

Spotlights

Iván Duque Márquez
Rick Perry
Marta Lucía Ramírez Blanco
Epsy Campbell Barr
Olga Margarita Alvarado Rodríguez
Alexander Acosta
Kimberly Breier

Highlights

Leadership in the Americas
U.S.-Latin American Relations
The Venezuelan Crisis
Economy, Trade, and Future of Work
Data Analytics & Technology
Reconciliation & the Peace Process
Energy, the Environment & the Future of Cities
Systems of Preparedness

Extras

Partnership Accelerator
Launched at the Americas Summit
Events at the Americas Summit
Community Feedback
Our Partners



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SUMMIT REPORT

2019 CONCORDIA AMERICAS SUMMIT

May 13-14, 2019 | Bogotá, Colombia

Partnerships For Social Impact

About Concordia Americas

The Concordia Americas Initiative was launched in May 2016, with the inaugural 2016 Concordia Americas Summit in Miami, Florida serving as one of the first international platforms to raise awareness about the Venezuelan humanitarian crisis. For the past three consecutive years, Concordia has brought together world-renowned political leaders, business innovators, and global non-governmental representatives in Bogotá, Colombia to host its flagship regional convening. The 2019 Americas Summit took place on May 13-14 at the Grand Hyatt, Bogotá and was Concordia's largest gathering in Colombia's capital to date, exploring critical issues facing the Western Hemisphere through the lens of cross-sector collaboration.

For more information about the Concordia Americas Initiative, visit:
www.concordia.net/americas

2018 Concordia Americas Summit Report

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A Message From Our Founders

Colombia is in the midst of a new era, one marked by possibility, innovation, and entrepreneurship.

Colombia is in the midst of a new era, one marked by possibility, innovation, and entrepreneurship. A beacon for Latin America, the country is on an unparalleled trajectory of advancement, growth, and stability.

It's been an honor to return to Bogotá this year and see Colombia's culturally-rich capital become a hub of global discussion. From the catastrophic crisis in Venezuela to the flourishing biodiversity of Colombia and the surge in artificial intelligence across Latin America, the 2019 Americas Summit provided an international platform through which to elevate the power of collaboration in driving the future of the Western Hemisphere.

Gathering world-renowned political leaders, business innovators, global non-governmental representatives, and impressive young minds, our fourth Americas Summit tackled some of the toughest issues facing the hemisphere. Crucially, the Summit witnessed the signing of important multilateral agreements between the U.S. and Colombian governments, while also announcing the launch of cutting-edge cross-sector partnerships. It was an honor to once again welcome President

Duque to Concordia, and to provide an opportunity for critical conversation between his Administration and the extensive delegation of officials, senators, and congressmen and women from the United States. As our largest and most ambitious Latin American gathering to date, the sheer diversity and vibrancy of this year's program is a testament to the growth of our Americas Initiative over the last four years. The morning sessions of the Summit's opening day welcomed individuals not only from Colombia and the U.S., but from Asia and Africa as well. These speakers sparked fertile dialogue and contributed to a hive of productive activity over the course of the two days.

We would like to take the opportunity to thank our Leadership Council for their ongoing guidance and their integral role in shaping the Americas Initiative into what it is today. A huge thank you, also, to our Members, Sponsors, Advisors, Speakers, and Board for their dedication and insight.

We look forward to continuing these conversations with you at the 2019 Concordia Annual Summit in New York City in September. ♦



Matthew A. Swift
Co-Founder, Chairman & CEO
Concordia



Nicholas M. Logothetis
Co-Founder & Chairman of the Board
Concordia

Iván Duque Márquez

President of the Republic of Colombia

Welcoming President Duque to the Concordia stage, **H.E. Olusegun Obasanjo, Former President of the Republic of Nigeria & Concordia Leadership Council Member**, praised the Colombian President's international leadership in the face of the Venezuelan crisis and emphasized Colombia's important role in regional security. In his introductory remarks, President Obasanjo also highlighted the importance of Concordia's regional programs and the power of bringing together leaders from across regions to share lessons learned in addressing similar challenges and pursuing similar goals.

President Duque shared the goals and trajectory of Colombia's National Development Plan, highlighting his efforts to provide a road of opportunity for all Colombians, to create a modern country and dynamic economy, and to close evident gaps in order to construct an equal society. The President observed the need for the government to work with local leaders across the country regardless of their ideology or political affiliation, along with the importance of placing Colombia within a global framework.

Colombia is a resilient nation, with an abundance of creative power and entrepreneurship, a history of overcoming barriers, and a capability of evolving along with the talent of its citizens. Discussing challenges that have arisen in the past and that need to be overcome, President Duque highlighted three key areas. First, more than 50% of Colombia's workforce falls under an informal structure of taxes and social security. Addressing this challenge will help build a more effective pension system, better public finances, and a sustainable healthcare system. Second, corruption poses a threat on both a national and global level. Transparency and scrutiny, within an effective legal framework, is key to overcoming corruption. Third, entrepreneurship must be prioritized, as the success of any type of entrepreneur generates formal employment.

President Duque cited the government's priority to create equal conditions in order to expand the middle class. By undertaking a broad exercise of dialogue with citizens, the government is attempting to recover the ingredient of trust between the state and its citizens, ultimately establishing a collaborative

environment that produces a better quality of life for Colombians. The President highlighted key elements of the National Development Plan, including its focus on reactivating economic growth by lowering taxes for small companies and its emphasis on reigniting tourism—and, therefore, generating employment—given that Colombia is a country with the biggest biodiversity per square kilometer after Brazil. The Plan also promotes the creative industry as one of the most important development engines of the country.

“We’re observing a humanitarian tragedy [in Venezuela] and we cannot have a passive position; that’s why the invitation for all Latin American members is not about asking ourselves when is the regime going to fall, but what are we going to do to make that happen and reestablish the constitutional order?”

Iván Duque Márquez

President of the Republic of Colombia

On the Venezuelan crisis, President Duque urged the Latin American community to apply pressure and take action to reinstall constitutional order and achieve liberty and democracy, stating that the diplomatic circle that we're observing through the Lima Group—a council of 14 Latin American countries set up in 2017 to deal with the Venezuelan crisis—and different external agencies needs to be strengthened. ♦



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“Placing entrepreneurship in the middle of the development discussion is absolutely important.”

Iván Duque Márquez
President of the Republic of Colombia



Rick Perry U.S. Secretary of Energy

The relationship between energy and security plays a critical role across the Americas, witnessed not least in Venezuela, a country that possesses the world's largest oil reserves and that has spiraled into deep chaos as a result of the mismanagement of the corrupt actions of Nicolás Maduro. This was a key focus of the 14th U.S. Secretary of Energy's remarks. Highlighting the pivotal role of the U.S. in the global energy renaissance, Secretary Perry cited the ability of breakthroughs in energy across the country to meet a surge in global demand, which is forecasted to rise by 50% by the year 2040. Due to continued innovation in technology, the U.S. is the world's number one producer of oil and natural gas, while—at the same time—technology is making fuel cleaner, reducing energy-related emissions.

In terms of the relationship with its hemisphere partners, Secretary Perry explained that the U.S. is urging countries across the hemisphere to support and sustain free markets and is developing key partners to implement market reforms and other policies to increase business activity. Importantly, the U.S. now exports energy to 35 nations across five continents. Highlighting the energy potential of Colombia and the opportunities that its use can bring for the creation of new jobs, the Secretary affirmed that Colombia could triple its production if it applies the correct measures that allow innovation and technology to contribute to the diversification of the country's technological matrix.

“The breakthroughs that we’ve seen in energy are world-changing. They’ve created an unparalleled energy resurgence across the U.S. and parts of the globe. They’re strengthening the ties that bind the Americas together. They’re providing spectacular opportunities across the region as we develop our energy more wisely, more efficiently.”

Rick Perry
U.S. Secretary of Energy

Secretary Perry used the Concordia stage to announce the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the U.S. and Colombia in order to establish a framework for cooperation in energy matters, including the provision of technical assistance, the exchange of knowledge and information, and the offer of training and services. ♦

For a summary of Secretary Perry's conversation with María Fernanda Suárez, Colombia's Minister of Mines & Energy, see pages 38-43.





Marta Lucía Ramírez Blanco
Vice President of
the Republic of Colombia

Epsy Campbell Barr
Vice President of
the Republic of Costa Rica

**Olga Margarita Alvarado
Rodríguez**
Second Vice President of
the Republic of Honduras

Since President Duque took office last year, Colombia’s cabinet has been gender equal, with women making up 50% of the 16 cabinet ministers for the first time in the country’s history. While the Duque Administration is actively appointing Colombian women to positions of leadership, it is crucial that the appropriate measures are in place to ensure that this progress has permanence. The 2019 Americas Summit featured a panel of three inspirational female vice presidents of Latin American nations, illuminating the role of female leadership in government and examining the measures in place to ensure progress in this space can continue.

As stressed by Vice President Marta Lucía Ramírez, Colombia’s first female vice president, female participation in the political arena is a necessity

for society and has far reaching consequences, not least driving economic empowerment. While the capabilities of women, from an intellectual point of view, are just as strong as men, women have something additional to contribute—they search for social consensus, they establish connections, and they reach agreements through constructive conversation.

“I’m here to honor Colombian women and to work for them. The 50% of women and 50% of men in the cabinet are all working to transform women’s reality, to open more opportunities with economical independence so we can close that salary gap.”

Marta Lucía Ramírez Blanco
Vice President of the Republic of Colombia

However, at the rate at which we’re going, 200 years will pass until women are on the same level as men, according to Vice President Epsy Campbell. In an impassioned delivery, Vice President Epsy Campbell urged the audience to empower girls from a young age and encouraged politicians to take concrete action to give women the same opportunities as men. Reiterating the remarks of Vice President Marta Lucía Ramírez, the Costa Rican Vice President implored us to understand that equality is not only a gain for women, but for society as a whole. ♦

For a full summary of the panel, see pages 12-17.



Alexander Acosta U.S. Secretary of Labor

Discussing the ever-important trade dynamic between the U.S. and Colombia, Secretary Acosta shared key statistics with the audience: Colombia sends more than a quarter of its exports to the U.S. and receives more than one third of its imports from the U.S. Much of this trade takes place within the context of the U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement, which allows nearly all goods to be traded duty free and incorporates strong and enforceable labor protections.

“I’m pleased that Concordia is once again holding this conference here in Colombia, because it provides an opportunity to showcase how nations in Latin America can take important steps to address labor challenges...”

Alexander Acosta
U.S. Secretary of Labor

The U.S. Department of Labor has engaged with the Colombian government to help ensure labor laws are effectively enforced and rigorously monitored, ultimately seeking to uphold commitments to Colombian and American workers. Colombia now has a standalone Ministry of Labor and is

implementing labor inspections, introducing electronic management systems, and improving inspector training. Secretary Acosta lauded the leadership of Minister Arango, who has set an ambitious agenda focused on reiterating the country’s pre-existing commitments and increasing capacity.

The U.S. has incorporated numerous labor commitments as part of its support for Colombia’s ascension to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The Department of Labor is funding projects that address child and forced labor, and that improve conditions for workers in the palm oil, coffee, and mining sectors. These projects have meaningful impacts on the lives of Colombian workers and their families. Building on these recent efforts, the Secretary announced an additional \$9 million of technical cooperation for new projects in Colombia. As part of the Women’s Global Development & Prosperity Initiative, one of the projects will support women’s economic empowerment in the flower and sugar cane sectors. It will work with the government and private sector to provide skills training, ensure labor protections, and increase the economic participation of women in Colombia. Another of the projects will improve the ability of rural workers to understand and exercise their labor rights in the palm oil, sugar, mining, corn, and cut flower sectors. ♦

Kimberly Breier

Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs for the U.S. Department of State

Exploring the bilateral relationship between the U.S. and Colombia, Assistant Secretary Breier highlighted the decision of the U.S. to expand cooperation around trade, innovation, security, human rights, democracy, and countering narcotics. The Western Hemisphere remains a region of strategic priority for the U.S., which seeks to enhance engagement, encourage greater business investment, and to strengthen people ties.

Acknowledging the human tragedy unfolding in Venezuela, the Assistant Secretary urged the international community to unite to allow Venezuela to reclaim democracy. She stressed that the opportunity for the Americas to present a future

of democracy and prosperity amid this crisis is more apparent than ever. The U.S. is sanctioning over 150 individuals and entities in Venezuela, and has supported the regional humanitarian response. ♦

“Colombia is a model for the region today. It is a strong democracy, an economic powerhouse.”

