



ITU REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FORUM FOR THE AMERICAS (RDF-AMS-26)

**Universal, meaningful, and affordable connectivity for
an inclusive and sustainable digital future**

16 and 17 June 2026 | Cartagena de Indias, Colombia

<http://itu.int/go/RDF-AMS-26>

CONTRIBUTION FORM

This form is intended to collect inputs from stakeholders contributing to the implementation of the Baku Action Plan and the ITU Regional Initiatives for the Americas (2026-2029).

ORGANIZATION: Caribbean Organization of National Telecommunications Operators ('CANTO')

FOCAL POINT: Mark Reynolds, Director, mreynolds@logic.ky, + 13459383009

TITLE: Inclusive Tech: The Future of Digital Innovation in the Caribbean and Central America

DESCRIPTION OF ACTION:

The Caribbean Association of National Telecommunication Organizations (CANTO) is advancing a comprehensive, multi-year strategy to position the Caribbean and Central American region at the forefront of inclusive digital innovation. This initiative represents CANTO's deliberate evolution from a traditional telecommunications trade body into a regional digital transformation catalyst—embodying its core strategic vision of moving from “Telco to Techno.”

CANTO is building a dynamic platform of engagement at the intersection of telecommunications and the rapidly evolving domains of artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, sustainability, and e-commerce. This platform fosters strategic alliances and thought leadership among telecom operators, regulators, governments, hyperscale cloud providers, satellite operators, fintech companies, and digital economy stakeholders across more than thirty Caribbean and Central American markets. The goal is not merely to connect people, but to create conditions under which digital services, commerce, and innovation can flourish for all citizens across the region.

Central to this effort is the recognition that Caribbean and Central American nations face unique digital challenges. Small-island and developing economies contend with high infrastructure costs, climate vulnerability, limited economies of scale, and uneven digital literacy. CANTO addresses these realities through four strategic pillars.

First, AI readiness and adoption. CANTO facilitates regional dialogue on AI governance,

network optimization, and practical deployment of AI tools to help operators, SMEs, and public institutions leapfrog traditional operational constraints. The organization fosters partnerships with global technology leaders and regional academic institutions to build capacity and accelerate responsible innovation.

Second, cybersecurity and cyber resilience. CANTO treats cybersecurity as a collective regional priority, advocating for critical infrastructure protection, harmonized data-protection frameworks, coordinated incident response, and sustained capacity building for both regulators and operators. This aligns directly with the Baku Action Plan's emphasis on building confidence and security in the use of ICTs.

Third, sustainability and climate-resilient infrastructure. For the Caribbean, sustainability extends beyond environmental responsibility to include the survivability of networks under hurricanes, flooding, and power instability. CANTO champions green telecom infrastructure, energy-efficient data centers, and climate-adaptive network design, aligning with regional climate priorities and global ESG expectations.

Fourth, e-commerce and digital economic empowerment. CANTO is building the broader digital stack—payments infrastructure, digital identity, trust frameworks, and logistics connectivity—that enables cross-border digital trade and meaningful SME participation in the global digital economy.

Underpinning all four pillars is CANTO's advocacy for Stage 5 regulation: an agile, technology-neutral, converged regulatory environment that balances consumer protection with investment incentives and enables rapid adaptation to emerging technologies. This regulatory modernization is essential for unlocking private-sector investment across the region.

Through strategic partnerships with the ITU, PTC, CTU, SubOptic, and Capacity Media, alongside active engagement with hyperscale cloud providers and satellite operators, CANTO is expanding its convening power and global influence. The organization is also modernizing its engagement model through year-round virtual forums, innovation pavilions, curated meeting programs, and a strengthened annual conference integrating Caribbean culture with cross-industry programming.

CANTO's transformation demonstrates that regional telecommunications organizations can serve as powerful conduits for inclusive digital advancement—bridging global innovation and local realities to ensure no community is left behind.

COUNTRIES in FOCUS:

Caribbean: Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Curaçao, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, Puerto Rico, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sint Maarten, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands, U.S. Virgin Islands. Central America: Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama.

YEARS of IMPLEMENTATION: [Tick the relevant boxes or delete the irrelevant items]

- ☐ 2026
- ☒ 2027
- ☒ 2028
- ☒ 2029

RELEVANT ITU REGIONAL INITIATIVE: [Tick the relevant boxes or delete the irrelevant items]

- ☒ AMS1: Facilitating resilient infrastructure to enable deployment of universal and meaningful connectivity
- ☐ AMS2: Digital inclusion, digital skills/competencies
- ☒ AMS3: Support for innovative digital ecosystems and the adoption and use of emerging technologies
- ☐ AMS4: Promoting cyber resilience and capacity building in cybersecurity and cyber resilience
- ☒ AMS5: Governance and enabling regulatory frameworks for sustainable digital transformation

Please find more information on the ITU Regional Initiatives 2026-2029, as defined by WTDC-25, [here](#).

RELATED ITU-D PRIORITIES AS DEFINED BY THE ITU WORLD TELECOMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE 2025

- ☐ Affordable connectivity
- ☒ Digital Transformation
- ☐ Enabling policy and regulatory environment
- ☐ Resource mobilization and international cooperation
- ☐ Inclusive and secure telecommunications/ICTs for sustainable development

Please find more information on the ITU-D Priorities, as defined by WTDC-25, [here](#).

RELATED PARTNERS2CONNECT FOCUS AREAS

- ☐ Focus Area 1 - ACCESS: Connecting people everywhere
- ☐ Focus Area 2 - ADOPTION: Empowering communities
- ☐ Focus Area 3 - VALUE CREATION: Building digital ecosystems
- ☐ Focus Area 4 - ACCELERATE: Incentivizing investments

Please find more information on the Partner2Connect Focus Areas Action Framework [here](#).

RELATED WSIS ACTION LINE: [Tick the relevant boxes or delete the irrelevant items]

- ☒ C1: The role of governments and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs for development

- ☐ C2: Information and communication infrastructure
- ☐ C3: Access to information and knowledge
- ☒ C4: Capacity building
- ☐ C5: Building confidence and security in the use of ICTs
- ☒ C6: Enabling environment
- ☐ C7: ICT applications
- ☐ C8: Cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content
- ☐ C9: Media
- ☐ C10: Ethical dimensions the Information Society
- ☐ C11: International and regional cooperation

RELATED GLOBAL DIGITAL COMPACT: [Tick the relevant boxes or delete the irrelevant items]

- ☒ 1: Close all digital divides and accelerate progress across the Sustainable Development Goals
- ☐ 2: Expand inclusion in and benefits from the digital economy for all
- ☐ 3: Foster an inclusive, open, safe and secure digital space that respects, protects and promote human rights
- ☒ 4: Advance responsible, equitable and interoperable data governance approaches
- ☒ 5: Enhance international governance of artificial intelligence for the benefit of humanity

RELATED SDG: [Tick the relevant boxes or delete the irrelevant items]

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| ☐ SDG 1: No Poverty | ☐ SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities |
| ☐ SDG 2: Zero Hunger | ☐ SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities |
| ☐ SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being | ☐ SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities |
| ☐ SDG 4: Quality Education | ☐ SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production |
| ☐ SDG 5: Gender Equality | ☐ SDG 13: Climate Action |
| ☐ SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation | ☐ SDG 14: Life Below Water |
| ☐ SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy | ☐ SDG 15: Life on Land |
| ☐ SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth | ☐ SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions |
| ☒ SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure | ☐ SDG 17: Partnerships for the SDGs |