



SUMMIT IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW GROUP (SIRG)
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REPORT ON THE WORKING GROUP MEETING OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

(National Summit Coordinator of Jamaica, Ambassador Janice Miller)

Mr. Chairman

National Coordinators

Colleagues all

It is an honour for Jamaica to co-chair, along with Colombia, the Working Group on the Regional Agenda for Digital Transformation. Appreciation is conveyed to Summit Chair for the opportunity to contribute in this manner to the Ninth Summit of the Americas.

Chair, the first meeting of the Working Group on Digital Transformation, held on 25th February, enjoyed participation from approximately 24 member states. Representatives were from capitals, permanent missions in DC and from relevant ministries and departments in member states. The Working Group also benefitted from the technical support and advice of the Summits Secretariat.

The first meeting provided an opportunity for member states to provide general comments and to speak on previously submitted comments on the proposed draft text prepared for consideration. Allow me at this juncture to thank the United States as Chair and all those involved in presenting a solid text for discussion.

During the first meeting, general comments were made on the text and supplemented the comments provided by many member states to the Summits Secretariat. These general comments allowed for a rich, open and informative discussion and, in the main, focussed on: the format of the draft Political Commitment; the content of the text and, the situating of the possible implementing mechanism.

In terms of the format, it was pointed out that unlike the other draft Commitments, this draft was more similar to a resolution text. While clarification was provided as to the thinking behind the format, the observation in relation to the format will, no doubt, continue to be borne in mind as discussions continue on this draft commitment.

In terms of content, the importance and relevance of digital transformation was emphasised by many of the delegations. Some of the issues raised, among others, included the necessity of bridging the digital divide, ensuring digital transformation reached the populations who could most benefit, the need to protect personal data, and, the adoption of an open government approach which is inclusive. In this connection, there were proposals for the draft to take into account social inclusion and social perspectives. Cyber security as well as digital literacy, digital governance and the broadening of equitable access including for women and girls were also raised. Health -

telemedicine, education particularly in teaching and learning and the provision of low-cost courses to the citizens of the Americas were also raised.

Delegations also spoke to the importance of properly situating the agenda for digital transformation in existing regional mechanisms while there was one mention of situating the agenda in ongoing multilateral initiatives. It was also expressed that the duplication of efforts should be avoided.

Appreciation is conveyed to those delegations which have submitted concrete comments and observations. As we move into the next phase of the consultations, we look forward to working with all delegations and the Secretariat in an inclusive manner so as to ensure a satisfactory outcome at the Ninth Summit on this most important and timely topic.
Thank you.