

**M. ZORAN STANČIČ,  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL  
DG CONNECT, EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

**5<sup>TH</sup> ELAC CONFERENCE**

**SESSION: "OPENING STATEMENTS – DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES, ECONOMY & SOCIETY"**

**MEXICO, 5 AUG. 2015**

**SPEECH  
[CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY]**

Ministers, Vice-Ministers, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very pleased to represent the European Commission at the fifth Ministerial Conference on the Information Society in Latin America & the Caribbean (eLAC) co-organised by the United Nation's ECLAC Commission and the Mexican Government.

The European Commission has been always supportive and actively involved on all eLAC Ministerial Conferences since their very beginning ten years ago because they are instrumental for Europe partnership with Latin America & the Caribbean (LAC).

Indeed our respective regions share deep-rooted and historical ties that bring us close together. We are natural partners seeking to deepen our strategic bonds in the social, political and economic areas.

Some figures prove this. Trade between the European Union (EU) and LAC is significant. In 2013-2014, the EU was the second trade partner for the LAC region at a similar level with China. From an EU perspective, trade with LAC exceeded 6% of EU exports while 6% of our imports came from you.

Foreign direct investment (FDI) from Europeans in LAC and reversely is also noticeable: In 2013, the €506b EU FDI stock in LAC countries was higher than the €319b EU direct investments in Russia, China and India combined!

Last June, the Heads of States and Governments of the EU and the Community of Latin American & Caribbean States (CELAC) met in Brussels for the second EU-CELAC Summit.

As an expression of our shared determination to further strengthen our relationship, they have adopted a **Declaration** entitled a '**Partnership for the next generation**' as well as an "**Action Plan**".

They underlined the importance of **information and communication technologies** (ICT) to encourage peace, promote well-being, human development, knowledge, social inclusion and economic growth, highlighting ICT contribution to the improvement of coverage and quality of social services.

The "**Action Plan**" contains a full chapter on "science, research, innovation and technology" with a strong focus on ICT. I would like to tell you how I believe that we could implement these actions together.

The Action Plan envisages several tracks ranging from improving cooperation, strengthening capacities and infrastructures, enabling sustainable research & innovation and fourthly to boosting the use of sustainable technology.

The most relevant for us here in this room, is the track to foster cooperation as regards the **digital economy** and the reduction of the **digital divide** for increasing competitiveness while making social inclusion a cross-cutting issue.

## **RESEARCH**

To that end, the EU-CELAC Action Plan emphasises on research and innovation. Indeed it explicitly foresees a **joint strategy in research, development and innovation** to take advantage of what ICT offers to address issues like e-Government, e-Health, e-Education or climate change.

Increased cooperation on research on ICT can build on an already solid basis. Organisations from LAC countries participated in more than 190 projects in the ICT thematic area of EU's 7<sup>th</sup> Research Framework Programme and received nearly €12m funding from the European Commission.

Moreover, there have been three EU-Brazil coordinated calls for proposals on ICT with a fourth call being foreseen. Mexico is creating a "**mirror fund**" to support the participation of Mexican organisations to Horizon 2020, the 8<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme.

Willing to reinforce scientific cooperation and taking the opportunity of being here, I would like to invite the private or public sector organizations of your respective countries to look at the Horizon 2020 work programmes to consider joining European research or innovation projects. Indeed, Horizon 2020 offers many opening to the non-EU research performers. Furthermore, I also invite LAC Governments to consider creating their "mirror fund". Mirror funds are very efficient to stimulate the participation of national researchers to the European programme.

## **RESEARCH: CLOUD**

Talking about past and on-going research collaboration, I would like to zoom on the **Cloud**. In 2014, we drafted a common position paper identifying areas for cooperation: cloud infrastructure, promotion of new policies and financing schemes, cloud computing in the SME sector, and building trust and common standards like service level agreements, data protection frameworks or norms.

## **RESEARCH: FIWARE**

A strong ongoing stream of scientific and technological transatlantic cooperation is about the "**Future Internet**".

In that context, I would like to tell you something on EU's "**Future Internet Public Private Partnership**" or **FI-PPP** which started a few years ago for a 5 year duration with a €450 million budget. It has now reached its final steps. It aims at creating or improving future internet technologies to enable the rapid development of applications in different domains.

The so-called **FIWARE enablers** are the main results of the FI-PPP. They consist of specifications and reference implementations. Reference implementations are typically open-source software.

Last week, FIWARE sponsored the sixth edition of the "**Campus Party**" that took place in Guadalajara. Campus Parties are amongst the most important technology and Internet events in the world, and the biggest "geek social network". The first Campus Party took place

in Spain 17 years ago and the Mexican edition was the largest ever, with 15.000 attendees! It is a sign of the ICT savviness and entrepreneurial spirit in Latin America.

### CABLE

An important item of the EU-CELAC Action Plan is the call to the private and public sectors to improve the interconnection of research & education networks through the enhancement of transatlantic links.

These words are not empty promises: one month ago, on 30 June, the Hispano-Brazilian EULALINK joint venture was established to finalise the financing of the long awaited **submarine optic fibre cable** linking Lisbon to Fortaleza and from there, interconnecting the European GEANT and the South American RedCLARA research & education networks.