Kimberly Breier

Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs for the U.S. State Department





Leadership in the Americas

The 2019 Concordia Americas Summit convened a diverse roster of leading minds and unique perspectives across the public, private, and nonprofit sectors in order to elevate the role of leadership across the Americas.

The 2019 Concordia Americas Summit convened a diverse roster of leading minds and unique perspectives across the public, private, and nonprofit sectors in order to elevate the role of leadership across the Americas. In a conversation titled *Concordia Americas: Partnering for the Future*, **Nicholas M. Logothetis, Co-Founder & Chairman of the Board at Concordia**, led a panel with the following three distinguished members of Concordia's Leadership Council: **Ambassador John D. Negroponte, Vice Chairman of McLarty Associates and Former U.S. Deputy Secretary of State & U.S. Director of National Intelligence; Eduardo J. Padrón, Ph. D., President of Miami Dade College; and, Luis Alberto Lacalle, Former President of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay.**

The discussion began with an examination of the measures needed to alleviate the stagnation currently being experienced in Venezuela. Ambassador Negroponte highlighted the lack of clarity around the use of force under international law in the absence of a UN Security Council resolution or a call for external intervention from legitimate president Juan Guaidó. He emphasized that more pressure of various kinds is needed. Dr Padrón highlighted that the real crisis is the dismantling of the country's human infrastructure, with people fleeing in vast numbers due to a lack of jobs, shelter, and food. President Lacalle firmly cautioned against military intervention in Venezuela, stating that it would lead to a political earthquake in the continent. This belief was shared by Ambassador Negroponte, who emphasized the tremendous implications of external force.

Exploring the role of Concordia in Latin America, Logothetis asked Dr Padrón about the significance

of education to employment and job growth. According to Dr Padrón, education has always been important to the development of nations, but in our increasingly-globalized world, it's crucial for countries to provide access to quality education. Universities can be the most important equalizers that we have in society, but education has to move into the 21st Century and equip students with the skills that allow them to participate in the new economy.

“The real crisis in Venezuela today is how the human infrastructure is beginning to dismantle,”

Eduardo J. Padrón, Ph. D.
President of Miami Dade College

President Lacalle raised the issue of political engagement, urging us as citizens to not be indifferent to political activity, but to participate with politicians and share ideas and individual experiences, touching on the upcoming elections in Argentina and Bolivia. Finally, when asked about the Middle East, Ambassador Negroponte touched on the escalating tension in the Persian Gulf area, particularly between the Sunni countries and Iran. A panel discussion titled *Unveiling Populism in Latin America: Lessons for Democracy*, moderated by **José Manuel Acevedo, Subdirector of Noticias RCN**, addressed the challenge of populism in Latin America. The panel opened with a video of **Maria Corina Machado, Coordinator of Vente Venezuela**, who highlighted populism as a façade to shield a

military regime and stated that the disorder that populism has instilled in Venezuela threatens every single country in the hemisphere.

Using a range of statistics, **Alvaro Uribe Velez, Former President of the Republic of Colombia**, demonstrated that in countries under populist

“The enemies of populism are freedom, the rule of law, and institutions.”

Maria Corina Machado
Coordinator of Vente Venezuela

governments, people become poorer and core values of democracy—safety, investment, social cohesion, institutionality, and freedom of thought—face threat across societies. **Julio Borges, Ambassador of Venezuela to the Lima Group**, then unveiled two signs of populism that go on to fuel an anti-democratic, polarized rhetoric: the first is leaders who believe they are fully representative of the people, segregating the opposition and qualifying them as enemies of the people; the second is a narrative that dissembles both the historical discourse and political culture of society. Ambassador Borges went on to say that it’s not clear at what point populism takes advantage of a country’s low defense system, but that it’s critical for politicians to continually renew, innovate, and reinvent themselves, rather than treating themselves as victims. Bringing a private sector perspective to the conversation, **Axel Kaiser, Executive Director of Fundación Para el Progreso**, addressed the role of corporations and entrepreneurs in containing populism. Kaiser stated that business leaders have a public responsibility—one that goes beyond the generation of wealth.

The conversation then shifted to Colombia’s ability to withstand populist leaders. President Uribe shared his belief that the government has everything in place to be successful over the medium and long term, especially when you look at its efforts relating to safety, drug dealing, tax reduction, investor trust, and so on. The challenge lies in social tensions in the short term, but President Duque is committed to addressing these issues. President Uribe ended by reiterating the importance of strengthening private enterprise and social policy and encouraging cooperation between the two in order to maintain a country’s stability.

In line with Concordia’s mission to facilitate cross-sector partnerships for social impact, a conversation titled *Opportunities & Challenges to Achieve the SDGs: The Role of Strategic Partnerships* featured **María Juliana Ruiz Sandoval, First Lady of the Republic of Colombia**, and **Robert Skinner, Executive Director of the UN Office for Partnerships**, moderated by **Lucas Gomez, Technical Director of Monitoring and Evaluation of Public Policy, National Planning Department of Colombia**.

First Lady Ruiz opened the panel by sharing her vision to fuse government with social responsibility, stating that the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide a foundation for Colombia’s leadership. The First Lady shared her work to collaborate with First Ladies and Gentlemen on every level—from cities to municipalities and even departments—and to deal with issues that need to be agreed upon regardless of political affiliation, such as zero tolerance to child abuse. She emphasized her power as spokesperson and her ability to call for action, highlighting the importance of local perspective and working directly with stakeholders to close social gaps in the country. Skinner highlighted the importance of Colombia in the creation of the SDGs themselves, with the country incorporating the goals into its National Development

“I give Concordia credit. Concordia really breaks down the silos, brings communities together, and has these important conversations.”

Robert Skinner
Executive Director of the UN Office for
Partnerships

Plan as soon as they were introduced in September 2015. Reiterating First Lady Ruiz’s remarks, Skinner stressed the importance of working with mayors at the city level, as this is where the delivery will take place: city leaders are in direct contact with people and communities and understand their specific needs, so it’s crucial that cities have a voice. Skinner explained that the UN Office for Partnerships is a piece of the UN’s convening power, helping to bring multi-stakeholders into the conversation in order to produce real action.

In *The Role of Vice President: Reaching Gender*

Equity in Government Leadership, Claudia Gurisatti, Director of News for Noticias RCN, led a conversation with vice presidents of three Latin American countries, namely **Marta Lucía Ramírez Blanco**, Vice President of the Republic of Colombia, **Epsy Campbell Barr**, Vice President of the Republic of Costa Rica, and **Olga Margarita Alvarado Rodríguez**, Second Vice President of the Republic of Honduras. The discussion explored the necessity of female participation in the political arena, as well as the measures in place across Latin America to advance progress in this space.

Gurisatti opened the panel by acknowledging the recent progress made in Latin America towards gender equality in politics, thanks to the strength, dedication, and discipline of the panelists. When asking about the steps needed to accelerate this progress, Vice President Epsy Campbell highlighted that at the rate at which we're going, 200 years will pass until women are on the same level as men. We must empower girls from a young age, we must urge political parties to take concrete action to give women the same opportunities as men, and we must understand that equality is not only a gain for women, but for society as a whole. Vice President Marta Lucía Ramírez reiterated the necessity of women participating in the political arena, explaining that women leaders have a vision to transform societies and erase corruption, and are able to implement this vision. The participation of women in politics has far-reaching consequences, not least opening up economic empowerment. Second Vice President Olga Margarita Alvarado acknowledged the rise of women in politics, and explored the resulting promotion of fair countries and hope.

The conversation also explored the impact of quota laws. According to Vice President Epsy Campbell, quota laws have achieved positive results in Costa Rica, and play a critical role in sparking an appetite for cultural transformation. Female political participation in Costa Rica has risen from 11% to 40% following the application of a quota law in 2002. 46% of Congress is now occupied by strong, competitive women. Vice President Epsy Campbell urged for progress like this to become a universal position, emphasizing that mechanisms such as quota laws and affirmative action laws are a temporary, yet effective, measure—if executed properly—until we reach a point of equilibrium.

Reiterating many of these points, Vice President Marta Lucía Ramírez explained that we need to





communicate that the capabilities of women, from an intellectual point of view, are just as strong as men, but also that women have something additional to contribute—they search for social consensus, they establish connections, and they reach agreements through constructive conversation. Women now make up 50% of Colombia’s cabinet, but we must have the measures in place—and deeper reforms in our policies—to ensure that this has permanence.

“One in five ministers across the world is female. It is necessary to convince the world that economically- and politically-empowered women lead to the prosperity of society.”

Claudia Gurisatti
Director of News for Noticias RCN

To examine the role of leadership from an industry perspective, Concordia partnered with **Boston Consulting Group** to hold a Strategic Dialogue titled *Sustainable Financing: Implications for Investors & Corporations*. Growing trends in the face of global challenges have placed pressures on the business and investment community to play a more prominent role in addressing the economic, societal, and environmental challenges facing the world. The investor community is now embracing sustainable finance as its contribution. The investor use of environmental, social, and governance (ESG) data into investment decisions and increasing use of engagement and voting power has a profound impact on corporations.

There is a responsibility within all companies to go beyond economic impact and to include a social and

environmental impact, according to **Oscar Cadena, Head of Public Affairs for the Andean Region at Uber**. Regulatory stability is crucial in creating the right environment for companies to operate within effectively, while also achieving a sustainable impact. **Matias Bendersky, Chief of the Resource Mobilization Division at the Inter-American Development Bank**, believes most institutions are guided by a measure of impact, but that companies are not doing a good job of “selling” the story of the SDGs. **Ryan Brennan, COO of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation**, took this one step further, by suggesting that action must be taken against those companies that are not even considering making an impact. **Megan Kashner, Clinical Assistant Professor in Kellogg’s Public-Private Interface and Director of Social Impact at Northwestern University**, spoke about the ‘secret weapon’ of new talent—in the form of millennials—moving into companies, as they acknowledge the importance of sustainable finance.

“The challenge for disruptive companies is to find legal stability in terms of the confidence that enterprises need to act in a country.”

Oscar Cadena
Head of Public Affairs for
the Andean Region at Uber

The conversation also explored the progress being made in sustainable investment in Latin America, where even financial regulators are talking about social impact. In Colombia specifically, banks are issuing loans solely for clean energy, marking a huge step in this space. Both **Eduardo Atehortua, Head of LatAm for PRI**, and **German Chullmir,**



CEO of Orel Energy Group, explained the work of their organizations, with Chullmir stating that Orel will not invest in companies without a social impact vision. However, we need to prioritize better information, data, and reporting standards.

“Millennials nowadays don’t want to work in a company that does not have a real impact in the world.”

Douglas Beal
 Director, Social Impact
 Boston Consulting Group

Closing the 2019 Americas Summit, **Matthew A. Swift, Co-Founder, Chairman & CEO of Concordia**, sat down with **Alan Fleischmann, Founder & CEO of Laurel Strategies**, for a conversation titled *Looking Ahead: The Role of Convenings & Leadership in Global Development*, which explored the importance of creating collaborative models and building partnerships. Swift acknowledged the organic growth of the Concordia community, and explained that Colombia has been an ideal location because of its dynamism, optimism, and entrepreneurialism, seen in cities such as Medellín, which is one of the centers for the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Concordia can add value by talking about Colombia in a global, rather than regional, context, and by helping Bogotá become a hub of world leaders. The conversation also explored the motivation behind private sector companies, particularly in terms of how they engage with the communities in which they operate and, ultimately, build respect among consumers. Partnerships play a critical role in bridging this gap. The conversation ended with a call for more CEOs and government officials to be involved in these conversations. ♦

Next steps:

- As citizens we have rights but also an obligation to participate in political life—to share ideas and experiences, and to engage with politicians.
- Countries can armor themselves against populism by focusing on the following key areas: safety; an environment of trust for foreign investment; the advancement of democratic policies; independent institutions; and, pluralism in opinion and thought.
- When thinking about SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals, it’s crucial to work at the local level—for example with mayors at the city level—given the proximity of city leaders to people and their ability to implement change at the local level.
- The First Ladies of Latin America should come together around a common cause.
- Collective effort on a local, national, and international level, along with continued political reform, is needed to advance the role of women in the political arena.
- Corporations are building ESG factors into their core models, but there are multiple standards when it comes to reporting and data, which is complicating the landscape. We need better information and an increase in ESG data providers in order to effectively analyze companies and data, particularly in Latin America, where ESG investing is gaining momentum.
- The seeds planted in public-private relationships need to be nurtured to forge strong partnerships that are key to the success of the future.



