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>> EMCEE: (No English translation)

>> EMCEE: (The audio was not clear enough to understand what was being said on English channel)

>> For interpretation, beside the registration booth, if you need, go to the booth for registration. You can get the devices for interpretation. Thank you so much.

(No audio for captioning)

>> EMCEE: Ladies and gentlemen, it is my honour to welcome you to the (distorted)

(English channel is difficult to hear and understand) This year we continue with WTDC-25 from Baku Action Plan in Azerbaijan. This is (distorted)

And also regulated by the (distorted) Commission Colombia. Thank you to Colombia for the support and (distorted) we Universal, Meaningful, and Affordable Connectivity for an Inclusive and Sustainable Digital Future.

Please let me welcome Felipe Díaz Commissioner from Executive Director of CRC. Thank you, Mr. Diaz. And we have Mr. Oscar Leon Secretary-General of CITELE.

Join us, (distorted) Papua New Guinea, Vice-Minister of ICT of Colombia. And Dr. Cosmas Zavazava, it is an honour to introduce you (distorted)

BDT ITU.

Give you're welcome words. We're going to start today, the first Day of This Forum with our special guests and Directors, please welcome Mr. Felipe Díaz from the Comisión de Regulación de Comunicaciones. Colombia.

>> FELIPE DÍAZ: (No English translation)

At universal connectivity that is accessible for all of us to

generate the social inclusion and sustainable society for us this Forum is especially fundamental for the Region because we have an important challenges and for connectivity, service, quality, communication. Network sustainability. For Colombia to be the place, the home for this space is not only an honour, but reflects our commitment with the Regional, practical and cooperative goals that we're implementing and developing not only in spaces internationally based, but we have documentation that we can have to recreate regulations and guidelines more actively.

We have been trying to generate knowledge that is common and sharable with our partners. So we subscribe to many Documents because we understand that communicating and development of the ecosystem is not only bonded to the local action, but it is an international challenge we all have to cooperate because, it is not only the infrastructure, it is everything that we consume through the ecosystem. We know that we cannot have a study that is generating development but also how we develop content and how we have the interior of the shared knowledge and we also consider that we should avoid to do isolated efforts and work hand in hand as regulators, as a Region, because we are stronger, if we work and learn from our success and our mistakes.

So I believe the space is not only fundamental but we also have to take this great lesson for us this lesson is based on the better guidelines means we need to listen in a better way, the separation of data and we have to learn we cannot do guidelines and regulations that the postmarket dynamics, if we don't have enough information in real-time and consider mainly that it is not the same to regulate one agent and another agent that challenges on this integrated system.

Part of the materialization of this, it is so important for us and that is why this is very important. The event for us. Because we need to have regulations and we are charmed and I appreciate you have consideration to let us host you in Cartagena. Feel yourselves like this is your home. Thank you very much. We're very attentive through this Forum. Thank you very much.

>> EMCEE: Thank you to our host Mr. Diaz for the warm words of welcome and extraordinary support from the CRC to have this Forum. Mr. Oscar Leon, please come to the podium, Executive Secretary from CITEL.

>> OSCAR LEON: Good morning, everyone. One minute. I want to join to the -- greetings, especially to Ms. Papua New Guinea, Felipe Díaz, and Mr. Cosmas Zavazava. And the Director of communications and all of the Ministers and Authorities, friends, it is a pleasure to have you here. I want to express, first of all, in the name of the inter-American communication of communications, CITEL. I want to thank you for the organisation of this Forum. And also to the Colombian Government and the Communications Regulation Commission for the hospitality and leadership in this important meeting. This is a very relevant moment for our Region, because we are in a new cycle implementing the Regional initiatives. And this is from

2026-2029 in a context where we are transforming digitally and we're redefining our economies. We're doing this with our institutions and society and we see how factors like AI and the computers and Clouds, platforms, digital platforms, networks, data, economy is transforming not only our markets, but it is also transforming our institutions daily. At the speed of innovation is overcoming the institutional speed. That is why Felipe Díaz said something really important. We need to go according to this process that we have been doing. It is strategic (audio skipping) to try to achieve the same speed. But to be prepared for what is coming up.

The Americas are showing to be in the organizations, and we could not go to Azerbaijan. There were 20 agreements that we defended to have in mind, the processes. 90% of the agreements were adopted. And now we articulate in the Regions as countries to accelerate the digital development of the Region. We need better policies, more institutional capacities, more investment, more innovation and definitely a more deep cooperation in general levels.

Alliance between Government and international organisations and Civil Society generate real impact and the framework that we're working inside for the Member States and associated States where it is contributing to the education of (distorted)

The features ... (distorted)

To the connectivity and the resource reminds us the cooperation is an objective and a tool to transform lives. And give better opportunities. (Distorted)

In the sub-Regions of the continent. In the international hours. With the initiatives that we were implementing especially at the Paraguay Region and Argentina because the native language to have these locations that were far from the Digital Transformation process.

We know that this is giving us a very important lesson and the projects that we're doing are part of several activities we're working with. We need Brazil and all of the Amazons and the Regional cooperation showing the regulation field that we're going to see these in the working tables, during these days. Implementing 14 guidelines of proving that we're (audio skipping) with all of you, 14 countries of the (distorted) guidelines to make change of the regulations in a pragmatic way in Americas. I want to take the opportunity to strengthen Alliances and share experiences to find cooperation mechanisms. Because at the end of the day, the success of the Regional initiative is going to be measured not only for the amount of Documents that we create, but for the amount of support that we can take to different Regions.

(No English translation)

Through America, this is a moment we invite and the owner to have Your Excellency,
Patricia Perdomo.

>> PATRICIA PERDOMO: I want to thank you. I want to welcome Mr. Cosmas Zavazava, BDT and Mr. Felipe Díaz with CRC and Mr. Oscar Leon, CITELE General Secretariat. And all the delegations of the

Member States, Representatives of the Private Sector, Academies, National organisations, technical community and other participants in this space.

Welcome from the Colombian Government in the name of the Mr. Minister, our Minister of MinTIC. And our gratefulness to the Commission of Communication to make this possible in our country. The 21st Century is not separating the countries of richness, size, or geography. It is separating the countries because of the capacity to transform technology and the oneness. It is the States inventory, it is the centre of the strategic decisions, because that is where we are defining the ways of societies, participating in the digital economy, organizing essential services and strengthening the institutions. Making a wider opportunity for the territories to avoid taking out of the framework that is going forward with an incredible speed. America and Caribbean are going through the inflection point. And we are continuing and our expansion in the middle of the challenges of investment, economical issues, and sustainability crescents. The axis is growing in mobile environment and this growth is not being translated in this quality or financial study meeting. Are enough capabilities to sustain the expansion that the region needs.

