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PRESENTATION BY THE EXCUTIVE SECRETARY FOR INTEGRAL DEVELOPMENT,

MRS. KIM OSBORNE

DURING THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE

 INTER-AMERICAN COUNCIL FOR INTEGRAL DEVELOPMENT ON

MULTI STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS FOR BUILDING RESILIENCE TO

EXTERNAL SHOCKS

HELD DECEMBER 8, 2020

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SEDI PARTNERSHIPS 2020

 Overcoming the daunting economic and social challenges that our member states face and which have been exacerbated by the COVID‐19 pandemic, requires strong multi‐sectoral, multi stakeholder partnerships that can harness expertise, knowledge, funding, and other resources necessary to build back resilient and inclusive economies.

 The Executive Secretariat for Integral Development of the Organization of American States (OAS/SEDI) has developed concrete partnerships to expand our reach and impact in member states. Our partners are diverse and provide a wide range of support from direct technical assistance, mentoring, training and capacity building, and access to tools and services, they include the private sector, universities, development banks, think‐tanks, foundations and other actors.

 Given the limited time I will highlight only a few of our partners at today’s meeting with some information on the joint impact that we are having in our region. As I speak, we continue to build partnerships and I am encouraged with the potential for expanding our pool of partners going forward. Based on recent discussions with many actors, I can confirm that agendas are aligning. Public officials, the international community, businesspersons, institutions, and companies are all poised to collaborate and work together ‐ the potential for growth and for expanding our reach through partnerships is trending in the right direction.

**DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (DED**)

 **MSMEs:** The weight of stronger, more productive, competitive, and digitalized micro, small, and medium‐sized enterprises (MSMEs) for our region’s economic and social recovery cannot be overstated.

* Our long‐standing partnership with the **Permanent Mission of the United States to the OAS** has supported and funded the implementation of the Caribbean SBDC Program since 2012, enabling the delivery of standardized quality technical assistance by MSME support institutions to clients in a manner that provides measurable results and economic impact. In 2020, over 5,700 small businesses were served, 977 new businesses started and over 12,000 jobs supported in 6 CARICOM countries. Sales revenue amounted to more than $67 million and profits generated topped $7 million. In recent years, significant efforts have been undertaken to coordinate with other donors and partners to leverage funding. Partnerships with the **Caribbean Export Development Agency** and the IDB‐funded **Compete Caribbean Program** in the area of capacity building, for example, have provided critical support and resources to existing SBDC programs, and in so doing, has augured towards their future sustainability.
* Customized virtual training programs for MSMEs will be available at the beginning of 2021 through a partnership with **WhatApps,** and collaboration with **eBay** and **Google**. The training will expand MSMEs digital footprint and increase their internationalization efforts and opportunities for engaging in ecommerce. To ensure sustainability, these partnerships also include a train‐thetrainer program for the authorities responsible for supporting the MSME sector.

 **Competitiveness, Productivity, and Innovation:**

* Our Americas Competitiveness Exchange (ACE), which has become the premier economic development, innovation, and entrepreneurial network in the region would not be possible without the unwavering support of the **U.S. Department of Commerce** and **U.S. Permanent Mission to the OAS**. The ACE program focuses on sharing good practices and opportunities to promote actionable partnerships between senior‐level decision‐makers from across the Americas and top innovation hubs, advanced research and technology centers, cuttingedge companies, and leading academic institutions visited in each edition of the ACE. 12 successful editions have been held since 2014 showcasing 57 regions and 900+ projects, benefiting over 36,500 entrepreneurs and recipients from accelerator programs, and creating 1,000+ jobs.

* **Walmart and CONAMER (National Commission for Regulatory Reform) of Mexico** have provided technical and financial resources and capacity building in the context of the RIAC Group of Experts on Subnational Competitiveness (GTECS) to advance the sharing of good regulatory practices on construction permitting and the launch ofan Inter‐American Construction Permits Certification Pilot Program to support countries with the implementation of a single window process. Four countries have indicated their interest in joining the Pilot Program: Guatemala, El Salvador, Colombia, and Honduras.