U.S.-Latin American Relations

With deep ties across numerous arenas, including politics, economics, and defense, the relationship between the U.S. and Latin America is highly substantial.

The last several decades have seen a groundswell of changes across Latin America and, in particular, Colombia. The U.S., too, has experienced great changes, including rising political polarization, evolving attitudes toward military intervention, and others. There is also greater external engagement in the region than there was previously, with powers like China and Russia taking on greater roles in different aspects of regional affairs. Amidst this context however, the importance of U.S.-Latin American relations remains incredibly strong. With deep ties across numerous arenas, including the political, economic, military, and cultural, the relationship between the U.S. and Latin America is highly substantial and was a major point of discussion throughout the 2019 Americas Summit. As the largest power in the Western Hemisphere, the priorities of the U.S. in Latin America are ambitious and diverse. In an address entitled *A New Era in the Americas*, **Kimberly Breier, Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs for the U.S. Department of State**, provided an overview of the country's portfolio of interests and initiatives throughout the region. The U.S. is eager to promote democracy through greater rule of law and government accountability, support prosperity through increasing trade and U.S. business engagement, and enforce human rights standards by putting pressure on rogue regimes and other actors. Through initiatives like the BUILD Act and the 2X Americas Initiative, respectively, the U.S. is also working to encourage greater business investment into the region and support women's empowerment. Breier cited commendable progress in a variety of countries, such as Brazil's pension system reforms, measures in Ecuador to relax restrictions

on press freedoms, and efforts in Chile to embrace free markets and competition. However, the U.S. remains greatly concerned about the current crisis in Venezuela, Cuban support of the Maduro regime, and anti-democratic developments in Nicaragua. With significant representation of both U.S. and Colombian political leadership at the summit, the U.S.-Colombian bilateral relationship was the focus of several discussions. Speaking on *Bipartisan Support for the Future of Colombia*, **Debbie Wasserman-Schultz, Congresswoman for Florida's 23rd District for the U.S. House of Representatives**, and **French Hill, Congressman for Arkansas's Second Congressional District for the U.S. House of Representatives**, emphasized that despite the current environment of toxic partisanship in the U.S., support for Colombia as an ally has been steadfastly bipartisan. Assistant Secretary Breier noted just how broad-sweeping U.S.-Colombia cooperation is, encompassing trade, security, democracy, and human rights, among other issues. Part of what strengthens the relationship between the two countries is that there is much to learn from one another. Wasserman-Schultz and Hill, along with Catalina Ortiz, Congresswoman for Partido Verde of the Republic of Colombia, and Juan Manuel Daza, Congressman for Centro Democrático of the Republic of Colombia, discussed the countries' shared challenges with partisanship. According to Ortiz, the country is "paralyzed" from advancing due to polarization. As someone at the center of the political spectrum, the Congresswoman often finds herself subjected to attacks from either end of the political system—a dynamic that plays out in U.S. politics today, as well. Similarly, in *Partnering for Security and Defense*

in the Americas, Gen. (Ret.) David H. Petraeus, Chairman of KKR Global Institute, Former Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, and Concordia Leadership Council Member, raised this point, noting the respect U.S. military leaders have for the efforts of the Colombian armed forces over the years. Petraeus highlighted the lessons the U.S. has learned from its own military engagements in Iraq and Afghanistan and extended these to the Colombian context. Chiefly, the country cannot simply target enemies through military operations alone; there must be a broader civil-military effort that improves governance, establishes rule of law, and rebuilds the infrastructure, schools, and markets that underpin a functioning society in areas where there has been violence and destruction.

“The five main sources of illicit income are drug trafficking, illegal mining, extortion, kidnapping, and smuggling.”

Guillermo Botero Nieto
Minister of National Defense for
the Republic of Colombia

From the Colombian perspective at the Summit, the relationship with the U.S. is crucial, yet has significant room to grow. In his opening remarks **Guillermo Botero Nieto, Minister of National Defense for the Republic of Colombia**, stressed that international cooperation is a key priority for Colombia, particularly with the U.S. and other regional partners on the issue of narco-trafficking. Even though the U.S. and Colombia are two very different countries, there are fundamental areas of agreement that can lead to progress, especially on an issue as interregional as narco-trafficking. Congresswoman Ortiz made the case for a broadening of the U.S.-Colombia relationship to include other important issues, such as entrepreneurship and digital technology, in order to go beyond traditional security, rule of law and, more recently, the Venezuelan crisis, which has dominated the bilateral agenda. Congressman Daza, on the other hand, justified the longstanding emphasis on dealing with security, narco-trafficking, corruption, and violence, by arguing these are a higher-order priority that needs more immediate resolving.

This point was echoed by Congressman Hill, who characterized national security as a precondition for successful efforts on entrepreneurship and civil society.

“It’s understandable that Venezuela and coca can eat up a big part of the [bilateral] agenda, but we should broaden it.”

Catalina Ortiz
Congresswoman for Partido Verde of
the Republic of Colombia

Another issue that was raised by U.S. officials was the role of outside powers in the region, namely Russia and China. For Assistant Secretary Breier, the role of China in Latin America is one of the biggest strategic questions for the region. In the 21st Century, Chinese trade and investment into the region has been substantial and offered countries new opportunities for business and financing. However, Breier raised concerns about Chinese companies departing from important labor, environmental, and transparency standards, emphasizing that infrastructure development should follow international guidelines and facilitate inclusive growth rather than enable corruption and hinder governance. In a session on *Trump Administration Priorities in the Americas*, **Mauricio Claver-Carone, Senior Director of the National Security Council**, pointed to shrinking Chinese investment in the region in recent years, underscoring that the U.S. is still much of the region’s primary ally, and adding that the U.S. has been successfully increasing its investments into Latin America to fill the void. The other area where China, along with Russia, is playing a major role is the Venezuelan crisis, which was a significant discussion piece for the U.S. at the Summit.

The situation in Venezuela is currently a focal point of U.S. policy toward Latin America given the gravity of the humanitarian crisis and the strategic implications of having a failed state in the Western Hemisphere. Claver-Carone noted that the U.S. is pursuing a two-track policy of intensifying pressure on the Maduro regime in Venezuela as well as the Cuban regime, which has been a major supporter of Maduro’s. Congresswoman Wasserman-Schultz added during her panel that Russian and Chinese



involvement in the Venezuela situation has provided a lifeline to the Maduro regime, making it critical that the U.S. continue to apply pressure on them through political and diplomatic efforts. Colombia, meanwhile, has felt tremendous pressure due to the crisis, having taken in over 1.3 million people fleeing Venezuela since the crisis began. Minister Botero stressed the high priority Colombia is placing on defending its borders given the risks and pressures involved. Projecting forward, General Petraeus expressed doubts that the situation will resolve anytime soon, as the Venezuelan army remains “part and parcel to” the Maduro regime. For Petraeus, the U.S. seems unlikely to intervene militarily at this time, but it is essential to consider what the consequences of intervention might be, and what would be required to deal with them.

In *A Hemisphere of Freedom: Responding to Crisis & Advancing Democracy Across the Americas*, Matthew Swift, Co-Founder, Chairman & CEO of Concordia, sat down with Mark Green, Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The conversation began with an examination of the U.S. government’s support of interim president Juan Guaidó. Administrator Green gave an overview of the financial, humanitarian, and democratic assistance that the U.S. is providing to Venezuela as well as to countries hosting Venezuelans who are being forced to flee. On the first day of the 2019 Americas Summit, Administrator Green announced USAID’s commitment of an additional \$160 million to support migrants and implement peace agreements in Colombia, and to help Colombia tackle a number of other challenges.

Discussing the outlook for Latin America as a whole, Administrator Green cited the significant progress made over the last two decades, in particular the rise



of the middle class and sharp GDP growth in both Colombia and Mexico. However, challenges remain: eight out of the 10 most dangerous cities in the world are in Latin America, illicit drugs and trafficking remain, and authoritarianism is on the rise. ♦

Next steps:

- The international community—including the public, private, and nonprofit sectors—should mobilize whatever pressure is at its disposal to resolve the humanitarian crisis in Venezuela and provide the Venezuelan people with aid and dignity.
- Politicians and citizens in polarized democratic countries should work to disagree with one another without being disagreeable.
- The U.S. and Latin America should explore further opportunities for collaboration to promote rule of law, government accountability, investment, trade, human rights, and women’s empowerment in the Western Hemisphere.
- As security and rule of law improves in Colombia, the U.S. and Colombia should consider broadening the agenda of their relationship to include greater emphasis on other important issues like entrepreneurship and civil society.
- To guarantee a successful peace process in Colombia and in other post-conflict Latin American countries, there should be strong civil-military coordination to ensure that quality governance and daily life are restored in areas where violence has done the most damage.



The Venezuelan Crisis

The ongoing crisis in Venezuela—now the largest humanitarian crisis in the hemisphere—has remained a focal point for Concordia over recent years.

| The volatile governance and human rights situation in Venezuela is changing daily, with the economic and democratic future of the country, as well as regional stability, at stake. Following recent defections in the military in support of Juan Guaidó's constitutionally-legitimate interim government, the international community is honed in on what comes next. In a panel titled *Venezuela: Preparing for the Unexpected*, moderated by **Juan Roberto Vargas, Director of Noticias Caracol**, experts from the region responded to the latest on-the-ground developments and shared key considerations shaping the immediate, short, and long-term prognosis.

Carlos Vecchio, Ambassador to the U.S. for the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, acknowledged the clear leadership of Juan Guaidó, who is mobilizing the Venezuelan people, and stressed the need to maintain unity and conviction while increasing pressure from the international community in order to conquest freedom. Regarding U.S. military intervention, Ambassador Vecchio stated that interim president Guaidó has been clear that every option requires mobilization. Decisions need to be taken in a multilateral and responsible way, with the objective of achieving liberty. **David Smolansky, Chair of Working Group on Venezuelan Migration & Refugee Crisis for the Organization of American States**, also highlighted the important role of the international community in terms of aid contributions, and explored the fact that 54 countries today recognize Guaidó as president of Venezuela, with Cuba, Nicaragua, Bolivia, and Russia supporting Maduro. On January 1 there was a demotivated country, but today there are more than 50 ambassadors and a humanitarian coalition to bring aid to the country.

Examining the reaction of Colombia to the Venezuelan crisis, **Carlos Holmes Trujillo, Minister of Foreign Affairs for the Republic of Colombia**, explained that Colombia's position has been clear from the start, taking measures to support all democratic efforts and remain at the country's service. Minister Trujillo explained that Venezuela deserves the collective support of the international community, and that placing Venezuelans as a priority is fundamental for both the region and the world, as well as for democratic ideas. He expressed conviction in the fact democratization will continue growing and will return.

“This is not a unilateral decision—it’s a multilateral construction. Because this is not a problem between Maduro and the U.S.—it’s between the free world against a dictatorship [...] We’re defending universal principles of freedom.”

Carlos Vecchio
Ambassador to the U.S. for
the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

Jorge Fernando Quiroga Ramírez, Former President of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, praised Colombia's appointment of Minister Trujillo as a high-level politician and the most important councillor for Venezuela and Colombia. He issued a call to action that now is the time to invoke all stakeholders and that establishing key international



actions will be critical over the coming weeks—it’s crucial that the international community unite to utilize all mechanisms to support Guaidó so that the transition is irreversible. Venezuela needs more support to reinstate education, trade, markets, basic resources, shelters, and so on.

A flashpoint presentation titled *Don’t Blink: Senator Rick Scott on the Crisis in Venezuela* explored the Venezuelan crisis from the perspective of the U.S. Senator Scott emphasized the close alignment between the U.S. and Colombia in supporting the Venezuelan people, explaining that the two countries stand united in their common goal of freedom and democracy for the region and security for the hemisphere. He praised President Duque’s strong measures to support freedom and democracy in Latin America, grow jobs for citizens, and bring drug trafficking to an end. The danger posed by the Venezuelan crisis to the security of citizens of the U.S. and South and Central American nations was also highlighted, with the potential of the crisis to destabilize every country in the region and create a

“We cannot abandon Venezuela or its people. We cannot allow the brutal dictator Nicolás Maduro to carry on his genocide of young children unquestioned and unchallenged. And most importantly, we cannot allow Venezuela to turn into Syria [...] Now is the time to rid the world of Nicolás Maduro and his genocide.”

