

**Connect Americas Summit
Panamá City, Panama
17-19 July 2012
Closing Remarks
Thursday 19 July 2012**

Haiti (Republic of)

His Excellency, Dr. Hamadoun TOURE, Secretary General of the ITU,
Honorable Ministers,
Distinguished Heads of Delegations and Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am particularly honored to have the opportunity to make this policy statement on our Broadband vision on behalf of the Government of Haiti in the occasion of this important 'Connect Americas' Summit; and also delighted to be here in Panama, at the kind invitation of the People and the Government, where I really feel at home.

The Government of Haiti understands that the implementation of a national backbone network is essential for strong and sustainable economic growth, investment, social inclusion and public sector transformation.

For the benefit of the country, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) is cooperating with us and commissioned LS Cable & System Ltd to assess the current situation of the provision of broadband telecommunications services in Haiti, and provide a solution to build an advanced infrastructure. The IDB and the Haitian Regulatory Agency (CONATEL) are working closely to develop the plans to build an independent national broadband network through the implementation of a Public-Private Initiative, involving all stakeholders in Haiti.

The plan is to build a national broadband network using the most advanced telecommunications Infrastructure and this network will be a national wholesale-only, open-access data network. All Haitian telecom operators will have access to a high-capacity fiber optic backbone for the transmission and interconnection of broadband traffic throughout Haiti, and access to the international market through existing and a new independent and dedicated Subsea fiber Optic.

We are living today with this irreversible truth: broadband internet access is the main channel through which financial, social, cultural and economic activities take place. For Haiti to succeed, it requires the perfect marriage of information and communication technologies (ICT) and its economy. Therefore, we believe it is the right time for Haiti to fully embrace technologies as an economic engine and vehicle to compete and succeed in today's globalized environment.

The new government understands that the improvement of the Haitian communications

infrastructure will have a positive impact on the business climate, the private sector growth, the development of an economically strong middle class, the provision of education, and on the Government's ability to provide services to all its citizens. Also, Haitian consumers should have access to ICT services throughout the country, at the highest quality and lowest cost.

The business plan development, with focus on an integrated network designed in order to provide maximum benefit to the operators and allow for the greatest coverage of the population, is well on its way. We expect to have the financial part of this business plan ready by fall of this year with investment and operations structures for both the access network and the backbone.

The government goal is to "Give the younger generation the necessary tools to fulfill their dreams of participating in the global economy, to use ICTs to educate, to create good jobs and to generate prosperity for Haiti".

This new broadband infrastructure will provide the basis to deliver all the e-services and e-applications and the Haitian People with the tools to participate effectively in the information society and to build a Great Nation really inclusive.

Thank you for your attention