That's why the question is not only -- so many of us are connected. The question is more exigent. How can this connectivity be wide, sustainable, significant, and capable to produce a real transformation in individual's life. For Colombia, these questions have an answer from the Government and the state vocation. The infrastructure is necessary without the networks, regulations, operations and sustainability, there's no transformation that could be sustainable. But network suspended over the map is not development. And available connection is not inclusion. And if technology is not wellness. We do achieve this where we interfere with the social life of the territories when it stops being a promise and it starts influencing the way of the community and the relationship with the state, with the market, with their own capacities and the world.

Colombia is understanding that the infrastructure and the social wellness are going to be hand in hand to be useful, to be caring and to have that proper value. Technology cannot be managed as another asset of richness. We have to talk about economical return that is being reinforced and previous advantages, and deployed without public orientation or qualities that the Regional are known very well. If the States have to react or delay, through the institutions, to the way where the citizenship, so the community cannot be in just a Forum formula. It needs to be transforming the public discipline. In a regulatory decision and investment and policies and effective cooperation and territorial precedence. The international community is reaching a huge step with the Baku Action Plan adopted during the framework of the WTDC-25 where we had an important Agenda for next year going forward to the universal communication, strengthening digital inclusion, promote innovation systems and consolidate

regulatory environments and have the digital development to the service of all of the individuals. But the message is after the Action Lines. The connectivity is not the goal, it is the condition of the development, equity, dignity for human beings. This Regional Development Forum has that value. To bring the Global conversation to the land in America, to achieve multilateral commitments to take decisions, to go from aspirations to the design, the design to the execution and from the execution to the results that could be felt in our lives and countries.

In Colombia, we assumed this challenge in a very exigent context. We know that connectivity is not only in an empty space, it needs efficiency, information, innovation, and Regional sector. The traditional model is not always reaching out to respond to the complexities of our countries. At the end of the fourth semester of 2025, Colombia registered 10.2 million access to Internet and 49.7 million of mobile access. The figures show the connectivity and major responsibility to ensure that the assets are transforming quality and real objectives for the citizenship that the country is showing 5,000 kilometres of optic fiber, and it is super important because it shows that we have stability of better service quality for people that were out of the digital connections. It is not only to deploy networks, but also to have the productivity, innovation, communication, and institutional presence to this infrastructure expansion we need to have the human capacities.

Colombia, overcomes our calls of 1,147,000 people that represents achievement of 114%. These numbers are showing better connections, better capacities for technology to have a real sense in the daily life. That is the responsibilities and it is also in the Baku Action Plan technology. We need these networks availability, with the infrastructure, the appropriation, possibilities to participate in the digital society. That is why when Colombia is talking about purpose quickly, it is not talking only about infrastructure. It is also about a Mission where the network, the spectrum, the formation, and the innovation are going to be together and not to have only the code and appropriation of autonomy and development. It is looking from the top part and looking of the society's connectivity.

And in the territories, infrastructure, and community, changing the way how we understand the sustainability of the solutions when a community participates in their own connectivity stops being a passive beneficiary and starts to be and have a very important place in communications on the country with the capacity projected for more than 70,000 homes. In a territory that is with an important and environmental importance and community importance. Because it integrated, protects and includes abilities of Sustainable Development on the defense of one of the most determined ecosystems on the planet. We are working with decisions with the spectrum for 2026/2029, facing the strategic use of special relevance because the first time in Colombia we're going to have organized communities that need to recognize that expansion, that there is new actors, new ways

to achieve the conventional models that are not being enough. To have research and lecture of oriented to the spectrum. And this is where we have one of the most important conversations, or the regulation is not only limited for the speed of innovation and to compete with the vastness of the connections we need to protect the users who have an investment and allow the new technological models going forward without going to overcome the public interest. We need to anticipate tensions, recognize market failures and open new alternatives and support trust without turning in an obstacles. We need to understand the rigor before escalating and correct with evidence and precise decision. The world is talking today with AI and authorization of data platforms and immersive environment. And this is a very important conversation that requires our attention but for the Americas, this is the first question that cannot be avoided. How can we achieve that technological revolution could be a new way to have power? It is not enough to mention education, health, productivity in a separate way. In the digital universe, this mentions that are integrated in a major way. How this is prepared for these people to live with more autonomy.

We're talking about talent that is taught to be conditioned by distance, services that are not dependent only on the centre, local economies, capable to enter value circuits and public answers. More effective. And the way we in technology to modify the reality. This is the new sensibility of the connectivity. This is not fascination for the tools. It is the common sense over the effects. This is a Government decision, but it is going over an administrative period. What we have is a proposal that goes in front of the digital area and it stops to look at technology like an accessory and it is leverage for productivity and presence in this way. On the land of the promises.

We are deploying networks, new management for communities, and people, educated with a wide comprehension of the role of technology and development of the nation.

Now, our purpose is to continue with better coordination and better direction and with a better vision that the technology is not only to connect territories but also to support a new cycle of social understanding with technology and development of humans in Colombia.

Technology is being asked to coordinate and build Alliances, shared solutions, the bridge of the digital way in Colombia is helping us to see the international organisms and the different learnings we have in the capacity of the roots. Cartagena need to be able to coordinate this vision. We call to use connectivity as a shared infrastructure for dignity. As a trust condition, as an autonomy tool that will not leave anyone outside of the future. It can open the way, give the regulations and a vision that is profoundly human will make this much better. Thank you very much.

>> EMCEE: Thank you Vice-Minister for the leadership and the vision of Colombia and the Digital Transformation and commitment with the Government, with connectivity, and this is a very nice inspiration.

Now, we're going to invite ITU BDT Director, Cosmas Zavazava.

>> COSMAS LUCKYSON ZAVAZAVA: Thank you very much for having us here. Some of you might ask what's so special about this meeting? This meeting is very important particularly following the WTDC because it brings together all of our stakeholders. It brings our Member States. It brings our industry and Private Sector members and Academia. You may want to know outside of the 194 Member States, we have 1,258 Private Sector industry and Academia members. And I think we have to talk and forge partnerships so that together we can move forward the digital Agenda taking into account the fast evolving technologies, artificial intelligence, big data and any other emerging new technologies. I recognize Your Excellency Ms. Patricia Perdomo, Vice-Minister of Colombia. Thank you very much for hosting us.