Rick Scott
 Senator of the State of Florida

flood of migrants throughout Latin America and to the southern border of the U.S. A country rich in natural resources, with an economic foundation set to thrive under the right leadership, Venezuela needs a constitutional government.

A discussion between Senator Scott and **Gustau Alegret, Editorial Director of NTN24 USA**, explored the possibility of U.S. military intervention. Senator Scott shared his opinion that he’s not optimistic that progress can be made through diplomatic channels, but rather in whatever way more pressure can be applied, whether it’s through additional sanctions, or whether it’s by making sure that anyone touching the Maduro regime can’t do business worldwide. He urged for pressure to be placed on Cubans, who are using Venezuela for its oil, either by putting a blockade on their ports or through additional sanctions, as well as urging for the White House to be more public about the impact imposed by sanctions. In the face of unprecedented regional migration, Colombia is poised to serve as a regional—and likely global—norm setter for how a middle-income, democratically-governed country manages migration and displacement. Governments, civil society, multilateral organizations, and the business sector are looking for ways to maximize the benefits of migration to promote inclusive growth. *Unlocking Public-Private Investments to Address Migration in the Americas* explored how the public and private sector can collaborate to address the socio-economic needs of vulnerable populations and illustrated how the international community can join such efforts. **Felipe Muñoz, Advisor to the President of the Republic of Colombia**, presented an assessment of the migration phenomenon in Colombia and the government’s plans to promote the regularization and inclusion of Venezuelans, with a special emphasis on technology, citizen security, and intersectoral



alliances. Up until March 2019, Migración Colombia counted over 1.26 million Venezuelans in the country, with almost 22% of migrants in Bogotá. The existing information about the migrant population reveals that it is concentrated in urban areas and that it is young, hard-working, and educated. The proportion of unemployed Venezuelans with respect to those who were of working age in 2018 was 17.8%, which is 9% higher than that of non-migrants. Muñoz highlighted the power of media in sharing the right message about welcoming Venezuelan people.

Carol Thompson O’Connell, Acting Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of Population, Refugees & Migration for the U.S. Department of State, noted the importance of focusing on the medium- and long-term solutions. She highlighted that the U.S. is the largest donor to the regional response to this humanitarian crisis, donating \$213 million in humanitarian aid to 12 countries over the last two years, of which \$90 million went to Colombia and \$43 million to support the regularization and socioeconomic inclusion of newcomers, specifically. The undersecretary invited the international community and the private sector to invest more in generating socioeconomic opportunities for all communities, including migrants.

According to **Rafael de la Cruz, Manager of the**

“We are the same people at the end of the day, separated by a frontier that in the past was the same country of La Gran Colombia.”

Rafael de la Cruz
 Manager of the Andean Region &
 Representative to Colombia for
 the Inter-American Development Bank

Andean Region & Representative to Colombia for the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the humanitarian crisis is a tragedy but migration could be a great opportunity for Latin America. He announced the creation of a regional fund of \$100 million in non-reimbursable resources to help countries that receive migrants. The IDB has reserved \$800 million for loans to national or subnational governments that present social infrastructure projects for areas with high migratory flows. Migration can also stimulate economic growth, which would reduce unemployment, among other benefits.

The representatives of the U.S. and the IDB congratulated the Colombians and their government for hosting so many migrants and encouraged the government and society to regularize this entire population. Finally, it was highlighted that Colombia has been a pioneer in the design and implementation of public-private partnerships for the inclusion of vulnerable populations, making the country an example for the region. The key will be not to give preferential treatment to any particular population and to generate opportunities for all inhabitants. ♦

Next steps:

- It is necessary to combat myths related to migration and promote tolerance and acceptance so that this phenomenon is an opportunity for inclusive growth for all. Migration should be embraced as an opportunity, not a problem.
- Colombia must make the most of its intake of young, educated, and talented individuals to aid the country’s future.
- Efforts must be made to strengthen the link between humanitarian development and the private sector.

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Economy, Trade, and Future of Work

Across the globe, few conversations on matters of economy transpire without recognition of the role of technology in driving disruption, opening up new opportunities, and revolutionizing industries.

Across the globe, few conversations on matters of economy transpire without recognition of the role of technology in driving disruption, opening up new opportunities, and revolutionizing industries. Latin America has proven no exception in this regard—industry, government, and nonprofit leaders alike contemplate how to train the workforce for 21st Century challenges and needs, and how to promote a more inclusive economy writ large. Amid globalization and digitalization, the question of how to preserve the culture and soul of local communities, industries, and ecosystems is particularly poignant. And, finally, alongside questions of change and disruption remain familiar questions on how to ensure fair labor protections, incubate a balanced regulatory environment, and foster greater regional trade. In this context, the 2019 Americas Summit featured a robust set of action-oriented discussions on the economy, workforce development, and the future of work in Colombia and the broader region. The notion of building an inclusive formal economy was a recurring theme at the Summit. There are roughly 130 million people in Latin America and the Caribbean, including more than 27 million young people, that constitute the informal economy. In the session *Digital Transformation in the Americas*, **Gloria Alonso, Head of the Department of National Planning for Colombia**, noted that her department’s development plan aims to close gaps in access to opportunities throughout Colombia. From reducing the unemployment rate for young people (which Alonso mentioned is at around 16-17% in Colombia) to formalizing the many informal small companies so that they have greater access to financing opportunities, physical and digital connectivity are key. As noted by **Victor Muñoz,**

High Commissioner for Digital Transformation for the Republic of Colombia, half of the people in the rural parts of Colombia are not connected with the major cities.

Economic inclusion was at the heart of the presentation by **Sergio Figueredo, Executive Director of Choco4Peace, Cacao at the Intersection of Sustainability & Blockchain Technology**. In Colombia today, there are around 38,000 cacao producers, 90% of which are small farmers and 73% of which live below the poverty line. For many, access to finance, skills development, insurance, and useful technology is limited—even with the Colombian government’s national support program to transition farmers away from illegal coca production. Responding to the need for more active private sector participation, Figueredo runs a platform that leverages blockchain technology and connects cacao farmers in Colombia with global markets, investors, and other services, such as crop insurance. Through the traceability enabled by blockchain, socioeconomic and environmental impact can be better tracked, and there is greater transparency throughout the supply chain, enhancing trust and increasing efficiency. Equipping underserved populations with technological solutions, at scale, would go a long way toward greater inclusiveness in the economy.

As cross-sector stakeholders looked toward promoting a stronger and more inclusive economy while developing a 21st Century workforce, participants paid considerable attention to the question of how to ensure people are developing the right set of skills. In the context of the discussion on digital transformation, Muñoz and **Julio Rojas Sarmiento, Chief Financial Officer of Banco**



de Bogotá, emphasized the outsized role that skills development would need to play amidst the digitalization affecting Latin America. In a recent visit with technology industry leaders in Silicon Valley, Muñoz's chief takeaway was the idea of "training for the skills of the 21st Century." Sarmiento added that, in addition to technical skills, investing more in English education would be valuable because of how pervasive English is in the technology world. Relatedly, panelists also agreed on the need for building wider trust in digital platforms. As articulated by **Salvador Pérez Galindo, Vice President of Public Affairs for LatAm & the Caribbean at VISA**, the future of commerce is digital, making the Colombian government's focus on the matter a model for the rest of the region and a key step toward injecting greater confidence into the system.

"Colombia can be a leader in digital transformation, not only in the region but globally."

Julio Rojas Sarmiento
Chief Financial Officer of Banco de Bogotá



Another aspect of workforce development emerged in conversations on promoting an orange economy in Colombia: the need to teach business and entrepreneurship skills to a broader net of the population, including the creatively inclined. This was one of the central points of the panel *The Creative Economy & Conservation as Pillars of Sustainable Development*. **Cecilia Duque, Former Director of Artesanías de Colombia**, emphasized the need for more programs and policies in place that support, empower, and educate artisans. Building upon this priority, speakers in an interactive Strategic Dialogue called *Orange Economy Fishbowl: Creative Talent - A New Global Commodity?* highlighted that educational systems often fall short when it comes to motivating creative young people and connecting them to the economy. Instead, there should be systems in place that engage people in the orange economy from an early age so that their creative potential does not go to waste. As explained by **Alejandro Calderon, Co-Founder of Looking for the Masters**, the creative economy should be viewed as a major opportunity for Colombian and other post-conflict societies; accordingly, creativity

should be treated as a pillar of the economy. The creative economy was described by numerous plenary panelists as a vehicle for community development, cultural preservation, and empowerment. For **Donna Karan, Founder of DKNY and the UrbanZen Foundation**, she has learned—partly through her experience working with Colombian artisans—the power of fostering communities where people can create alongside each other and respect their cultures. **Ana Maria Fries, Director of Artesanías de Colombia**, added that artisans shape the creative DNA of a country, passing down their heritage and culture from generation to generation. Reinforcing this point, **Iris Aguilar, Master of Wayuu**, shared her desire for community development and empowering young women by encouraging them to uphold their ancestral artistic traditions.

“You ought to find your soul. What can you do that has not been done yet?”

Donna Karan

Founder of DKNY and the UrbanZen Foundation

There was also discussion of an alignment between creative preservation and natural conservation, with **Julia Miranda, Director of Parques Nacionales de Colombia**, noting her country’s incredibly rich biodiversity, the need to invest in local communities, and the capacity for this biodiversity to be leveraged for competitive advantage. There are strong examples already of private sector corporations working to connect local artisans with a sustainable and scalable business model. **Monica Contreras, Head of the Andean Region for PepsiCo**, pointed to what her company is doing to preserve and link the indigenous Wayuu community’s handcrafted product to the rest of the world. Additionally, **Carmen Busquets, Founder of Net-a-Porter**, has led a model for making local design available globally and, in her remarks, noted how globalization can be leveraged even while promoting localization. Several other sessions built on the topic of untapped areas of the economy that, when expanded upon, could have transformative impact locally and globally. **Bruce MacMaster, President of ANDI**, delivered a flashpoint presentation, *Agroindustry – The New Engine of Development*, which illuminated

just how underdeveloped Colombia’s agroindustry is. Colombia provides 0.5% of the world’s food and is the 31st highest global ranking food producer, yet the country is incredibly water rich and has nearly 15 million unused hectares of land that could be used for agricultural purposes. MacMaster cites that with an annual productivity increase of 7%, Colombia could provide 2% of the world’s food and be ranked 10th worldwide among producers, not to mention the economic benefits that would accrue for Colombia. To move toward this ambitious goal would require the right combination of private sector engagement, technology, skills development, and public sector regulatory support and incentives. The great potential for Colombian leadership in the global economy was echoed by Sarmiento, who noted that Colombia has everything it needs to be the Latin American leader on digital technology, but could learn valuable lessons from counterparts in Asia, the U.S., and parts of Africa.

Despite notes of optimism, there was a shared understanding that there remain certain obstacles to economic prosperity in the region. The rising prevalence of illicit trade in Latin America has been particularly problematic; Latin America accounts for an alarming 41% of global illicit trade. In Colombia, cigarette smuggling has kept hundreds of millions of dollars of tax revenue from the state. Beyond the issue of tax collection, **Juan Carlos Pinzon, President of ProBogotá**, remarked in a panel titled *Public & Private Collaboration to Combat Illicit Trade* that small local companies struggle to compete with illegally-entered goods and that trade is a threat to employment. As noted by **Jorge Bedoya, President of Consejo Gremial Nacional**, trading of contraband undermines the formal economy. Complicating the issue, illicit trade is often enmeshed in transnational cartel and terror groups, according to **French Hill, Congressman for Arkansas’s Second Congressional District for the U.S. House of Representatives**, making it a global problem that requires well-coordinated efforts. The crisis in Venezuela too has contributed significantly to the problem. Looking toward solutions, **Laura Valdivieso Jiménez, Vice Minister of Commerce for the Republic of Colombia**, underscored the need for a “unified system” that integrates communication and collaboration between the different public and private institutions involved in illicit trading, while Bedoya emphasized the necessity of cooperation between different border agencies.



