies and incentives for the deployment and operation of infrastructure and technologies needed for the development of the Internet, especially Internet exchange points (IXPs) and IPv6 protocols.
- Goal 3: Promote the use of protocols and digital technologies and the deployment of resilient infrastructure that support impact prevention, mitigation and rapid recovery in the case of disasters and in relation to the effects of climate change.

2. Digital transformation and the digital economy

- Goal 4: Encourage the use of digital technologies in businesses, with a special focus on MSMEs and promote digital transformation in different aspects of the economy.
- Goal 5: Promote regional entrepreneurship ecosystems and public and private action aimed at promoting data-based innovation and accelerating technology-based enterprises.
- Goal 6: Promote the development of venture capital funds at the regional level, with the support of traditional and non-traditional financial institutions, in order to offer resources to technology-based enterprises.
- Goal 7: Promote telework in the countries of the region through the sharing of good practices, the development and/or strengthening of regulatory frameworks, the development of digital skills and their monitoring and evaluation.

3. Regional digital market

Goal 8: Promote a regional digital market strategy to increase trade, expand the digital economy and strengthen the competitiveness of Latin America and the Caribbean, through incentives, regulatory coherence, integration of digital infrastructure, the development of digital platforms of goods, services and content, and cross-border data flows.

Goal 9: Foster measures for regional trade facilitation through the use of digital technologies, institutional coordination and interoperability among different national foreign trade systems.

4. Digital government

- Goal 10: Establish and promote digital services standards that facilitate and expedite government services and support multiaccess channels, favouring interoperablility for digital services in the region, through the development of infrastructure, platforms, architectures, standards and integrated systems.
- Goal 11: Promote the use of reusable components and open solutions in digital government for the design of public services.
- Goal 12: Foster the adoption of a regional strategy of standards for digital identity management and interoperability, advanced electronic signature, e-apostille and electronic medical records that support innovations in the public and private sectors, preserving information privacy and strengthening security and trust in online transactions.
- Goal 13: Promote open government initiatives through the use of digital platforms to facilitate data openness and reuse, collaboration, citizen participation, social innovation, public transparency and accountability.
- Goal 14: Promote the use of digital systems for government procurement, contracting for services and public works to ensure transparency, citizen surveillance and effective accountability.

5. Culture, inclusion and digital skills

- Goal 15: Promote the development and incorporation of digital skills and computational thinking in teaching and learning by updating curricular content in line with the capacities that will be demanded by the activities of the future.
- Goal 16: Strengthen advanced digital, technical and professional skills, in addition to providing incentives for companies and governments to train workers continuously and improve productivity and efficiency.
- Goal 17: Promote the production, supply and use of digital contents, goods and services as a necessary condition for the inclusion of persons with disabilities and older persons in the information society, especially for the purposes of work, education, access to justice and public services, and smart cities.

- Goal 18: Massively expand access to digital services and content production and supply with a view to achieving universal access, ensuring the inclusion of the entire population and stimulating content production, supply and use in indigenous and native languages.
- Goal 19: Promote a digital culture that gives citizens incentives to build up digital skills and competencies to make innovative, safe and responsible use of ICTs, with a view to a peaceful online coexistence.

6. Emerging technologies for sustainable development

- **Goal 20:** Promote the design of public policies supported by evidence-based innovation and aligned with national and regional priorities.
- Goal 21: Promote the convergent use of different types of emerging technologies in the formulation and implementation of public policies and the design of digital services.
- Goal 22: Promote digital financial services as a priority for developing inclusive financial systems, through innovation, an enabling regulatory framework, the strengthening of digital skills, responsible financial management, security and the strengthening of identification systems.

7. Governance for the information society

- Goal 23: Promote an integrated gender equality perspective in public policies on digital development, ensuring full ICT access and use for women and girls, and advancing their participation and leadership in public and private decision-making spaces.
- Goal 24: Prevent and combat cybercrime through digital security strategies and public policies, the establishment and/or development of legislation and regulatory frameworks, capacity-building, and local, regional and international coordination between computer security incident response teams.
- Goal 25: Promote the participation of Latin American and Caribbean countries in Internet governance processes, strengthening regional mechanisms, strengthening capacities and fostering synergies, and encouraging the development of forums for dialogue and multi-stakeholder national mechanisms.
- Goal 26: Strengthen the institutional structure of the entities responsible for designing, implementing, following up and giving continuity to public policies for digital transformation and national digital agendas, and foster the coordination and participation of different stakeholders in the development of these policies.
- Goal 27: Promote normative coherence and regional coordination for policy effectiveness by adopting open standards and technological neutrality, and the participation and co-responsibility of different actors in the digital ecosystem.

Goal 28: Coordinate actions aimed at guaranteeing privacy and personal data protection, the protection of consumers online, access to public information and freedom of expression in the digital environment, avoiding improper and unauthorized use of data and strengthening mechanisms of collaboration between the competent authorities in the region.

Goal 29: Improve the measurement of digital transformation and the digital economy by strengthening data collection for official statistics, including by using advanced technologies and by strengthening and harmonizing common frameworks of indicators and monitoring them through information society observatories.

Goal 30: Strengthen regional cooperation as an essential mechanism for tapping the opportunities and tackling the challenges of the region with regard to the information society.

C. PROGRAMME OF REGIONAL COOPERATION ACTIVITIES

7. The Presiding Officers will have a mandate to prepare a proposal for a programme of regional cooperation activities on the digital agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean for the period 2018-2020, with the aim of helping to achieve the goals set out in the digital agenda and developing cooperation activities. This proposal, including its detailed description, timeframes and parties responsible, will be prepared within three months of the adoption of the digital agenda.

Annex 3

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