

## Guatemala Declaration

### Boosting Digital Transformation in Latin America

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU), a specialized agency of the United Nations for Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), and the Regional Telecommunications Technical Commission (COMTELCA), a specialized agency of the Central American Integration System (SICA),

#### TAKING INTO ACCOUNT:

That ITU is a specialized agency of the United Nations founded in 1865 to facilitate international connectivity in communications networks, allocate global radio spectrum and satellite orbits, develop the technical standards that ensure networks and technologies seamlessly interconnect, and strive to improve access to ICTs to underserved communities worldwide.

That COMTELCA is the Regional Telecommunications Technical Commission. That it is an International Public Law Organization and is the specialized institution of the Central American Integration System (SICA), which coordinates, supports and harmonizes the development of the Telecommunications and Information and Communications Technology industry in the region.

#### WE DECLARE:

That digital transformation can help the economies of the region recover faster from the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and ensure better reconstruction.

That digital transformation offers a unique opportunity to advance global goals and that leveraging digital tools can contribute to better access to public services and to achieving the Sustainable Development (SDG) goals.



That the concept of digital transformation is increasingly being embraced for driving urban governance, addressing inequalities, and promoting integrated sustainable development in Latin America.

That the digital transformation may boost significantly the sustainability in all the sectors so enhancing climate mitigation and adaptation actions. ICT can play a key role in advancing

sustainability in the digital transformation to achieve Net Zero in the ICT sector, as well as to support other sectors in achieving Net Zero<sup>1</sup>.

That although the countries of the region have accelerated their digital processes, there are still gaps in the deployment of telecommunications infrastructure, connectivity, quality of service, and digital literacy.

That if the Latin American region is to embrace digital transformation successfully, it needs to implement international standards that focus on how ICTs and new emerging technologies can help them serve their inhabitants better, enable and empower them in their day-to-day lives, and build inclusive and resilient communities that enhance the human experience for all.

That the countries of the region must establish the appropriate public and regulatory policies to optimize the digital transformation growth and development, while also implementing international standards such as those developed by ITU.

That there is a need to exchange knowledge and experiences, and promote technical and institutional cooperation efforts in order to contribute to countries' digital transformation in the region.

That the key pillars of digital transformation include: building smarter, more sustainable and more inclusive cities and societies; enhancing the quality of services (QoS) for digital technology services, networks and devices; and boosting digital financial services and inclusion through telecommunication services, digital payments and fintech.

**AND, THEREFORE, WE AGREE TO:**

1. **Continue strengthening the relationship** – between ITU and COMTELCA, with the purpose of sharing knowledge and experiences; promoting actions and activities of mutual cooperation, which, in turn, promotes the digital transformation in the region maximizing the use and implementation of international standards.
2. **Set the vision for digital transformation** – by proposing the necessary public policies and the appropriate regulations so that the digital transformation can enjoy greater growth and development in the region, while achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
3. **Accelerate the development and implementation of ITU standards (known as “Recommendations”) as key enablers for digital transformation** – by inviting COMTELCA members to participate in the ITU Bridging the Standardization Gap (BSG) programme, and to contribute in ITU-T Study Groups, Focus Groups, Regional Groups and other global initiatives such as AI for Good and the United for Smart Sustainable Cities (U4SSC). As well as the implementation of policies to promote the development of telecommunications infrastructure in collaboration with other stakeholders.
4. **Promote financial inclusion for all** – supporting the outcomes of the Financial Inclusion Global Initiative (FIGI) and encouraging the development of technical standards that aim to lower the cost of ICTs, enhance the resilience of digital infrastructure, and support high levels of security for financial transactions in collaboration with various institutions within the countries and among all interested parties

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<sup>1</sup> COP26 – Glasgow Climate Pact

5. **Foster new partnerships and cooperation** – by promoting shared digital agendas for sustainable development, and by proposing clear goals for government action in order to take full advantage of the digital transformation for the benefit of the countries of the region.