There is also concern over regulatory environments. In a flashpoint presentation *Regulation vs. Competitiveness: Where is the Balance?* Eduardo Visbal Rey, Vice President of Foreign Trade at Fenalco, noted some of the predominant challenges companies are facing today, such as rapidly-changing laws and standards. Visbal Rey made the case for unleashing the power of the private sector to help address local and regional challenges. Greater coordination within the government—and between the public and private sectors—on regulatory changes that affect the business environment would go a long way in supporting private sector development and impact. Providing a Colombian public sector perspective on regulation and the economy, Alicia Arango Olmos, Minister of Labor for the Republic of Colombia, outlined the workforce-oriented priority areas her ministry is focused on, which have encompassed everything ranging from enhancing training opportunities in the workplace to improving the social protection floor for those in the informal economy who make less than the minimum wage.

“Equity is necessary for this country to move forward.”

Alicia Arango Olmos

Minister of Labor for the Republic of Colombia

Arango Olmos cited that 44% of Colombian workers fall below this threshold. Other priorities include greater support for entrepreneurs, bolstering of the protections in place for older people, and continuing to support female workforce participation. Notably, Arango Olmos’ U.S. counterpart, Secretary Acosta, voiced his support for the Colombian labor agenda,

and announced that the U.S. is allocating \$9 million toward technical cooperation on labor projects. ♦

Next steps:

- The public and private sectors need to come together when it comes to guiding the technological transformation of Latin American countries.
- Other countries around the region should look to the initiative the Colombian government is demonstrating on the digital transformation front.
- Governments, companies, and nonprofits should forge collaborative solutions to equip workforces with the skills needed for the 21st Century reality—not just in terms of technical skills, but also creative skills that preserve culture and humanity in an age of automation, digitalization, and machinery.
- Development of a creative economy will require cross-sector prioritization and collaboration, including partnerships that better link creative people with business knowhow and entrepreneurial skills.
- Increasing illicit trade is threatening many aspects of the regional economy, requiring national governments from around the hemisphere to work together to police it, and creative partnerships to combat the root causes of the trade.
- In order to advance trade opportunities and business investment, the Colombian government and the private sector should work to coordinate on issues of regulation so that there is less confusion and more shared understanding.





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Data Analytics & Technology

From the rise and implementation of new technologies such as 5G networks, cryptocurrency, and artificial intelligence (A.I.), technology has never been more accessible in everyday life than it is today.

As the world finds itself in the midst of a technological revolution, Colombia has established itself as one of Latin America's most technologically-advanced hubs. Through the establishment of the new Ministry of Science, Technology & Innovation, Colombia has positioned itself at the center of this technological revolution. From the rise and implementation of new technologies such as 5G networks, cryptocurrency, and artificial intelligence (A.I.), technology has never been more accessible in everyday life than it is today. But with the rise of these technologies, new fears and vulnerabilities present themselves. At the 2019 Americas Summit, some of the world's leading experts in big data and technology sought to address these concerns head-on, while presenting exciting opportunities for Colombia to continue to grow as a global hub.

“A.I. and big data are such powerful tools and opportunities that are available today, and we cannot ignore them.”

Dr. Sreerama Murthy
CEO & Chief Data Scientist of Quadratyx

In a flashpoint presentation entitled *The Untapped Potential of A.I. & Data Science*, Dr. Sreerama Murthy, CEO & Chief Data Scientist of Quadratyx, provided insight into how A.I. technology is being implemented in the workforce. Dr. Murthy began his presentation by stating that A.I. technologies should not be considered as a disruptor in the workforce but as a way to assist in areas that require human

experience and expertise, such as a radiologist diagnosing a tumor or a company deciding where to open its next branch. While these examples have often required people to make these decisions unilaterally, there are now strong big data and A.I. systems that can make those decisions much easier. The idea that there is now technology that can make “human” decisions easier sparks a fear that the workforce is being automated. While true to a certain extent, Dr. Murthy argued that “there is no need to believe that A.I. is dangerous.” These new technologies exist to assist in the process, but they cannot completely solve all of the problems.

In fact, A.I. technology and big data systems are not commonplace just yet, but there is great potential to implement them. Dr. Murthy laid out several different fields in which this technology could help in Colombia. In the orange economy, we can use A.I. technology and big data to create an inexpensive and highly-technological educational system: a system that is able to provide education on a mass scale and allow for the secure sharing of ideas and intellectual property across the world. He strongly believes that in order for the next generation of innovators to build upon the current technological landscape, they must first be aware of and understand what is happening worldwide. Big data analytics and A.I. technology can then be used to identify gaps in policy making, planning, and resources, as well as to predict and prevent certain events from happening. The potential to implement this technology is endless when we stop viewing it as a threat to the human workforce and start viewing it as assistance. The sentiments of Dr. Murthy were echoed in *Aspen Institute Socrates Program: Spotlight on Artificial Intelligence, Future of Work & Civil Society*

in Colombia, featuring: **Juan Carlos Pinzón, President of ProBogotá**; **Brynne McNulty Rojas, Director of Strategic Partnerships for the McNulty Foundation**; **María Paz Gaviria, Director of ARTBO**; **Luis Ernesto Araújo, Partner at Prestigio**; **Elliot Gerson, Executive Vice President of the Aspen Institute**; and moderator **Cordell Carter, Executive Director of the Aspen Institute**. The panel discussed the implications of A.I. on the workforce but also in other fields, including the ways in which law and policy are made. The discussion began with all of the panelists acknowledging how important it is that this conversation is happening in Colombia. As Colombia continues to position itself at the center of Latin America's technical innovations, the panelists emphasized the importance of Colombians having a place where they can discuss thoughts and perspectives on A.I., freely and holistically, in a Colombian context. In light of this, Gerson announced that the Aspen Institute will open its first South American Institute in Colombia.

“We must take advantage of the new era of technology to make an impact on civil society. Today President Duque is betting on entrepreneurship and creativity.”

Juan Carlos Pinzón
President of ProBogotá

Continuing the discussion, the panelists spoke about the pros and cons of A.I. on society. While Dr. Murthy explored this in regards to the workforce, Gaviria emphasized the effects of A.I. on arts and culture, stating that “A.I. will change the way we build knowledge and have a profound aspect over the arts.” The implementation of A.I. technology, or “augmented intelligence” as Rojas referred to it as, provides a gateway for people to be more creative in their lives. With more and more skills becoming automated, humans are allowed to focus on being more creative, and that creativity helps the arts flourish. On the other hand, we must keep in mind the cons of A.I. technology. Technology is advancing at an unprecedented pace and humans run the risk of getting left behind. Even though humans may not fully understand the full implications of the technology, we must use it to better society.

In his flashpoint presentation entitled *Using Data Analytics to Innovate in Public Policy*, **Santiago Fainstein, Customer Advisory Director for Latin America at SAS**, elaborated on how we can better use the technology and data analysis available to us. He started by illustrating just how far we have come with technology in a short amount of time. In 2008, the CEO of Blockbuster stated that Netflix and Redbox were not considered as competition, yet in 2019 Netflix is one of the largest streaming services in the world. Fainstein used this example to illustrate just how difficult it is to predict the future when it comes to technology. One area that Fainstein focused on specifically is public policy in Colombia. He emphasized how analyzing the data we already have, frameworks can be established that allow us to improve national security and commerce, and better fight against trafficking. There is already technology out there that can read through documents in search of names, dates, and directions. With that information, we are able to combat corruption, tax evasion, money laundering, and trafficking.

“Believe in the power of data and apply it to solve the problems our countries face.”

Santiago Fainstein
Customer Advisory Director for
Latin America at SAS

While the possibilities for utilizing A.I. technology and big data analysis to our advantage are endless, so too are the possibilities for corruption. During *The Digital Toolbox to Fight Corruption* Strategic Dialogue, panelists discussed ways in which Colombia and the rest of the world are currently using data analysis and A.I. technology as a means to fight against corruption. The conversation started with the panelists acknowledging that corruption is not just a public sector issue, but a private sector issue as well. As such, it is paramount that the public and private sectors share information with each other and work together to implement new technology. In regards to Colombia, **Mauricio Toro, Representative to the Chamber of Bogotá**, expressed the belief that the public and private sectors should be making synergies in the investigation of the new technologies such as blockchain, as it can be widely

used in the healthcare sector, for instance.

Guillermo Ocampo, Digital Transformation Lead for Microsoft Colombia, argued that the fight against corruption should start at a young age. This requires countries to educate young people in the use of the technology that is being used to combat corruption. **Sylvia Constain, Minister of Information & Communication Technologies for Colombia**, emphasized that all levels of the Colombian government should be working with the private sector in the development of talent in the technological and digital fields. Fighting corruption is in the best interest of every sector and there needs to be cross-sector collaboration in order to address it. But, as **Michael Blake, Assembly Member for the New York State Assembly**, pointed out, there need to be systems established that address the root of corruption, not just react to it.

One of the areas of public policy in which the need for technology to address corruption is most prevalent is in the justice system. **Néstor Humberto Martínez, Attorney General for the Republic of Colombia**, pointed out how Colombia faces great challenges with its lack of technology in the justice system. As it stands, there is no system in place that prevents industrial espionage or the manipulation of markets. As such, it is increasingly important that we turn to technology such as blockchain, which allows for transactions to be tracked and prevents one person from altering data by themselves. Horacio Jose Serpa, Senator for the Republic of Colombia, agreed with the need to implement these technologies, stating that the more we are able to trace technology, the harder it will be for any corruption to take place. ♦

Next steps:

- Aspen Colombia plays an important role as a locally-funded and lead initiative. Aspen will provide the location to uniting, and the tools to access global technology, and Colombia will then be able to become a leader in the region.
- We need to identify which social policy issues technology can help us solve.
- We need to introduce new effective and technological models to identify the incongruities in the public contract.



Rethinking a Nonviolent Colombia

Juan Manuel Barrientos Valencia, Chef and Owner -
Elcielo Restaurant



Reconciliation & the Peace Process

Though it's been nearly three years since President Santos established Colombia's Agreement to End Conflict and Build Peace, implementation of the complex agreement has been strained.

Though it's been nearly three years since President Santos established Colombia's Agreement to End Conflict and Build Peace, implementation of the complex agreement has been strained. As such, the reconciliation process continues to be a central theme within the Concordia Americas Initiative. In his flashpoint presentation *Rethinking a Nonviolent Colombia*, Juan Manuel Barrientos Valencia, Chef & Owner of ElCielo Restaurant, shared how he has carved out a role for himself and his business within the reconciliation process. For more than 11 years, Barrientos has committed to training

former guerrilla members, ex-paramilitaries, and wounded soldiers in his restaurants, providing them with new skill sets in the kitchen and high-end hospitality. In prioritizing these strategic hires across his business, Barrientos has been able to actively provide a pathway to legal and transferrable economic opportunities, while also advocating for forgiveness and reconciliation.

Barrientos introduced the concept of "negative peace," which he described as the complacency of operating in a toxic situation. This could take the shape of a neighborhood that is overtaken



by an organized crime ring and then remains in that scenario for stability and the illusion of safety. Barrientos also recognized the difficulty in implementing the peace agreement, and said that he wanted to depoliticize the process so that there can be a unified dismantling of organized crime across Colombia and a rejection of “negative peace.”

“Negative peace is one of the biggest cancers that we have in the country.”

Juan Manuel Barrientos Valencia
 Chef & Owner of ElCielo Restaurant

During the plenary session *Decentralized Processes for Instituting Peace: #DelCapitolioalTerritorio*, representatives from the Alianza Verde and Centro Democrático discussed remedies to build trust and confidence among Colombians to support a pathway to peace. #DelCapitolioalTerritorio, or “From the Capitol to the Territories,” is a multi-party project that prioritizes the implementation of the peace agreement across seven areas in Colombia. The project is supported by the government of the U.K., the International Republican Institution, and Fundación Ideas Para La Paz. ♦

“There must be a reconciliation beyond political interests.”