All Ministers and Vice-Ministers present, Mr. Felipe Díaz, Commissioner and Executive Director of CRC. Mr. Oscar Leon Secretary-General of CITELE. Very much for your coordination of the Region, distinguished persons and colleagues, ladies and gentlemen and friends, ladies and gentlemen, this is a third in a series of our Regional Development Forums, the first one was in Prague. Czech Republic for Europe. It was a great success. I think of course, our Host Country, the second one was for Africa hosted by Zimbabwe at Victoria Falls. Highly well attended. And of course we thank the Government of Colombia for hosting us here. Friends, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen ... since I took office, I have always talked about a human-centric digital approach. Some of you in the artificial intelligence call it responsible AI. And others choose digital sovereignty. As you know, digital sovereignty is build on three pillars.

One is local infrastructure. Two, it is local data. Because the Foundation of AI is data. And finally local talent, the need to bridge the gap in terms of digital skills. And we do adhere to all the fundamentals. Our Regional Director, Bruno Ramos is going to speak to you about the philosophy that I introduced when I took office. BDT for Impact. We want a human-centric approach that we do, that impact people. The haves and have-nots. Those in urban and rural areas. These with disabilities and those that do not have those challenges. Indigenous People, women, children, the elderly. And I think if we manage to address those things then we will have universal and meaningful connectivity.

Of course, our regulators, thank you for hosting us. We're very grateful. We think they're instrumental in creating an enabling environment to prepare the way for the industry and Private Sector to invest. Without that, we're a missing link. It is a tremendous pleasure to join you here in beautiful Cartagena, the Indias. I want to extend by gratitude to Colombia Government and the CRC for hosting us. Your hospitality sets the perfect stage for the critical conversation we will holdover the next two days.

We are proud of our regulators as they create an enabling environment as I already alluded to. And we recently concluded a very

successful well attended record breaking Global Symposium for regulators that was hosted by the country of Turkiye. It was dually represented. It was not the numbers, it is the substance of the meetings to this.

-- meetings together.

At a meeting like this we adopt the best practice of the regulators. It is the standard guidance. It is the GPS for regulators. I said during my remarks on that occasion, this is the Olympics of regulators. Regulator frameworks. We are proud to bring it together.

You may know, we have reached G5, generation 5 regulation where we talk about collaborative regulation. It is pointless to talk about digital regulation or telecommunication regulation without interacting with the power companies, with the Central Bank in terms of the financial inclusion and other regulators. So we want to come to the table, discuss, strategize together.

We gather here under a theme that is both ambitious and essential. Universal, meaningful, and affordable connectivity for the inclusive and sustainable Digital Future. This is not just a collection of words, it is the mandate given to us by the Member States at the WTDC, the last one being held 17-28 of November hosted generously by the Government of Azerbaijan. The first one of its kind in the CIS Region. We think it was a great success.

Just a few months ago, we adopted the Baku Action Plan and today, this Forum is about putting that plan into action for the Americas and with the Americas. We are very grateful. Resolution 17 of WTDC speaks to the need of and that is translated into Regional initiatives. The Americas have five initiatives. We will fully and impactively implement those.

Colleagues our Mission is clear and also urgent.

Globally, you may -- I ask that 2.2 billion remain offline. Although we are celebrating 6 billion that are online. We should not sit and just watch and report on the statistics.

The statistics are raw. They don't tell a story. That is why we launch an ambition programme that we call measuring universal, meaningful, and affordable connectivity. What are the six billion that are connected doing with connectivity? Are they engaging in electronics, receiving services or just surfing the net? That is not enough.

From the remote villages to city peripheries need meaningful access. Connectivity is no longer about a signal. It is about quality. It is about resilience. It must be affordable. At the BDT, our vision remains BDT for impact. We have moved from dialogue to delivery.

In the last quarter of 2025 alone, we launched over 100 projects globally. Valued at more than 100 million. We welcomed 55 new Sector members, bringing fresh ideas and investment among our membership.

And I should just tell you with humility, the Development Sector is the fastest growing Sector today in ITU. You can check the statistics.

I think the Private Sector industry and Academia, they see the impact we're making and they want to make it together with them.

The statistics matters in the stories. It matters that after hurricane Melissa we could dispatch broadband satellite to restore vital links in Jamaica. It matters we're teaching women in AI to make sure the Digital Divide doesn't become a gender divide. In the Region, you are reaching parity, followed by others and America and Asia-Pacific. And other Regions need to play catch up.

Ladies and gentlemen, for Americas, the Roadmap for the next four years is defined by five ambitious initiatives. These are our priorities. Our priorities together. And they will guide our collective work.

The fast first one relates to resilient infrastructure. You know this Region is one of the most vulnerable to natural disasters. And also impacted by climate change and we prioritize the issue of climate change adaptation and mitigation so we save lives and we roll out early warnings for all. Particularly for the Caribbean Region, small island and States that remain vulnerable. Resilient infrastructure. We must deploy the infrastructure that withstands climate shocks from the Caribbean seas to the Indian Regions. Our networks must be secure, so Cybersecurity is very important, sustainable and available for effective impactful disaster management. We take this seriously. It is pointless talking about investment and connecting people if people don't benefit from it. Digital inclusion and skills, that is the second Regional initiative. We need to close the usage gap. This means empowering Indigenous communities, bridging gender Digital Divide and ensuring of our youth have the skills for AI-driven economy.

I said local talent, the talent is with you young people. And it is important for us to make sure that we facilitate them. And you will hear from the Regional Directors, we want to make sure that every human being has equal opportunity to digital skills and also to be connected.

The third one is innovative digital ecosystem. We will support digital Governments, e-commerce for medium, small, medium enterprises. The ethical adoption of emerging technologies to drive local innovation. You may know, I took office on 1 January. On 25 January, I launched a global initiative, which is called innovation and entrepreneurship for digital development Alliance.

And it is doing very well. We have established many acceleration centres across the world. Including this Region. And we celebrate the impact we are making on the ground.

Talk is cheap. Talk is sweet. But food is better, I think.

So we have evidence to demonstrate the impact we're making together with you.