**Science and Technology:**

* The **National Council of Science, Technology and Technological Innovation (CONCYTEC) of Peru** helped launch Prospecta Americas in 2019, an OAS regional platform which aims to map trends and future technological developments in sectors of critical importance for the Americas, and to provide inputs to OAS member states in the formulation of public policies. Prospecta Americas follows a partnerships‐based approach, that will lead to the establishment of 10 Centers of Excellence across the region to facilitate hemispheric research, collaboration, and social appropriation of transformative technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Big Data, Blockchain, Quantum Computing, Gene Editing and others. Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Chile, Mexico, and Peru have expressed interest in hosting such Centers. The State of Hidalgo, Mexico, has offered to host Prospecta Americas in 2021.

**Tourism and Culture:**

* We are working in partnership with the **United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)** to offer joint capacity building opportunities and generate knowledge products for OAS member states, particularly in support of the 2030 Agenda. A recent joint publication on “Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals: Good Practices in the Americas” highlighted actions and progress in tourism institutions in OAS member states in support of the SDGs.
* The **George Washington University** and the **United States Bureau of Indian Affairs** have partnered with us on the organization of the First Indigenous Tourism Forum of the Americas in October 2020. The Forum, and a series of webinars held at the sub‐regional level, helped to build awareness on the need to foster sustainable economic activities in the tourism sector, specifically for historically disadvantaged indigenous communities. It also highlighted the importance of strengthening the institutions responsible for community–based rural tourism and the guidelines for the operation of sustainable community tourism in the Americas ‐ a key constituency of the Inter‐American Committee on Tourism (CITUR).

**DEPARTMENT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (DSD)**

 **Sustainable Energy:**

* Since 2009, the **Permanent Mission of the United States to the OAS** has offered financial support for the implementation of the Energy and Climate Partnership of the Americas (ECPA). Additionally, the **U.S. Department of Energy** and the **U.S. National Institute for Standards and Technology** provide technical resources to develop measurable and impactful interventions in the field of sustainable energy. ECPA stands as the only hemispheric platform for energy dialogue and cooperation gathering all OAS Member States and engaging governments and companies in the promotion of energy sustainability. The OAS/SEDI has successfully leveraged this program and is bringing‐in other valuable partners. One of many examples are GE and MIT, which helped to assess the viability of policy and technology options deployed by Latin American and Caribbean countries to meet their NDCs under the Paris Agreement, a contribution valued at $100,000 dollars. Other partners include CARICOM, CXC and GIZ, which trained teachers on the use of the Green Engineering syllabus for primary and secondary schools in the Caribbean, a contribution valued at $60,000 dollars, among many more.

**Integrated Management of Water Resources:**

* Our major partners in the area of water management are the **Inter‐American Development Bank (IDB)**, The **United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP)**, and the **Latin American Development Bank (CAF)**, with a combined in‐cash contribution of nearly 13 million dollars directly executed by the OAS/SEDI. In 2020, an investment portfolio of 25 projects was developed to promote the integrated management of the water resources in la Plata Basin (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Uruguay, and Paraguay), which totals 90 million dollars of in‐cash financing and in‐kind contributions estimated at 1 billion dollars. The projects address priority areas of action defined by the countries, including improving water management, early warning systems, navigation, agriculture and hydroelectric in the Basin. New developments within this portfolio will focus on sanitation, particularly as it relates to COVID‐19 prevention and response.

 **Disaster Risk Management:**

* Launched in 2020 and funded by the **US Department of State**, the project “Building the Resilience of the Small Tourism Enterprises in the Caribbean to Disasters” has already trained more than 260 business owners or managers and 30 emergency management professionals to assist small tourism enterprises in the Caribbean in overcoming national and corporate level challenges that affect business continuity during and after catastrophic events. The project relies heavily on partnerships with specialized agencies like the **Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA)**, the **Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO), the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association** and the **Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)** as it aims to establish highlevel policy dialogue between government, private sector actors, and other relevant stakeholders for strengthening contingency plans and ensuring business continuity after a disaster.