Cesar Eugenio Martinez
 Representative of Centro Democrático

Cesar Eugenio Martinez, Representative of Centro Democrático, said that his presence within the

project “is a little bit exotic because we were not supposed to go there and admire what [our party] has previously criticized, but we also realized that we needed to change that perspective to a more humane perspective.” In visiting rural territories, Martinez recognized that there needed to be greater investments of resources to support sustainable pathways to peace. **Juanita María Goebertus Estrada, Representative of Alianza Verde**, agreed that polarizing politics stifled the reconciliation process. “Even if we had political differences, it was about working together in these affected territories... and with the joint work we find an immense hope and an open window of opportunity,” Goebertus said. Goebertus said that it is essential to move forward with the complete transformation of the 170 municipalities to ensure stronger economic opportunities. **María Victoria Llorente, Director of Fundación Ideas Para La Paz**, highlighted the progress that can be made when parties cooperate around community-driven and action-oriented initiatives like #DelCapitolioalTerritorio.

Next steps:

- In order for the peace agreement to be effective, there needs to be a unified dismantling of organized crime across Colombia.
- The concept of “negative peace” is dangerous because it normalizes a state of living in fear.
- Fair and transparent elections will promote a fair reparation process.
- Polarizing and personal politics stifle reconciliation, but it is possible to bridge gaps in ideology by focusing on community needs and methods of sustainable economic development.



Energy, the Environment & the Future of Cities

At the 2019 Americas Summit, top experts from around the globe delivered robust talks on the issues we face moving forward and, more importantly, how to apply their innovative solutions.

Under the growing threat of climate change, nations across the globe have adopted newer, greener forms of energy to mitigate its impacts. From the early onset of chronic pulmonary diseases such as lung cancer to rising sea levels that destroy local homes and economies, the imminent problems posed by climate change are vast—no country has been left untouched. Though Colombia has the sixth cleanest energy matrix in the world, it is one of the most vulnerable countries under global warming and, as a result, has made great strides to face these challenges head on. As the world’s largest producer of oil and natural gas, the U.S. has also encouraged other nations to take new approaches to the future of energy, while prioritizing sustainability and growth. At the 2019 Americas Summit, top experts from around the globe delivered robust talks on the issues we face moving forward and, more importantly, how to apply their innovative solutions.

In the flashpoint presentation *Powering the Future of the Americas*, **María Fernanda Suárez Londoño, Minister of Mines & Energy for the Republic of Colombia**, and **Rick Perry, U.S. Secretary of Energy**, discussed how both nations are approaching the future of energy. Suárez first spoke about the need to diversify and embrace biorenewable resources such as wind and solar power. As the second-most biodiverse nation in the world, Suárez also recognized the importance of taking advantage of all the natural resources at their disposal. Under this new phase of environmental progress, the Minister also said Colombia can expect to bring electricity to over 100,000 families every four years, a vital service needed by the some 500,000 Colombian households without electricity. By ensuring all citizens have met their basic needs, more Colombians can truly

invest in the energy revolution. Ultimately, as Suárez outlined, sustainability, affordability, and reliability should be the focus in the years to come.

“I see people being free, rising to their potential. I see families across our hemisphere, receiving the life-giving power of reliable and affordable energy. This can happen, this is happening. If we remain on course, we’ll be successful.”

Rick Perry
U.S. Secretary of Energy

While the debate between innovation and regulation continues in both Colombia and the U.S., the public and private sectors often feel compelled to compromise between the two. However, Perry and Suárez affirmed that both are possible, and certainly not mutually exclusive. Technological innovation regularly sparks concerns around transparency, but Secretary Perry firmly emphasized how governments can and should be held accountable for their work. He specifically recalled his time as former governor of Texas, where, under his tenure, the state became the first in the nation to require public disclosure of all chemical compounds used in hydraulic fracturing. Another much-welcomed byproduct of renewable energy is job creation. In the U.S. alone, clean energy employment grew by 3.6% in 2018. What’s more, the U.S. Department of Labor forecast that wind and solar technicians would be the nation’s fastest-

growing jobs until 2026. Ultimately, taking smart risks and maintaining an entrepreneurial mindset had great potential for immense payoffs. Moreover, responsible innovation and partnership-building between the public and private sectors is vital for sustainability and growth in this area.

Gold mining has played a major role in economies in civilizations across the Americas for thousands of years. As the longtime standard for currency benchmarking across the world, it's an important raw material and highly profitable. However, while it is a completely legal product, gold has been traded and produced in unregulated underground black markets, which poses great risks to the environment. Fortunately, the legal gold business sector has become a force for good to help contain and transform the illegal economic chain of gold production. In Colombia, gold mining is vital to the economy because it produces the most currency of any industry. But the gold black market has fueled gang wars, deforestation, empowered drug cartels, and caused numerous cases of mercury poisoning due to unregulated working conditions. Just three years after the signing of The Peace Agreement in 2016, which formally ended the decades-long Colombian conflict, illegal gold mining is more than an illegal enterprise, it poses serious threats to social stability and peace. Today, the practice has even become more profitable than drug trafficking, which has forced Colombian police to create a special branch to fight the scourge.

During the *Environmental Impacts of Legal & Illegal Gold Mining* Strategic Dialogue, experts from the public and private sectors discussed how to best combat the growing problem. Speakers argued the need for a shared and inclusive vision, which considers not just illegal and legal mining, but ancestral mining carried out by ethnic communities, formal small-scale mining, and formal grand-scale mining. Legislating for environmental preservation and conservation was also highlighted as a major priority. **Brigitte L.G Baptiste Ballera, Director of the Alexander von Humboldt Biological Resources Research Institute**, emphasized how the environmental consequences of illegal mining are long-term, even though people tend to think about the short-term effects. Moreover, in such a biodiverse country, Colombia needs multiple solutions to protect its natural resources. Ultimately, working towards sustainable extraction that minimizes dangerous risks to people and the environment

is the way forward. Colombia's aggressive and multifaceted approach towards the illegal mining industry shows just how invested the nation is in taking charge of this problem. For such a complex issue with multiple actors, collaboration between various government bodies, the private sector, and miners can truly help leverage the best solutions for regulating and safeguarding this lucrative industry.

“Illegal minors destroy the life, the environment, and the people.”

Olusegun Obasanjo

Former President of the Republic of Nigeria &
Concordia Leadership Council Member

By 2050, the world's population is expected to reach 9.8 billion and nearly 70% is projected to live in urban areas. For cities, this poses many challenges. The scarcity of land for the construction of new buildings and protecting and efficiently utilizing natural resources is a major concern. Still, cities must find ways to stay competitive in the global market, bolster their economies, and spread job opportunities.

In the *Rethinking Smart Cities for Competitiveness & Sustainability* Strategic Dialogue, experts discussed the best solutions to the modern problems of an ever-changing world. **Miguel Uribe Turbay, Pre Candidate for Bogotá Mayor**, highlighted three main challenges countries face in the development of a city: regulation, infrastructure, and communication. In his view, building robust infrastructure is the greatest task. The panel also questioned how technology can best be of service to its users and how to optimize the best technological advancements. For Colombians and other developing nations, political mandates control development, which too often force the premature termination of projects midway after the introduction of a new mayor or government. However, if continuity and nonpartisanship are kept in mind, ideally, projects should be minimally affected by shifts in government. Smart cities that are environmentally friendly must also be designed with protecting the environment and preserving scarce natural resources in mind. Although citizens are arguably the largest stakeholders in cities, they are easily omitted from the decision-making processes at the

top. **Justin Kintz, Vice President of Public Policy & Communications at Uber**, continued to stress the need for developers to listen to the people they plan to serve. By encouraging civic engagement, all citizens can help inform the decisions that will ultimately impact and shape their daily lives.

“The visions of the city cannot change every four years, they must be shared visions of the citizens.”

María Isabel Ulloa

Executive Director of ProPacífico

As the second-most biodiverse country in the world, Colombia’s landscapes are vast and beautiful. Yet, the mountainous terrain has historically posed major challenges to improved infrastructure and transportation. In one of its most determined projects yet, the Colombian Ministry of Transportation has planned to connect the country from the north to its southernmost tip. The project, nicknamed “Highway 4G,” refers to Colombia’s Fourth Generation road infrastructure program, which has some incredibly lofty goals. While Highway 4G faces many national and regional obstacles, **Ángela María Orozco, Minister of Transportation for the Republic of Colombia**, says it shows great promise.

During her session, *Transportation Solutions: Keeping Economies Moving*, Minister Orozco stressed the importance of engaging local communities in the project as the federal government works to integrate local transit systems. Prioritizing transparency and publicly documenting Highway 4G’s timeline has helped hold the Ministry accountable for its progress and to the public. Minister Orozco also spoke about other developments in transportation, which involved the recent approval of a subway system, the nation’s first-ever aeronautical plan, and recovering a fragmented railway system. Cross-sector partnerships between the government and the private sector have allowed these plans to materialize, but the other great challenge is increasing public trust in new initiatives, as many private-public sector projects have been placed on hold. Going forward, the Colombian government’s efforts to attract investment and persuade its citizens to utilize a newer, better connected, and more sustainable transit system is a tall order, but



Orozco's enthusiasm indicated loud and clear that they're up for the challenge.

One of the largest strains on Latin American cities is poor transportation and urban mobility. Approximately 80% of Latin American youth are urban dwellers and this figure is only projected to increase to 85% by 2025. However, without sustainable improvements to transportation, cities risk negatively impacting the region's overall economic growth trajectory. There's no doubt that improving mobility while mitigating adverse environmental impacts is tough—a feat that requires collaboration between the public and private sectors. Still, discussions about urban mobility are inseparable from other key socioeconomic issues.

In *Urban Mobility Solutions through Public & Private Collaboration*, Federico Gutiérrez Zuluaga, Mayor of Medellín, and Justin Kintz discussed the economic and environmental impacts of new mobility services in urban transportation systems. When cities are navigable with multiple transportation options, this can be an invaluable path to attract workers and talent outside city centers and rural areas. From traffic and clean air to long commutes for low-wage work, the mobility solutions of tomorrow must be sustainable, accessible, and work to better the lives of all citizens. Fostering cross-sector partnerships is certainly one way to achieve this. Kintz placed heavy emphasis on the role of influential leaders in the public and private sectors and how they should provide technology and expertise to inform development. Like many other legislators and leaders, Zuluaga pushed for tax wavers and other financial breaks to incentivize potential buyers to purchase electric vehicles. Ensuring transportation is as efficient and affordable as possible are also key ways to democratize mobility. And by promoting sustainable mobility in a holistic and socially-responsible fashion, the future of transportation, even with its challenges, is full of promise.

“With sustainable mobility, social gaps can be closed.”

Federico Gutiérrez Zuluaga
Mayor of Medellín

Every year, nearly eight thousand people in Bogotá die due to climate change. Around the globe, air

pollution alone kills more than eight million people annually. For perspective, this is equivalent to the entire population of Bogotá, Colombia. With such stark prospects, it's easy to be paralyzed and overwhelmed by fear. Fortunately, as one of the populations most vulnerable to the detrimental effects of the climate crisis, Colombians take the issue and its solutions to heart.

For three years, Movilizadorio, a citizen participation lab for social innovation, has worked on issues of inclusion, peacebuilding, and climate change. In her flashpoint presentation, *Remaking the World Together*, Juliana Uribe Villegas, Founder of Movilizadorio, shared how public mobilization can lead organizations, businesses, and political leaders to build a more habitable world, especially when it matters most. With the climate crisis growing each day, Villegas outlined three major takeaways she's learned through her work. The first was the simple step of taking action. As climate-related disasters increase, the world has seen a surge in activism demanding direct action from political leaders. Radical collaboration came next, in which people from all walks of life join to mobilize against climate change. As we've seen across the globe, partisan politics and socioeconomic differences often interfere with the bigger picture. All members of society must act, as we're all stakeholders in the future of the environment. Utilizing the wealth of resources and information climate experts have shared is also key to bold, progressive action. To scale this knowledge into actionable steps is vital. From legislators and philanthropists to grassroots activists and ordinary citizens, climate change leaves not one living thing untouched, but together, we can make a difference. ♦

Next steps:

- The public and private sectors need bold, direct action to address climate change.
- The future of urban mobility needs to be affordable, efficient, and accessible.
- Strong transportation systems are key to economic development and socioeconomic equity.
- The government needs more legislation to ensure environmental protections due to climate change and criminal environmental degradation such as illegal mining.

“What we need is less talking and more action [...] When all of society has a united purpose, everything is going to work out.”

Juliana Uribe Villegas
Founder of Movilizadorio





Systems of Preparedness

While the global community recognizes the importance of preparedness and adaptation, effective community-level resilience requires local action.