The fourth one, cyber resilience as we connect more, we must protect more. We will support Cybersecurity strategies and ensure a safe, digital environment for all. You may be familiar with our digital guidelines, child online protection remains one of our priorities. We have encouraged the Governments to translate them into local languages, so they're more accessible. And we are committed to making sure that even with emerging technologies we protect particularly our young children.

So that they're not discouraged from connecting because they feel unsafe.

During COVID, many young women and girls become vulnerable. They were victimized, they were harassed online and many of them chose never again to go online. It is our fault. We have the responsibility to make sure -- we connect and protect. That's important.

And the fifth and last one, enabling regulator frameworks. We need smart regulations and incentivized investments to create a level playing field and access to connectivity for unserved communities, including community networks.

I remember well at WTDC in Buenos Aires, 2017, spearheaded by the Government of Mexico, we talked about community centres. And that is very important. Is it relevant. ITU is a neutral platform. We are technology neutral. Any technology that will help to connect people in a safe way, it is welcome for us.

We are not here, if I can repeat again, to talk. We are here to match needs with solutions.

Within this Regional Development Forum we will hold matchmaking Roundtables for the Partner2Connect correlation. We have the pledges. Now we need the implementation.

I urge you all the Governments, Private Sector, development banks to use this today to sign, commit, and launch, we are here, we are your midwives. We will make sure that the child is safe.

And looking ahead, connected hemisphere. As we meet, I'm reminded that our work is woven into larger UN Agenda from the SIDS Conference, which I led the ITU Delegation where we discussed many issues that are relevant to SIDS, to the areas that are Landlocked Developing Countries Conference. That was held and I addressed that in then Bolivia is one of the landlocked countries here. And when they are landlocked they rely on the neighbours for access to submarine cables. If you are at war with your neighbours, you can't reach the subsea cables. We don't want that to happen.

We are ensuring that Digital Transformation is recognized as an accelerator for all the Sustainable Development Goals. And I think we made progress, but we're still lagging behind when it comes to the 2030 Agenda.

But we can recover. We can dust off. And accelerate the development. I'm not concluding, the BDT team led by our Regional office is here to support you. We, in headquarters, dream, create innovate together with our Regional colleagues and our Regional colleagues bridge the last mile. They're closer to the membership and recognize the critical role they play. I talked about mechanisms to bridge the digital skills gap. We have the ITU academy. Running a plethora of courses that are available to you at no cost.

We have the Digital Transformation Centers that focuses on people who live in remote rural areas. We may not have had an opportunity like you and me to get an education or University education but they have a right to access and skills. We focus on those. We have the ITU Academy training centres that focus on Parliamentarians, the judiciary, middle, upper middle management in

Governments. Because we all have to understand the message. Bridging the Digital Divide. And bridging the data skills digital. Bridging the urban and rural divide. Bridging the young and the not so young to be able to participate effectively in the Information Society.

Let me -- let us leave Cartagena with concrete Action Plans. Let us ensure that by the time we meet again, every person in the Americas regardless of where they live or who they are, can participate freely in the digital future.

I want to thank you once again. We met in El Salvador in 2023, where we had the Regional Development Forum. I am pleased to say, many of the pledges that had been submitted were implemented. Sometimes with ITU, sometimes without ITU. That does not matter.

What is important is making progress on the ground. We met in Paraguay for the last Regional Development Forum. I want to thank all of the Governments that hosted us, and you, in particular for participating and contributing to the impactful outcomes of the Conference. And with this, thank you very much. I apologize to the Madam who is managing. I abused the time. But thank you very much.

(Applause)

>> EMCEE: Dr. Cosmas Zavazava thank you. Thank you for the progress of universal and significant connectivity in the Regional (English channel is distorted, cannot caption)

>> (Distorted) (the English channel is too distorted cannot caption)

Now I invite (distorted) to take a picture.

>> EMCEE: Thank you very much. We have the person in charge of the Forum (distorted)

(English channel is too distorted and cannot be captioned)

(Break)

>> EMCEE: We will continue our agenda. We kindly ask you to be seated. Mute your devices. We're ready to start our first Roundtable. Please take your seats, and we will be ready to start in a few moments. Thank you.

>> EMCEE: We kindly invite you to be seated. We will start again right now. Welcome, again, we will start the substantial work right now. The first Roundtable is State of Digital Development and Trends, Challenges and Opportunities and the challenges that we face and looking ahead. We are pleased to invite Mr. Bruno Ramos Regional Director to address the audience, with the ITU Regional Office of the Americas. We will be the Moderator for the panel. I call on stage to join us right now. First, we will invite Mr. Javier Gutierrez, communications Commissioner of CRC Colombia. Also please, we invite Mr. Andrés Ehrler, Minister of Tourism from Honduras. Welcome, also.

Mr. Dean Molina Public Utilities Commission from Belize. Ms. Angeles Ayala, Deputy Secretary General COMTELCA. And Mr. Alkin Saucedo of ASEP, Panama. And Mr. Sergio Sotomayor, General Director of ANE Colombia.

Official picture of the first panel, I leave you with Mr. Ramos who will be the Moderator. Big round of applause to receive them, please.

>> BRUNO RAMOS: Thank you, to everyone for being here, I will talk a couple minutes, set an example and then start with an idea in this panel, and ask a few questions so we can have a dialogue. All right?

I thank Colombia for hosting this gathering. We need universal, meaningful, and affordable connectivity for inclusive and sustainable Digital Future. It is to expand coverage and protect the people. It is to ensure connectivity is useful, safe, resilient, affordable, and capable of generating real opportunities for everyone. The Americas have moved forward in an important way in the last few years. We see better digital adoption, expansion of the broadband, the new technologies and a growing digitalization of public services and private services as well. Also, we know we still have big gaps between urban and rural areas, between territories that are connected and disconnected communities.

Also regarding the affordability, social inclusion and resilience. Therefore, this Roundtable is an opportunity to look into the digital development status in the Region, identify trends and opportunities and especially to reflect on the transformation of commitments and concrete results. From the ITU, we have been working in the Americas to support the countries in this transition.

I wanted to talk a little bit about what the Director mentioned in his opening remarks about some achievements that we have in the Region.

And some realities that we have in the Region for the last year.