**DEPARTMENT FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT (DHDEE)**

In addition to the valuable partnership established with Structuralia, presented today, the DHDEE extends scholarships opportunities and contributes to enhance quality education in the region in collaboration with many other partners.

* **PAEC Brazil with Grupo Coimbra: 3,880 of students** have been granted scholarships to complete master’s and doctoral degrees in more than **700** highly specialized programs throughout Brazil as a result of our partnership with **the Coimbra Group of Brazilian Universities (CGBU)**. The Brazil Scholarships Program promotes academic mobility, university internationalization and human development in the hemisphere; has effectively strengthened the ties of Latin America and the Caribbean with Brazil, and helped to promote Brazil as a leader in internationalization in higher education. The total value of the program since its inception in 2011 is nearly $200 million dollarsbenefitingstudents from 30countries.
* **PAEC Mexico:** The OAS‐ CONACYT‐AMEXCID Scholarship Program is one of the OAS pillar scholarships programs and is part of a strategic alliance and collaboration with the government of Mexico. Since 2013, more than **3,400 scholarships** have been awarded to students from 27 OAS Member States, expanding educational opportunities in the areas of science and engineering and strengthen human development in the Americas. The total estimated value of the program since its inception is close to $173 million dollars.
* **Partners for ITEN:** A successful partnership between The University of the West Indies Open Campus (based in Barbados) with our Inter‐American Teacher Education Network (ITEN) has served to institutionalize STREAM education (science, technology, research, engineering, arts, and math) in an accredited academic program that services the Caribbean. Concrete actions include the creation of the UWI‐ITEN STREAM Virtual Community and incorporation of ITEN‐developed STREAM activities into two course syllabi.
* **Partners of the Educational Portal of the Americas:** The **OAS‐ProFuturo** **Foundation** alliance seeks to provide access to quality digital education in disadvantaged areas of 5 Caribbean countries, by providing teacher training, technological equipment, and digital didactic contents to schools. Since its inception in 2018, a total of 92 schools have received tablets and computers; access to an online education platform for the management of teaching processes; free digital contents; training and support for participating teachers. In response to the COVID‐19 pandemic, new online courses on innovation and ICT, and other digital education content is been offered. The Program has trained 3,659 teachers with a train‐the‐trainers model, surpassing the original goal by over 100%. Fundación ProFuturo’s contribution to the project is valued over $1.3 million dollars.

SECR**ETARIAT OF THE INTER‐AMERICAN COMMITTEE ON PORTS (CIP)**

**Disaster Risk Management and Resiliency:**

* A new CIP Project “Improved Disaster Mitigation for Ports in the Caribbean” designed to improve responses by national port authorities to natural disasters and increase port and business resiliency in the Caribbean is being funded by the governments of Italy and the United States. Their contributions are leveraging strategic in‐kind support from key partners such as the **Caribbean Disaster Management Agency (CDMA)**, the **Port Management, Association of the Caribbean (PMAC)** and the **Caribbean Shipping Association (CSA).**

**Education and Training:**

* Through strategic partnerships, the CIP Secretariat has built a robust Technical and Human Capacity Building Program that offers hundreds of port officers from the Americas certified professional development courses in key portdevelopment areas, including Logistics and Operations; Sustainable Management and Environmental Protection; Security and Safety; Dredging and Inland Ports, Port Legislation and Contract Negotiation, Social Responsibility and Gender Equality; among others. Strategic partners include **Puertos del Estado of the Government from Spain,** the **National Port Authority of Peru (APN), Fundación Valencia Port, the government of the United States, and the Mexico International Network for Ship and Port Facility Security (Red PBIP).**

 In 2021 and beyond we will continue to pursue new partnerships as we seek to expand the reach and impact of our work.

 Chair, I take this opportunity to that all our partners large and small for their invaluable contribution to our work and by extension to our member states.

Finally Chair, my special thanks to the team at SEDI for their hard work and dedication and their tireless efforts in pursuit of partnerships that add value to our member. Since this is only time, I will take the floor in this final meeting of the CIDI for the year, I wish everyone a happy Christmas and lets continue our journey together towards improving the lives and livelihoods of the people of the Americas.

I much obliged for your attention.

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