The pharmaceutical sector in Colombia has shown tremendous growth over the past five years due to an increase in foreign direct investment, positioning the country as a leader in the region. As a result, pharmaceutical managers are one of the greatest influences on the Colombian healthcare system. They provide a wide array of services and ultimately serve as distributors of life-saving medication. Due to their position in the industry, they have the daunting responsibility of not only distributing medicine to those who are in need, but having the power to decide who gets access to medication. This role raises pertinent questions about equitable access to healthcare and the dangers of counterfeit medication. In *Healthcare Systems - Access, Sustainability & Medicine*, Claudia Sterling, Head of Legal & Public Affairs for Cruz Verde, discussed the challenges Colombians face within a hyper-regulated healthcare system saddled with numerous bureaucratic hoops. Sterling illuminated the need to reduce barriers that exist in order to foster innovation in the industry, while ensuring that the general public has access to safe and effective medication.

Given the delicate nature of medicine, all drugs undergo rigorous technical, safety, and quality verifications before they are approved for mass distribution. Access to affordable and safe medicine is a crucial step in narrowing the inequality that exists in healthcare systems globally. Industry giant Verde Cruz has eight FENALCO-affiliated pharmaceutical managers that serve 85% of the market. In addition, they are the only stakeholder that can say they have a presence in all regions of Colombia. Moving forward, the public and private sectors must propose better ways of democratizing

the healthcare system so all citizens receive the care they need in a timely fashion.

“We will continue to guarantee the accessibility of medicines to 100% of the country’s departments.”

Claudia Sterling

Head of Legal & Public Affairs for Cruz Verde

In the past two years, the world has witnessed climate-related disasters of unprecedented magnitude. Beyond the damage to infrastructure, they’ve demonstrated the ever-growing threat climate change has to vulnerable communities around the world. While the global community recognizes the importance of preparedness and adaptation, effective community-level resilience requires local action. Key to effective disaster response is preparedness and adaptability. Disaster experts often cite the lack of adaptation as the root of failure. Though preparedness is crucial to safety and recovery, no situation is the same. While plans are important, being able to adapt under high-pressure crisis situations is often key to survival.

In *Building Back Stronger: Disaster Response & Preparedness in the Caribbean*, Nate Mook, Executive Director of the World Central Kitchen, and Annie Mayol, President & COO of Foundation for Puerto Rico, highlighted efforts by the public sector to increase preparedness at the local level and help high-risk communities become more resilient. However, even with all the right plans, countless barriers often inhibit effective disaster response. Among these main challenges is bureaucratic

hurdles. Federal funding requires adherence to strict guidelines that have greater stipulations on how aid is disbursed. Responding to the immediate needs in the aftermath of a disaster also conflicts with long-term, sustainable approaches to recovery given the demand on resources. Both Mook and Mayol echoed the need for listening to communities, since they are best equipped to help facilitate faster processes and use their larger platforms to hold those in power accountable. By tapping into the local community, first responders can truly accelerate sustainable growth. They can also help shape future strategies in development post disaster. With this approach, the unsustainable use of disaster aid can be avoided, making way for longer-term development and recovery plans. When the public, private, and non-profit sectors unite on real long-term sustainable development, positive social impact is possible.

“The barriers are oftentimes desperation and immediate needs, and that takes away from actually building something sustainable and long lasting.”

Annie Mayol

President & COO of Foundation for Puerto Rico

According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), human trafficking is a global industry worth \$150 billion. As the fastest-growing criminal enterprise in the world, anyone can be subjected to the realities of modern-day slavery. In January, Colombia prosecuted its first-ever case of human trafficking for domestic servitude, demonstrating the country’s crackdown on the illegal practice. Still, this criminal underworld has many facets. Human trafficking is not a partisan issue, but a humanitarian issue, and while all of us are potential victims, we are also potential partners in the fight to stop it. In *Partnerships to Eradicate Human Trafficking in the Americas*, moderated by **Juan Sebastian Gonzalez, Senior Fellow for the Penn-Biden Center for Diplomacy & Global Engagement**, **Sean D. Reyes, Attorney General for the State of Utah**, and **Kenneth Paxton, Attorney General for the State of Texas**, discussed the dangers of human trafficking and the roadblocks in the fight against it. They also shared some of their successes and ways that regular

citizens can help. Because it’s inconceivable to many, combating false narratives about the absence of modern-day slavery is necessary. Paxton and Reyes both acknowledged how awareness around human trafficking is one of the greatest obstacles to its eradication.

“Whether it’s medical people, whether it’s schools, we’ll partner with anybody, because this is a problem that stretches across all socioeconomic lines.”

Kenneth Paxton

Attorney General for the State of Texas

However, solving this problem will take a village—significant collaboration across state lines in the U.S., in addition to global borders. Colombia has done an excellent job in the fight against human trafficking. In the U.S. State Department Human Trafficking Report, the country is rated tier one, indicating the government’s additional efforts to combat this problem. Impressively, Colombia is one of the only countries in the region to achieve this status. In 2017, Attorney General Reyes recalled his participation in a sting operation in Cartagena, which led to the liberation of 121 child victims. That same year, Colombia dedicated two billion pesos to the rehabilitation of victims of human trafficking. However, after the media attention surrounding successful stings dies down, trafficking victims are still left to deal with the trauma. Moving forward, an aggressive multi-faceted approach from law enforcement and legislators to every-day citizens is needed to stomp out this harmful practice, to create real, effective solutions and, most importantly, to save lives. ♦

Next steps:

- Government agencies need to work with local communities on sustainable, long-term disaster response and resilience initiatives.
- Bureaucratic hurdles must be lifted to effectively prosecute human traffickers and support must be given to victims and survivors.
- Colombian healthcare systems must be democratized where medicine is more accessible to patients.





Concordia Innovative Financing Coalition: Partnership Accelerator

The Coalition (CIFC) serves as an organizer of Concordia-led discussions related to the deployment, evolution, or establishment of new funding streams directed towards the financing of the SDGs.

One of the goals of the 2019 Americas Summit was to leverage the Concordia Innovative Financing Coalition (CIFC) by connecting bankable projects with prospective investors for candid conversations about needs, challenges, and opportunities, with the goal of creating a shared roadmap and vision for action. To achieve this, Concordia held a special Partnership Accelerator, which combined expert curation, handpicked nascent initiatives applying blended financing for positive social impact, and the pressures of time to create real-time partnerships

and advance progress in key social issues in the Americas.

Participants from the public, private, civil society, and academia sectors were invited to share their actionable insight in small working groups on one of six topic areas, with Table Leads steering the discussion in a way that applied experience, know-how, and resources to developing opportunities. The community convened will continue to shape and define how the CIFC develops in the Americas. ♦

Climate Change Adaptation & Environmental Security

Table Lead:

Carolina Urrutia, Transforma

With increasingly uncertain climate patterns, Latin America needs to prioritize initiatives that focus on climate resilience and adaptation. This table explored the investment opportunities and challenges associated with projects that highlight adaptation, from soil regeneration to reforestation.

The table found that there is a lack of inclusive and strategic vision, with short-term thinking and an overreliance on the public sector characterizing the investment and project development ecosystem. As a result, there is a lack of institutional investment being directed to the field, particularly past the due diligence phase. Difficulty in mobilizing private resources, minimal large-scale insurance measures, and no pathway to scalability are drivers of this. Broadly, “talk” has not bridged to “action” in this space. Despite this, applying blended financing to climate adaptation and environmental security shows real promise: with the design of policy and combined methods of monitoring, Colombia could be a leader in incentivizing adaptation.

Colombia should look to existing projects and opportunities to begin this process. Regenerative agriculture, with a focus on soil health, could catalyze a wave of environmental adaptation benefits (increased resilience, capturing carbon emissions), and should thus be prioritized by government policies designed to support farmers’ transition to new crops and former combatants entering into the agriculture sector. Fundacion Guaicaramo is working with smallholder farmers across Colombia to train them on climate resilient techniques, with the affiliated Guaicaramo SAS palm oil plant serving as an offtaker for certain products. Private funds, such as South Pole’s or those being mobilized by Platform 17 (P17), can similarly be leveraged to incorporate adaptation and resiliency best practices into existing agriculture and rural land use strategies.

What’s needed to move Colombia into a space where potential is realized is, ironically, more talk: climate focused projects must adopt a lexicon that resonates with private investors and positions risk in financial terms. This, with the addition of strong technical advisors who can ensure holistic

and cross-sector interventions are designed for the region, community, and environmental conditions in place, can create a pathway for private investment in Colombia’s environmental security. ♦

International Partnerships for Livelihoods in Communities Affected by Migration

Table Lead:

Daniel Gonzales, Open Society Foundations

Colombia is a pioneer in impact investing, results-based financing, and information management systems for vulnerable populations. This discussion explored the role of innovative finance mechanisms in supporting specific options for employment and entrepreneurship-related initiatives relevant for both migrants and host communities in key regions. It recognized not only the large scale challenge Colombia faces based on volume and the short- as well as long-term needs of migrants and host communities, but also the potential of the nation to serve as a model for other middle-income countries facing similar migration flows, should it effectively leverage innovative financing for a whole-of-government, human rights-based response.

Partnerships are essential to this goal. According to the discussants, partnerships can mobilize participants in order to transcend humanitarian attention through a development approach, channeling resources towards models that highlight a longer-term approach, as well as the stabilization of migrants in receiving communities. Further, they can help create local capacities and capabilities in migrant-heavy territories that balance social and productive inclusion of migrants with the needs of the host community.

Members of the discussion are continuing this workstream, with next steps entailing a mapping exercise of funders, initiatives, and other supportive partners interested in crafting a cohesive and human-rights based response, as well as the formation of a ‘Propulsion Group’ of international experts capable of transferring insight from other middle-income countries responding to large migrant flows. Concrete milestones to this include the

identification of barriers in generating income and jobs for migrants and mapping impact investment opportunities in communities with high migratory flows, with the mid-to-long-term goal of creating one or several impact investment vehicles for the inclusion of vulnerable communities. Concordia will continue to support this work through its convening and partnership development efforts. ♦

Food Security & Access

Table Lead:

Luc Lapointe, the BC Lab

Food security in Colombia is plagued by systemic challenges: value chain inefficiencies, a failure to take into account population needs, and poor communication between the government and private sector companies relevant to this social issue. Fortunately, innovative partnerships and “pay for success” models that more effectively connect people in poverty to the food security value chains, such as a developing Chiper & Gates Foundation partnership, are presenting a new way of doing things and creating a model for others to follow.

As additional actors, including project funders, policy makers, private sector stakeholders, and civil society, embrace the challenge of food security and nutrition in Latin America, there is a recognition of information challenges. According to the discussion, improved data collection and analysis is key to develop initiatives at scale, and to create efficiencies in the project design and implementation process, so that partnerships like Chiper/Gates Foundation can take hold. It’s not just about mapping the food security ecosystem: data and insights drawn from other sectors—such as health and workforce/labor—can be essential to structuring “pay for success” models. While a government agency should be created to source and centralize data, the private sector’s innovation and technology, such as the proprietary technology developed by Quadratyx, will be essential to develop machine-learning capabilities that effectively leverage the available information and design the requisite holistic solution.

The Partnership Accelerator participants assembled are taking this challenge forward, working collectively and with others to further develop and refine initiatives that address societal, systemic, and technical barriers to food security in Colombia. ♦





Social & Economic Integration for Venezuelan Migrants

*Table Lead:
Juan Lucio, Paso Colombia*

The escalating economic, political, and humanitarian crisis in Venezuela has forced at least three million people to flee the country, most of them since 2015. Colombia, being the country that hosts the majority of these migrants, has the major challenge of successfully integrating these migrants into the labor force. According to a recent Brookings report, the most recent wave of migrants remains geographically concentrated in a handful of border municipalities, where their per capita concentration reaches up to 23.5% in Puerto Santander, for example. Given this context, two major impediments to the successful integration of Venezuelan migrants include limited government assistance to local municipalities (those border municipalities bearing the brunt of the migration) and local municipalities having a false assumption that these migrants are just “passing through”. In reality, a large percentage, if not a majority, of these migrants are intending to stay in Colombia.