In Colombia, together with the international cooperation Agency, we're implementing an initiative oriented to strengthen the regulation on electronic residues and promote circular economy. This project has facilitated the cooperation South-South and exchange of experiences between countries like Colombia, Dominican Republic, Nigeria, South Africa, and India. It is a way of showing and showcasing how can we have -- having Alliances is important and from ITU, we work to place the partners together and connect the main topics that are common amongst them. In par way, the ITU has supported the strengthening of the National framework for electronic residues, the development of policies and regulations, legal instruments and models, financial models and implementation. This job has contributed to strengthen institutional capacities like coordination between multiple agencies.

Again is an example of how, with partners, and the work with ITU, we have the possibility of working together to have a real impact on our activities. In the Barbados office, we're generating results by interceptions that are unique through the Smart Cities project, we have strengthened the communication capacities of little small fishermen, and the resilience in the face of disasters and emergency. And we're moving forward in the regulatory harmonization, financial services audited in digital trending centres in Trinidad and Tobago and other initiatives, which is to expand connectivity between schools and the Caribbean and all the Americas. Another fundamental work line with partners is the work it is very important to have a

specific panel on this matter in a few days. In Central America and Dominican Republic, through this project, the ITU has strengthened the institutional capacities and use of regulatory frameworks that are more flexible, including experimentation, mechanisms and Sandboxes in a relatively short period of time. This project has supported the execution of 10 Workshops for the training of 420 professionals in all seven countries that are beneficiaries of this programme.

These examples show that the Digital Transformation requires a lot of more than just infrastructure. Requires regulatory frameworks that are modern, institutional capacities, Regional cooperations, digital skills, environmental sustainability. Cyberspace the company is Member States in this effort supporting the implementation of Regional Initiatives and mobilizing cooperation, technical knowledge, Alliances and projects.

I am sure that this Roundtable will allow us to identify progress, challenges and opportunities and strengthen shared vision to accelerate digital development. With these few words that I tried to clarify a little bit the idea for this panel. This panel is to make a diagnostic trends and institutional contributions. I am going to exit the podium and we'll start. Right?

Okay. I wanted to ask you -- I wanted to first request objective answers, because I wanted to do this for everyone. The first question would be, which are the main challenges to achieve significant connectivity? And where do we have the larger gaps? Which are the main challenges to achieve connectivity? Who wants to start?

It is open. Whichever order you wish to talk to.

>> From the extreme I'm here. If we see from the Colombia standpoint, I would say that is a combination. But the data shows definitely that the largest gap is for affordability, accessibility.

For example, the largest expansion networks in Colombia is 4G. That covers 92% of the population, but territorial, it is only 25% of the territories, the remaining 75% of the territory connectivity conditions are bad. Infrastructure is bad. But we have inhabitants there, close to four million people there.

But from the standpoint of connectivity from the other countries, the average is only over 60% of the households. And if we make a differentiation between urban and rural areas, in urban areas we can go up to 80%. In the rural and secluded areas, the penetration of connectivity is even lower. Out of 40 -- close to 50% of those that do not have quickly, and their main reason is that they cannot afford the service.

So even though, in most of the territories there is no, the gap is payment capacity. And don't forget the important percentage that say they don't feel the need or they don't want to be connected and shows also work around the training and the how can we produce the benefits of connectivity from our standpoint of the National Agency of the spectrum, it is a very general outlook of working and closing the gaps. Democraticization for the access to the spectrum, for the Colombian case, the larger National operators. This year we were able

to materialize working together with the ministry, frequency band of 900 megahertz for organized communities. This is a strategy that can be useful for the accessibility programme, cost distribution in the community and I centre in the spectrum area, it is an additional alternative of those already existing. Additionally for small Regional operators, in the past they had not got access to the resources. And we have open in this moment, working with CRC, the regulatory Sandbox in the Region focusing on connectivity. What we expect is to generate alternatives for the territorial infrastructure gap. There is a challenge that is really important and significant. And in these accessibility gap, which is referred to large cities. The volume seen from the fixed connectivity standpoint is still on the large cities and the country.

>> MODERATOR: Thank you, Sergio. Let's move to the next. I wanted to summarize what Sergio said. He said affordability. And the topics of new technologies. Proposed to increase in the competition, I think when we have small suppliers and vendors is to increase the competition to elevate the service where the big operators don't have any reach.

What I wanted to add in the next one, use this accessibility issue to trend of emerging technologies that are coming in, like AI, private networks and satellite networks. Thank you.

>> I raised my hand because Sergio spoke providing a diagnosis of the Colombian topic. I don't see the glass so empty. I am a bit more optimistic. We have been working hard in Colombia, the results are there. As Sergio mentioned, the rurality still needs work. A large part of our Region in Colombia Pacific, some part of the Guatemala, we need to bring connectivity to the places. Part of the Colombian rural area has a big challenge. But I do not want to stay only from the CRC. We should remain with the coverage issue. Coverage, we have been talking about coverage for 30 years. We have done opinion aren't work here. It was said this morning our dear Vice-Minister was saying that Colombia has close to 50 million mobile access points and 10 million fixed access points. These are big numbers, and we have challenges ahead of us. I want to move to topics of social gaps. Not technological, but social gap.

Somehow Bruno Ramos mention it, too. To have to reach out to places to have access and people can have access to the services. One, the quality and the safety of the service. We're working on a safety matter that is very important. One of the largest challenges that we face, as a society, not just as a region but as a planet as a whole is this is a safe topic. From the countries continuously growing the numbers are staggering. We're talking about numbers of \$442 billion last year. In financial fraud alone. Colombia is not a stranger to the numbers. Colombia, in fighting fraud was close to 1.25 billion pesos, slightly below that. And we need to work very hard in fraud prevention. So we proposed and have published a regulatory project that is quite important for fraud prevention, attacking the most important gateways that we detected that are voice and SMS and a topic that is most important one is the weakest link

in the chain, which is the training and cyber culture. Over 94% of attacks cyber attacks, that is are achieved through bad action of a person or ignorance or lack of skills, so we need to attack a training topic, cyber culture topic, and we're working hard on this. On the other hand, since we have the diagnostic, part of the problem we face today, the reach of certain Regions that large operators haven't been able to reach for one reason or another is to get with organized communities. All we need to do is check for dispositions for last year to tell us that the promises we have from the regulatory standpoint. Meaning that the communities, the HOI, the associations, cooperatives can have access to the solutions for their communities. This problem where they clearly see that the large companies are not going to be able to reach.

Also, talking about accessibility.