This private sector investment will complement the public sector involvement. With some €26m, the European Commission intends to support a group of public actors gathered in the BELLA consortium - Building European Link to Latin America – to take advantage of the new capabilities offered by the cable to achieve the objectives related to international cooperation and regional development, e-infrastructure and space.

The cable is expected to be operational before the end of 2017.

### REGULATEL

Moreover, the Action Plan asks us to intensify our dialogue on strategies and regulation models for the telecoms and audio-visual sectors.

Again, this is very concrete: 38 telecom regulators from Latin America & the Caribbean, Eastern Europe, South Mediterranean countries and EU met one month ago in Barcelona under the aegis of their regional groups of regulators, respectively REGULATEL, EaPeReg, EMERG and BEREC. The focus was on the challenges for telecom regulation in the new Internet ecosystem.

The cooperation between our regulators is part of a bigger picture and a mission to further extend the commonalities between Europe and Latin America & the Caribbean when it comes to a market-based approach to economic regulation. This is also an important means to contribute to developing a "common language" spoken by both regions in international fora such as ITU and OECD.

These achievements do not come from nowhere. They result from our past joint efforts. Since 2001, through the @ALIS programme which is now completed, we came closer in terms of research cooperation thanks to the creation of RedCLARA and in terms of regulatory consistency thanks to the setting-up of Regulatel. RedCLARA and Regulatel have reached already a few years ago a level of maturity which allows them to be stable organizations.

### IGF and WSIS+10

Coming back to the EU-CELAC Summit last June, our Heads of States and Governments reaffirmed their commitment to the peaceful use of ICT in a way compatible with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and International Law. They agreed to guarantee the stability and security of the **Internet** and to ensure its **governance**, based on full participation of all stakeholders.

The LAC region is champion in this matter as illustrated by the organization of the next two sessions of the Internet Governance Forum in Brazil this year and Mexico next year.

The European Institutions are committed to the multi-stakeholder model of Internet Governance for which we share common values.

The European Commission has launched a Global Internet Policy Observatory (GIPO) which is a capacity-building measure to enhance transparency on Internet policies and governance. It will help all stakeholders but particularly weaker actors or those in remote areas, such as civil society and interested actors in developing countries.

There is a lot more I could say about Internet Governance such as the challenge of the IANA transition process and ICANN accountability. My colleague, Ms Megan Richards, will address this in another panel.

## DSM

I would like to end my speech by informing you on what keeps us busy in Europe. In 2010, we have adopted the "**Digital Agenda for Europe**" which contained a hundred of actions items which lead to concrete results. For instance:

- Basic broadband is available to everyone in the EU. Fixed technologies cover 97% of households. Next Generation Access networks, offering speeds above 30Mbps, cover 68% of households, up from 62% a year ago.
- 4G mobile broadband is available to 79% of households, up from 27% two years before.
- 75% of the EU population uses the internet at least weekly.
- 26% of the population uses e-government services to submit forms to public authorities online.

I think that we are doing well but more can be done. Following up on the Digital Agenda for Europe and to reap the untapped benefits of the digital economy, we have adopted last May, a "**Digital Single Market Strategy**". The Strategy sets out 16 focused Key Actions under three Pillars which the European Commission will deliver by the end of 2016. Many will take the form of legislative proposals.

You may wonder why I am talking to you about the EU "Single Market". It sounds like domestic European business. Some actions may seem only pertinent for the EU but many other have a clear international outreach.

Actually, even the apparently "EU internal" measures are relevant for non-Europeans because the end result of the Strategy will be a more integrated market and thus a better and more predictable environment for business investments.

What does the Digital Single Market Strategy contain?

Firstly, it aims at improving access to online goods and services across Europe by adapting consumer rules to the borderless nature of online trading.

Secondly, it intends boosting digital networks and innovative services by overhauling telecoms regulation, addressing illegal online content and strengthening cyber security.

I would like to quickly zoom on EU **telecoms regulation**. There are many recent developments, which may be of interest for your region.

The "**Telecoms Single Market**" **package** will be soon adopted with important implications for roaming and net neutrality in the EU.

Furthermore, we are currently preparing the **telecoms framework review** to address issues such as the regulatory conditions for broadband investment, market entry, governance and institutional aspects. In that context, a public consultation will be launched to gather feedback from stakeholders.

Lastly, we will attempt to break down national silos in telecoms regulation and in the management of radio waves.

My colleague, Mr Reinald Krüger, will give you all the details this afternoon.

The third pillar of the Digital Single Market Strategy looks at maximising the growth potential of the digital economy.

On the one hand, ICT should promote democracy and related values. To that end, there will be measures to ensure that ICT EU Citizens have the skills to benefit from the advantages brought by digital technologies.

On the other hand, ICT should improve the "classical industry". To that end, there will be measures leading to a strong, data-driven economy, taking advantage of emerging technologies such as big data, internet of things or the cloud. Obviously, these topics are of global relevance because they refer to new paradigms where new technical solutions, standards and legal frameworks are still to be developed rather globally than regionally or nationally. It will have a direct impact on innovative services or vanguard industrial products.

We do not want to tell what you must do but we want to support the eLAC process and we want to learn from you. We would like to invite Latin America & the Caribbean countries in EU discussions to share experience and to learn.

I thank you for your attention and I wish you all a fruitful Conference.