The discussion sought to explore partnership-based strategies to support local municipalities managing Venezuelan migrants who have decided to stay, and where a blended finance project to fund an integration project might be successful. As the conversation developed, the participants strongly agreed upon the notion that these conversations on interventions cannot be had without also considering market creation (product demand) and structural challenges (e.g. land rights). But if these dual aspects are addressed, we might expand the activity scope beyond traditional Development Finance Institution projects.

As follow-up steps, Paso Colombia is partnering with Bancamia on a micro-lending agreement that will seek to offer innovative and alternative options to funding Venezuelan migration integration projects in border municipalities. Additionally, Paso Colombia is working with table participants and others from the Partnership Accelerator to structure an impact fund or bond. ♦



Educational Advancements & Workforce Development

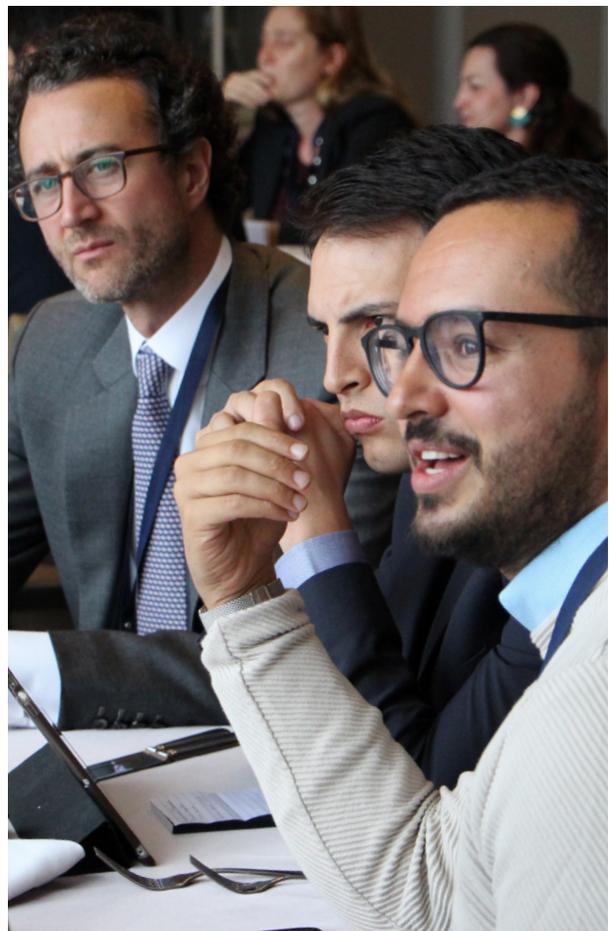
Table Lead:

Maria Alejandra Urrea Garavito, Sibs.co

The dynamics of education in Latin America are a critical link in the intergenerational transfer of poverty, and the region has seen a number of social impact bonds (SIBs) constructed to support this link. This table explored how investments can support the educational and workforce goals that Latin America should focus on, and drew from regional examples to generate best practices for future SIBs.

A key finding was that there remains a lack of willing players in the game. The government lacks incentives to participate, as success indicators are process or output oriented, rather than outcome or impact defined. The private sector doesn't have enough successful cases to refer to, constraining innovation in this space. Fortunately, the Duque Administration is prioritizing the increased use of SIBs and other outcome fund models through a new bill, and has created a National Planning Department tasked with growing the market. The demonstrative effect that comes with more projects—alongside micro adjustments to the public-private sector relationship that helps create a culture where SIBs are better understood and innovation is rewarded—could alter the incentive structure and create necessary champions in the public, private, and education sectors.

Partnership Accelerator participants are continuing to work together to craft a joint market-building strategy, and are currently refining their outreach focus. While the strategy will not be exclusive to workforce development, including for example opportunities and ecosystem information about nutrition and childhood development, many of the actors (IDB, Fundación Corona, Sibs.co, and the Department of National Planning) are drawing on their experiences in education and workforce SIBs and anticipate the resulting strategy to play a positive role in the growth and development of Latin America's workforce. ♦



Rural Development & Agriculture, Disruptive Technology, and Peacebuilding

Table Lead:

Sergio Figueredo, Choco4Peace

Colombia's agriculture future will be data driven and technology enabled, even while returning to organic or other conventional farming techniques to meet market demand. The industry must encompass more organic approaches to production in order to capture market premiums. Furthermore, agricultural systems and production models need to become more sustainable in order to prevent soil degradation and water pollution, to protect and restore natural ecosystems, and to limit agricultural land-shifting and deforestation. For a post-conflict country like Colombia to tackle all of these challenges and others related to the peace process, industry and market should work together to create a more flexible framework that aligns with on-the-ground conditions.

According to the discussion, there are opportunities to leverage technological interventions to address the challenge set. Technology integration into rural agricultural systems might help decrease production inefficiencies, while equipping farmers with leverage to utilize modern seed varieties, employ better processes, and ultimately place them higher in the agricultural market value chain. A more inclusive legal and regulatory framework, facilitated through transparent and technology-driven platforms, will further the conceptualization of innovation, reduce production bottlenecks, and increase access to markets. Artificial intelligence should be employed for the measurement and management of impact investments and their projections in external and internal markets, as well as their social impact for the communities.

With regard to market linkages, access, and distribution, Colombia's agricultural markets need to generate intermediaries between projects and buyers, in order to avoid stalling any projects that are ready to launch. Additionally, markets need to add more value and security to smallholder farmers by deploying agricultural microinsurance programs, establishing proper crop substitution and distribution

systems, fostering farmer entrepreneurship, and ultimately building a path towards more transparent and fair-trade networks. Although Colombia has spent resources on productive projects, project financing is still a major challenge, especially with regards to generating high-quality products and creating the necessary regulatory frameworks to support those. Agricultural markets need to communicate and attract more capital funds while enhancing connections with international markets and, most importantly, building trust with investors by using more transparent financing platforms, thus allowing information sharing without jeopardizing security. From the investor's perspective, social impact measurement is essential in order to attract capital that can then be invested in sustainable long-term projects.

Lastly, Colombian agricultural systems need to redefine their internal capital allocation processes by increasing transparency and allowing clear information flows to include new and unknown, but sustainable, initiatives. An imperative next step would be to improve land registration processes by establishing more transparent land ownership legal frameworks to protect farmer assets and create a more business-friendly environment for smallholder farmers, who cover around 80% of the country's

For more information about CIFC, or to get involved with any of the discussion next steps, contact:

partnerships@concordia.net



Launched at the 2019 Concordia Americas Summit

Paso Colombia and the City of Saravena

Partnership Signing

Concordia Patron Member Paso Colombia, a program of One Earth Future, and its partner, the City of Saravena, held a partnership signing and briefing on an initiative designed to support Venezuelan migrants and host communities through economic integration and job generation. Together, they are developing a Rural Alternative School (ERA) to promote agricultural projects, generate jobs, produce food, and create profitable commercial products. The ERA of Saravena's pilot stage will intervene 103 hectares of land, improving the livelihoods of 400 Venezuelan families, 600 families that were victims of the armed conflict, and 40 families of ex-combatants. Further stages will intervene 400 hectares, benefiting more than 2,400 families along the Colombia-Venezuela border. The program included the screening of a [short film](#) of the project, the partnership signing, and a Q&A with audience members and media about the scope of the partnership, how other agencies and foundations can get involved, and methods of scaling the initiative elsewhere in Colombia and in line with the Government of Colombia's National Plan.

Plataforma 17 (P17)

Partnership Launch

A multi-stakeholder coalition to catalyze private sector investment in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Colombia met to launch Plataforma 17. This initiative, which has the support of a range of public, private, and non-governmental actors, has the potential to unlock hundreds of millions of dollars for development in the country. It seeks the country's economic growth through mixed financial support for sustainable development projects that have a real impact on the current social and political problems of Colombia. Among the actors belonging to this platform are: the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF); The UN Multiparty Trust Fund for Post-Conflict of the UN; the Julio Mario Santo Domingo Organization; and, Mutual Empathy.

Choco4Peace

Campaign Launch

Choco4Peace works to enable vulnerable Colombian farmers to improve their lives by finding markets for their chocolate-producing cacao, allowing them to escape poverty and conflict. Their social enterprise supports constructing and sustaining peace by generating positive socioeconomic and environmental outcomes in post-conflict regions through the empowerment of women, youth, indigenous, and other at-risk people in the cacao sectors by providing access to markets, capacity building, and disruptive technologies. Choco4Peace's campaign shows the world how using disruptive technology like blockchain can support cacao producers in Tumaco, the largest coca-producing region in the world, providing them with access to markets and investments so they can build a life with dignity and transition permanently away from the production of cocaine.

Events at the 2019 Concordia Americas Summit

U.S. and Colombian Governments Sign Multilateral Agreements

On the first day of the 2019 Americas Summit, important multilateral agreements were signed between the U.S. and Colombian governments. These included the commitment of an additional \$160 million from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to support migrants and implement peace agreements in Colombia, along with a memorandum of understanding for a framework of cooperation on energy issues. President Duque and USAID Administrator Mark Green formalized the amendment to the bilateral agreement between the two governments, where \$169 million was added to the cooperation for the rural and social development of Colombia. The new resources will be allocated to areas such as: strengthening the presence of the state in 67 municipalities covered by development programs with a territorial approach; rural economic development; and, the conservation of biodiversity.

My Intention Is Colombia Film Premiere & Discussion

Make It Happen's *My Intention Is* series charts the stories of adolescent girls whose lives have been greatly affected by the history of violence, yet have found the strength within themselves to overcome the trauma and focus on creating better futures for themselves, their families, and their communities. *My Intention Is Colombia* premiered at the 2019 Americas Summit, followed by a discussion on the effects of violence and forced displacement on adolescents, youth empowerment, and the Colombian peace and reconciliation process, with Nicole Riggs (Founder of Make It Happen and the series' Producer/Director), Luz Grenada (National Director of Advocacy & Communications, Save the Children), and Cristina Plazas (Executive Director, Corporación Reconciliación Colombia), moderated by Christine Armario (journalist with The Associated Press).

Inter-American Development Bank and Tent Partnership for Refugees Host Private Breakfast

Concordia and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) came together at the 2019 Americas Summit to establish a formal Programming Partnership focused on enhancing understanding around the migrant and refugee crisis facing Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). Concordia offered the ideal non-partisan and non-profit environment for the IDB to elevate its ongoing work with the Tent Partnership for Refugees, which mobilizes private sector action to improve the lives and livelihoods of refugees and migrants in the LAC region. Concordia and IDB designed action-oriented programming that offered solutions for businesses being affected by this crisis to adopt a more active role and become part of the solution.

Kyle House Group Hosts Private Lunch

Kyle House Group (KHG) advises and represents leading foundations, NGOs, and international organizations global development and healthcare-related matters. KHG hosted a private lunch at the 2019 Americas Summit centered around the changing composition of development-oriented capital flows into Latin America, from traditional foreign aid to development finance, impact investing, and commercial investments through an ESG lens. The lunch focused on the changing trends and implications of cooperative approaches to advancing development finance in Latin America.

Community Feedback

“Exchange of opinions, perspectives, and relationships,”

Diego De La Ossa
Valure - Public Affairs & Government

“Concordia has the power to gather in the same place extraordinary people who generously share their knowledge,”

Liliana Reyes
Senado De La Republica, Colombia

“Convener leaders with a common purpose,”

Martha Segura
Fundación Apego

“The greatest value that Concordia provided was having the opportunity to listen and understand the different points of view on topics with great importance today from very influential people,”

Sabina Betancourt
Universidad de La Sabana

“Concordia helps to position Colombia as an important actor for Latin America and the Caribbean...a great opportunity to meet possible and future partners,”

Ana Maria Bermudez Rojas
Universidad de los Andes

“Open discussion of problems and the exchange of ideas towards possible solutions...added to an important network of contacts,”

Pablo Urrego
Diageo

“It was amazing for me to meet some friends at the Concordia Summit and see how young people are changing the world with innovation, creativity, and new ideas,”

Tania Lopez Lizca
Galeanos y Asociados Lawyers

Note Takers

Sofia Lloreda | Clara Andrade | Daniela Piñeros | Claudia Meza Oyola | Daniella Díaz

Laura Arana | Laura Quiza Ortiz | Marianna Maldonado | Susana Garrido | Inés María González

Julian Montalvo | Juan Felipe Patiño | Nicolás Alejandro Peña | Juan Sebastian Huertas

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