We want to involve other industries and infrastructures. For example, the road infrastructure of our country that was briefly mentioned this morning by the Vice-Minister. Today, we have over 7800 Kilometres Of Roadways well over 2800 kilometres have telecommunication infrastructure. We want to see how to interconnected underused infrastructure to-- we think it can have an important impact for the community. And can have a reach of 1.6 million people. And other municipalities. Thank you.

>> MODERATOR: Okay. I agree.

>> MARYLEANA MENDEZ: This is something we should not ignore, any public policy action or ideas or any Government in action should be present. It is a component that we faced. It is not to have the connectivity. There might be gaps in connectivity, as it was mentioned there will continue to be, due to the geographic position in the Region. But what we need clarity about is the way of adding on these topics is to put the people at the centre of it all the time.

I say this in all Forums. The focus of all of this is ourselves as users of telecommunication services.

So what should I do to protect myself? What should I do to help protect the others? And how can I implement these actions precisely to create trust and use because it will be useless to bring connectivity to people if people were not going to use them. If they're not going to use them properly. And making some mistakes in this. They will enter a situation that is going to be damaging to them.

I will add on to the part that is being mentioned, and also to help and hear different parties involved. Because many times, we want to take action, and as public policymakers, we think that the solution is in us, but when we hear the needs of everyone, that we can establish and attack the needs that can be resolved. Thank you.

>> MODERATOR: Something interesting that what was mentioned. Because when we try to bring access to organisations, we need spectrum and the spectrum in general is very expensive. But I wanted to add something. We talk about training. And sometimes we think about young people. But in Latin America, we already are past the peak of births.

So right now, we're in a drop in the amount of births in our

region. So the forecasting for 2050 is that we will have an ageing population. So we need to think of this, too.

If we think training, we need to think in training that includes very interesting topic. Because we're talking about new technologies and everything else. How are we going to train older people that are going to be most likely ones to be in our future? It is a little weird to say, but our region looks like this in the process of having more and more elderly people.

This is a topic to play here. When we are talking about training or new technologies, we also talk about the youngsters, but we need to add the elderly people. Thank you, Bruno, definitely, the challenges are constantly growing.

>> As the challenges move forward, we have the same challenges as well. We have what is exclusion. We're excluding the communities. I agree with what angel has said, think about the public policies and thinking that people are the centre of everything. I think this is a big challenge. I challenge beyond economic resources to give sustainability to projectless and beyond the infrastructure, demanded today. It is needed that infrastructure is not only significant and effective, it is also safe. The digital literacy programmes for economic development should be the goal. From there, we can include not only territorially the people, but also we can do a directed programmes for example, the originally Peoples to share their culture with us. Also, women, and also, women and that stay at home looking after the kids and have time and wish to expand their knowledge base. What they do every day through technology.

What Bruno said, very importantly sometimes we leave our adults behind and they are eager and this is proven. They are eager to be included in the technology. They use it and it has been proven that they have high adaptability to the use of technology. And lastly with the presence of our tourism Minister, we need strategic Alliances we cannot be part of the Government. This is the business of everybody. This is the Academia, Civil Society, multilateral that support and establish the countries, such as tourism and we have the honour of having a person that works together and as a tourism Minister.

>> MODERATOR: Do you think you can add to this discussion Andres on the challenges of opportunities we have to close the gap?

>> ANDRÉS EHRLER: Yes, of course, thank you, Bruno. Definitely, I cannot teach you anything about telecommunications because you are all knowledgeable. But we're working and listening to what communities demand. We have clarity on the large gaps that are creating inequalities in the world. And I know that a person is easily with their cell phone in Germany, deciding to come for vacation in America. What is the gap that exists today with regards to the opportunity we have regarding infrastructure? You said it very clearly. We're reaching the Indigenous communities that natural reserves. We are reaching these places, but there's not a lot of inhabitants. It is not very attractive for sales. Therefore, it is not a space where people who live here can compete in the same way

or the person that is in Spain, where their business and tourist operation trying to sell connectivity to have rural hiking trail in Spain. This is what is happening also not just in the access, like you mentioned, but also the tourist topic in the young person, it is also attracted from the market standpoint, but also based on the access of AI, interoperability that we have regarding the payment methods. Something that is not usual addressed, I think we completely isolated when I get to Brazil, I can pay for the cab. But the cabdriver they need it in cash because they don't take digital payments.

This is the challenge we face. We cannot come just exclusively from what you think from the telecommunication area but from what is thought out in the communities. How can I start -- how do I sell? How do I purchase? Who should I sell to in the meantime right now? In Spain, England, we have a tour operator, planning how they're going to work with their big data, working on the tourist projection that Bruno forecast they will get in 2028 because AI is allowing them to map out what is the behavior of tourism. Understanding this here today in Colombia, very likely if we move to Santa Marta and to the Indigenous communities in this area, they don't even know how many tourists are going to come next week. These are precisely the large challenges we are facing.

I thank very much the invitation. Because this is a topic that we require to start to discuss and understand that there should be a constructive dialogue before in 2020. What we thought if there are no roads, there is no way of developing it. If we don't get fresh water and sanitation that is a big problem.

Now the problem is not only roads, no fresh water or sanitation, but not a communication mechanism.

And this is part of the thoughts that we should work together and support each other.

>> MODERATOR: Thank you very much. Sometimes I think we're living in a very fast world and that is how it is. We need to find solutions for everything, but we're talking almost the same thing. It is to find out knowledge, to use the capacity to pay to use the services, and with this, also the offer of capacities, trying to get more and competency and people providing services. To see your innovation, on this ... (audio skipping) (No English translation) (No audio provided to captioner) (Audio for captioner is silent)

>> ATTENDEE: I am working in the Private Sector. I have in the past life working several years in public policies. I was working at an important time. I know a lot of the challenges that we have from the public policies. I worked a long time in the core topics, inside of the framework for the development trying to find the gap, where it is possible to reduce the poorness for many factors in the 50%. It was at the end of the '90s, into the 2000s. But there is a roof talking about the extreme poorness in Latin America that is not able to close. I was working in another Sector and 10 years ago, I'm working with telecommunication and it is called my attention of successful that it was the Sector with the partnership between the Private Sector and the regulators for to make that gap smaller.

And now we are talking about two, three, four, 5%, when many times extreme poorness in some countries was 10 to 8. I cannot stop connecting those things. So I wanted to know how can we do when we have so large limitations, one of the extreme corners. If we think about telecommunication or networking, and we said we are going to be there, so I'm like throwing another element that I think it is relevant.

