

**INTER-AMERICAN TELECOMMUNICATION COMMISSION
(CITEL)**

WASHINGTON DECLARATION

August 16, 2002

The representatives of the telecommunication administrations of CITEL Member States at the Third Regular Assembly of the Inter-American Telecommunication Commission (CITEL) held in Washington, D.C., August 12-16, 2002,

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT:

That the Heads of State and Government of the Americas confirmed, during the Third Summit of the Americas, their commitment to hemispheric integration and national and collective responsibility for improving the economic wellbeing and security of the people of the Americas.

That the Heads of State and Governments, in complying with the Action Plan of the Summit of Quebec, charged CITEL to work with regional and sub-regional organizations to formulate and implement before the next Americas Summit a cooperative and collaborative program in support of an agenda of connectivity for the hemisphere.

That the Summit stated that " free and open economies, market access, sustained flows of investment, capital formation, financial stability, appropriate public policies, access to technology and the development of human resources and training are key to reducing poverty and inequalities, raising standards of living and promoting sustainable development.

That the Summit recognized "the disparities between costs and access to technology among and within the countries of the Region" and "an individual and collective intention towards the expansion to access to world knowledge and the full integration of the knowledge society" has been agreed to, "particularly in developing countries and those which have smaller economies, and among rural and vulnerable Groups".

That Heads of State also expressed their conviction that the promotion of a Connectivity Agenda for the Americas would facilitate the reduction of the digital gap and would contribute to the beneficial integration of the hemisphere in a society increasingly based on knowledge.

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT AS WELL:

That the promotion and expansion of connectivity shall be based on a common effort and commitment among Governments, private sector and civil society.

That CITEL plays a central role in the implementation of the decisions of the Summits of the Americas with respect to telecommunications and its applications, making it necessary to strengthen its operating mechanisms and the efficient use of its resources to obtain timely response to the commitments adopted by the Heads of State of the Region.

That CITEL has elaborated an agenda project for the connectivity of the Americas and a Quito Action Plan as a contribution to the member states.

That CITEL continues to channel the regional expression through inter-American proposals before the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and other international forums consolidating Member States' objectives.

WE DECLARE:

That the development of the Information and Communications Technologies infrastructure and the access to the same, continues to be of the highest priority for the efficient management of information, given the strategic character of the telecommunications sector for the achievement of the objectives of economic and social growth of the States and the attainment of information societies.

That CITEL, as the senior technical telecommunication body of the Americas, is an ideal forum to gather the efforts of States, the private sector and other telecommunication entities and financing, for the development of each of the elements that contribute to Connectivity in the Americas: infrastructure, regulation, access to information technologies and communications of all segments of society and technology convergence, among others.

AND THEREFORE AGREE TO:

Continue consolidating and expanding CITEL's capabilities so it can fully respond to the commitments adopted by the Heads of State at the Summit of the Americas, in view of the fact that telecommunications and information technologies and connectivity are priority elements in the sustainable development of the Region.

Continue consolidating, strengthening and supporting the work of COM/CITEL and the Permanent Consulting Committees (PCC's) of CITEL.

Strengthen mechanisms that will allow the dissemination and implementation of human resources and training programs, including information activities to telecommunication services users, in coordination with national entities, the Center for Excellence of the Americas of the ITU, and with the private sector, regional, sub-regional organizations and other entities of civil society.

Coordinate and lead, within the scope of our competency, the process of promotion and implementation of a Connectivity Agenda for the Americas, supporting the joint work of Governments, regional and sub-regional organizations, the private sector and entities of civil society, in coordination with the OAS Secretariat for the Summits' process.

Facilitate an adequate environment for its Member States to exchange their experiences and best practices allowing them to maintain updated legal and regulatory frameworks promoting competition, which are predictable, consistent, nondiscriminatory and transparent, which will contribute to the development of telecommunications and universal access.

Enhance CITEL's role as a forum where Member States and Associate Members come together to address, in particular the technical elements of CITEL's mandate and which fully recognizes the important role and expertise of the private sector, in the development of the telecommunications infrastructure in the Americas.

Strengthen coordination in association with other telecommunications and financing organizations to develop and implement efficient and sustainable development programs, taking into account the need to attract investment for the development of infrastructure, promotion of universal

access, the use of new information and communication technologies, and the integration of the smaller economies into the hemispheric trade agenda.

Foster the development and the use of information and communication technologies in small and medium size businesses, in different spheres of society according to specific social, political, cultural and economic needs, and training for the development of appropriate contents.

Actively contribute in the preparations for the World Summit of the Information Society, putting forward the principles for a Connectivity Agenda of the Americas, encouraging cooperation and participation of the interested sectors of the Region, making proposals and through any other mechanism that allows active presence of Member States and Associate Members.

In witness whereof, the Delegates of the Member States taking part in the Third Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Telecommunication Commission adopt this Declaration in the City of Washington, DC, August 16, 2002.

CHAIR OF THE ASSEMBLY

Antigua and Barbuda		Guatemala
Argentina		Guyana
The Bahamas		Haiti
Barbados		Honduras
Belize		Jamaica
Bolivia		Mexico
Brazil		Nicaragua
Canada		Panama
Chile		Paraguay
Colombia		Peru
Costa Rica		Saint Kitts and Nevis
Dominican Republic		Santa Lucia
Ecuador		Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
El Salvador		Suriname
United States		Trinidad and Tobago
Grenada		Uruguay
		Venezuela