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Summits Talks
Emerging Technologies: Preventing and combating corruption
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Final Thoughts
Maria Celina Conte, Interim Director, Summits of the Americas Secretariat

I would like to thank the experts for this very interesting session.

Edward Hartwig, Deputy Administrator, United States Digital Service
Carol Roach, Acting Director, Department of Transformation and Digitalization, OPM, The Bahamas

Barbara Ubaldi, OECD Digital Government and Open Data Leader

Miguel Porrua, Coordinator of the IDB Data and Digital Government Cluster

Saiph Savage, Director, West Virginia University's Civic Innovation Lab

We had a very pleasant and full session, getting the perspective of a large group of outstanding speakers from government, civil society, and multilateral organizations – who are indeed the stakeholders in the Summit process.

I would like to briefly offer a few final thoughts in light of what we have heard today:

1. It is very important that the region continue to strengthen emerging technologies in preparation for the fourth industrial revolution; however, we must still press ahead with the basics of better technology use, such as ensuring that the entire population is connected and has access to technology. The IDB reminded us of this. Insofar as all citizens are connected and decentralized governments are operating digitally, more emerging technologies will be in application and, through local governments, will be better able to serve in preventing and combating corruption.
2. While governments have been making progress and experimenting with emerging technologies – as we have heard from both the United States and The Bahamas – the region is still a long way from a better understanding of how emerging technologies in government can bring greater transparency and better service delivery. This is also a dangerously uneven course, with some countries recording more development and

making more progress while others are lagging behind and finding it challenging to adopt. Coupled with the lack of national strategies and policies on emerging technologies in the region, this points to a scenario of extensive needs for technical assistance for member states to more uniformly exploit the potential they offer for development and to address corruption.

3. Once again, open government and open public data continue to emerge among the most pressing priorities in preventing and combating corruption. Moreover, as the OECD reminded us, transparency is enhanced by and benefits from access to proactive information through open data. Strengthening e-government for more efficient public service, with a greater use of emerging technologies, must bring about higher levels of transparency in government and citizen satisfaction. Open data and emerging technologies are key to implementing controls and mechanisms for transparency in state endeavors for emergency response. Complementing the new technologies with existing digital developments for monitoring the pandemic would mitigate corruption risks in real time and include data as an essential element of decision-making on the crisis.
4. The use of emerging technologies to combat corruption has to be a multi-stakeholder effort. Alongside government, civil society is an important player for deciding on and designing emerging technologies, and thus for potentially leveraging them. New technologies can likewise have a positive influence in identifying and reducing misinformation and fake news. As the Director of the Civic Innovation Lab at West Virginia University showed us, civil society, academia, and other social actors can use artificial intelligence or blockchain to identify, observe, and redirect disinformation flows to manage messages for corrupt practices.

In the four instances cited in the foregoing reflections, emerging technologies are clearly something to keep strengthening. They have a role to play as well in the search for better responses to crisis situations such as the current COVID-19 pandemic. Through open government information on how the pandemic is being managed, government procurement, connectivity for decentralized and more vulnerable populations, or by combating misinformation, **technologies can help improve our management, while implementing them means their attributes enhance transparency.**

Again, I would like to thank of the expert speakers and their institutions. I must also thank the moderator, Mike Mora, a fellow expert in open government and e-government from the OAS Department for Effective Public Management. My thanks as well to everyone who is connected to this session from across the Americas. I would also like to thank the team at the Summits Secretariat for their work in putting on this event.

On behalf of the Summits of the Americas Secretariat, as Technical Secretariat to the Summits process, I would like to reiterate our commitment to continue supporting the follow-up of the Summits mandates, including those from the Lima Commitment, and to continue providing the member states with support to implement the Summits mandates and initiatives.

As Technical Secretariat for the Joint Summit Working Group (JSWG) that brings together 12 other organizations, including the IDB and the OECD, besides the OAS, we will continue coordinating and promoting the implementation of the Lima Commitment mandates, including efforts to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic, as were are doing at the moment at the level of the highest authorities of the JSWG member organizations, under the leadership of the OAS.

Thank you very much.