>> MODERATOR: Thank you very much. That is a very deep question. We also are talking about the millennium objectives and the Sustainable Development in 2015-2030 where this poorness and hunger, it is a very good question. How our Sector may modify the society. Angie, we have only 20 minutes. At least two or three minutes, at least. Please.

>> ANGELES AYALA: I will be really brief. I believe this is an attention call. Maybe to take these to the inner part of our countries and it is the fact that before the Telecommunication Sector didn't receive or not receiving actually enough resources. It is a Sector as we have been seeing, and Andrés Ehrler and others mention, the many that is we start the importance of the successor and economic development of the country we're not able to get more resources. It is too hard to do some miracles with such a small budget are given to the Telecommunication Sector. And I believe that you are going to agree with this. We have to do miracles with just a few things. We require a lot. But we -- they go to some other mechanisms because I don't know if it is related to the Sector.

In this sense, I believe this is a brief message I wanted to leave another one. That is important thing. It is to transmit and generate this understanding to the individuals, to understand the Telecommunication Sector, even in the basic scales. Because everybody is trying to talk about the Sector as a great knowledge about this. And we, that have been working several years, we don't understand it, not even 100%. So when you see the budget and the different Summits and when they approve all the parties, they obviously don't understand what is required to help with the technology and Telecommunication Sector. I just wanted to mention that, Bruno. Thank you.

>> MODERATOR: And then Javier and Alkin and then Sergio.

>> JAVIER GUTIERREZ: The poorness cycle is being attacked and broken. In several cases, about 2 million people are getting out of extreme poorness. I really agree with the thing that you have mentioned. These telecommunication tools are contributing to many successful cases, especially the farmers to take tools to the farmers is an important and interesting thing. We have several cases where we show to the world where we alleviate mediation and the farmer sell products internationally. That in one side. And if we see the coin to the other side, from the CRC, our role through the competence and with a real competence enclosed and to close the circle because when we promote the competence, the fair and these challenges that we mention before, we are also taking them to a real solution.

>> MODERATOR: Before I give the room to Alkin anapestic dress

and Sergio. And then we will end. I wanted to add something about what Angie and you said. Maybe the issue is the timing because at the Telecommunication Sector is investment. A long-term investment. So there is in Europe right now, an Engineer was there and think about change of the frequency of the radio and TV and several years. But now, we need to change it faster. And to make an investment and the Telecommunication Sector, with the Governments, the state, they need to think long-term and generate a public policy short term. I won't discuss that because I'm not the panelists, but I will give you the challenges we have. But if this Sector is thinking at all, 20 years in the future to make a change look how we do this in the short term.

>> ANDRÉS EHRLER: We will look at all the Sectors, all the areas and I think we are trying to eliminate poorness. The topic right now, it is time to review the public policies and integrate. They should be integral policies. Targeting to attack the complexity of the society because we meet today because of telecommunication and how this telecommunication can be developed to this. Because right now, telecommunication as we know it they're having all styles. I believe that through the technology and telecommunication we can help improve our population conditions. I am almost thinking the same thing. That is being said.

>> Telecommunication is a lot, not generating anything. Nothing happening. We have bad budgets, I don't know if my colleague here, how is he doing in Honduras. But the regulatory things to talk about. The long-term policies and also in telecommunication made the gap closing very fast, related to what we were doing. The capacity is not if I have access or not to the Internet. The question is, can I use the Internet. And the other question is can I use AI? So the capacities are the greatest challenges about poorness. The way we were educated to add using little (?) goals, the same thing is the person that doesn't have the capacity to access the smartphone. Ask the about the price in your country. That is the difference we have in the different countries.

For real, these topics, to produce this we need to establish what policies are we generating in our country levels where we are showing interested for the individuals because we generate a lot of money with telecommunication and taxes through tourism. Where is it going? There are some aspects that are not helping for the population growth. That is where we should think, what are we dedicating to the development of the human talent, a little bit more of that. We're dedicating for protection and other instances that are not related to telecommunication.

>> MODERATOR: The education is the Department of Transportation, the exit. The question is very complex. And since this.

>> SERGIO SOTOMAYOR: Since this session, I want to mention two things. In my intervention before in Colombia, effectively we're going forward. It is true, you analyze the Governments in Colombia year over year, when we ended with the Government period. There is always an advance in connectivity and public institutions. But

sustainability of this project is the real thing. After four or five years of the project we finish with the budget and we go back to three or four years. They go and then the next Government has to start from 0. And we repeat that constantly. The resources in Colombia case are a unique case that there is no reach from the same Sector and strum I guess India and other countries it is lower the vowel and lowering the vowel and that with the actual schemes is more hard with more issues. We need transformation.

The projects, maybe a second floor back. And we have little operators that are getting to places that you cannot imagine with the fiber that I have out of the perspectives of the Sector. But somehow, they're solving an issue. Hardly they have access to credit. I believe this is something that may be could help somehow to reduce the gaps and the conditions of poorness in certain Regions. A second element to mention of the adaptation for technological appropriation. I believe we are in a space about telecommunication space economy. I see these like an opportunity and a threat. Because we are seeing trillions of dollars economy where the Region unfortunately is left off.

In Brazil, they have satellites. The other countries we don't have that. And we're going to be losing opportunities because of the device in the short term. The idea is those places we don't have anything else. We will have communication and we're going to close the gaps of the coverage. A few weeks ago we did a pilot in Colombia where emergency communication is something working already in Peru, United States, Canada, but for us, it is the first step, and trying to find local operators involved, I will calling attention because I believe it will be disrupted in the communications in the short term.

>> MODERATOR: Thank you.

>> (No English translation) (no audio for captioner)

>> MODERATOR: You are the host, would you please, Carlos?

>> CARLOS LUGO SILVA: Thank you, you are kind to give me the opportunity. All of the panel are talking about the if you means, Internet, quickly, giving the rights to education and to development. And we understand that connectivity and Internet, if they're not aligned for the project that is developing tourism, health or developing educational topics. We see how we look at that in the future. It has to be.

Sustainable, we cannot continue doing what we are doing. Several years, we are mentioning, giving infrastructure and after four or five years, you will see that infrastructure is not useful. The investment was the so high that we lost it and we're focused to do programmes that are sustainable where the communities, for example, the Internet communities are the management that operates technology. Manage the network and finance the service. They're responsible of the project. To have that investment as a state it is not wasted.

That infrastructure is then in the hands of the community. But the continuity of the service is the responsibility of the community.

Not the state. That way, we can close areas where they never arrive, we can close the gap effectively. The cultural changes that are proposed take us to a process that we start and now we are slower and the technological advance. In a responsible way to use AI. One of the greatest challenges we have the knowledge we take it effectively in a way, in a responsible way using these technologies. That is a challenge I believe is hard to achieve.

I wanted to say that my thoughts about what we're boosting and what we get with 900 megahertz band. For several it could be a simple process. For us, it is a tremendous opening. An opportunity for the community it is to close the gap in connectivity that has to go necessarily for the appropriation and sustainable of the service. Because the infrastructure, the state is providing it. Thank you.

>> MODERATOR: Thank you. This was just one session of this for the developmental world. So we're showing a little bit what more we will have. Very good discussions. Everything is connected. Society, the organisations, they have the responsibility and capacity. But the Governments need to keep the line. The public policies, the baseline of it is fundamental. Legal. We have several discussions about regulations new ways of regulation. New intentions of how to make things faster. I would like to have your hands together for all of them here. Thank you very much. And has mentioned before, we are going to talk more about this during the Forum. Thank you.

>> EMCEE: Thank you, Mr. Moderator and the panel members of this. What we have in the next two days of the Forum. Please go back to your seats. Please remain seated. We have a special announcement that we want to share with all of you.

At this point, when we close this -- before going to lunch, please -- thank you, everyone. It is an honour to announce to all of you this collaboration agreement, very special announcement for everybody between ITU and COMTELCA the technical Commission for Telecommunication of Central America. At this point, I would like you to join us on stage, Cosmas Zavazava Director of the ITU and Ms. Angeles Ayala Executive Secretary of COMTELCA to join us on stage and tell us about this special announcement. Let's give them a big round of applause, because we're eager to know what they have to tell us. So the Director and the General Secretary.

>> COSMAS LUCKYSON ZAVAZAVA: Thank you for the opportunity, I'm pleased to be here and say some words about COMTELCA and announce we're growing from strength to strength. Together, we have built a strong and productive working relationship to advance Digital Transformation and digital development and connectivity across Central America Region. And this cooperation has been reflected in joint initiatives, shared technical expertise and coordinated Regional dialogue that have contributed to strengthening the institutional and regulatory capacities across National Authorities in Central America.

I am pleased to announce that we are now in the process of enhancing our collaboration in the key areas, including regulatory innovation, the use of regulatory Sandboxes and other experimental

regulatory mechanisms, the exchange of informational methodologies and also the exchange of international methodologies and good practices, and Regional coordination and ICT and digital regulation.

We will work alongside with the COMTELCA to provide a specialized technical assistance, strengthen the capacities of National regulatory Authorities in a progressive convergence of regulatory approaches across the Region. And together, we are reaffirming our shared commitment to an inclusive, connected and digitally transformed Central America. We will be signing a set of agreements so that we can implement this very ambitious initiative for the benefit of those in Central America. We will not leave any Region behind. There are initiatives for the Caribbean, Latin America and other sub-Regions. So that we can together implement fully the tools, the strategic goals of ITU as agreed that P P-22. One making sure we have universal access that is universal and meaningful connectivity and secondly to advance Digital Transformation across the world. Thank you very much.

>> ANGELES AYALA: Thank you Dr. Cosmas Zavazava for the excellent introduction. For me, it is an honour today to communicate the joint work we have been developing for a considerable amount of time to benefit all nine countries that encompass the COMTELCA Region as we call it now. The nine countries that are part of Central America, Mexico and Dominican Republic and for us, it is a true honour to have this type of collaborations with the telecommunication developmental office, even though we have had the direction over the last few years, it has been a close collaboration we had since we shared offices in Honduras over a few years back, in which we established the cooperation mechanisms, especially with the intention of talking about what we can do to improve the formation of capacities in the technical teams in the Region.

But I presume that because I live this everyday with the Committee that are part of the Regional and technical Commission of telecommunication is that the Region has a very innate talent and a lot of acquired experience for many years. Why not implement it through the mechanisms for collaboration and coordination. It is obviously necessary to have the company present and stakeholders in the Sector and most importantly, the head of the policies where all of these accords and mechanics are established, which is the accompaniment of ITU. I want to highlight here the leadership of BDT to coordinate with us these efforts. And to be part of them. And obviously, to mention from COMTELCA, we are committed to use these types of mechanisms as schools for regulatory information.

Within our work and our activities, highly aligned with the next Action Plan that was just approved for 26-29.

I'm not going to talk beyond this because within this Forum we will have a different space to talk beyond that. But I would like to mention that I'm thankful, in particular, with the leadership of the BDT the support of the Regional Office of the Americas as well as the leadership of Carlos Lugo that helped us that this project can actually take shape and consolidate itself. And right now, this

collaboration. So thank you very much for the mechanism. We know this is going to be a huge institutional challenge to converge in a timely manner difference stakeholders that work at COMTELCA. We want to let you know that we're totally aligned with the work of BDT and we're totally aligned and believe that the capacity creation topic should be strengthened in all surroundings. So for us, it is a great honour to establish this with BDT. Thank you, formally.

(Applause)

>> EMCEE: While they take their Group picture, on Tuesday, they will have a new chapter in collaboration to benefit millions of people in Latin America. Give a round of applause to this orientation and their Director, Mr. Cosmas Zavazava Director of the BDT of ITU and Angeles Ayala Executive Director Secretary of COMTELCA. Thank you very much.

We start to get these new collaborations in this Forum that today is in its first day. Thank you very much to all of you for joining us. We kindly invite you to take this break for lunch. It is free. We recommend you to locate a place to take a lunch. We will be back at 2:00 p.m. And we will have a second Roundtable with an interesting topic, which is in the second Roundtable we will talk about interesting topics that come from the Conference of what happened in Baku Azerbaijan. This includes the Action Plan from Baku and it will be moderated by Mr. Miguel Alcaine. We'll see you back at 2:00 p.m. to continue discussing interesting topics in this Forum. Thank you very much. See you at 2:00. Thank you.

We recommend you to gather all your personal belongings and do not leave them behind. The room will be closed, but don't leave behind your personal belongings. Thank you.

(Lunch break)

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