**SIXTH MEETING OF MINISTERS AND** OEA/Ser.K/XVIII.6

 **HIGH AUTHORITIES OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY** CIDI/REMCYT-VI/doc.7/21

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VIRTUAL

FINAL REPORT OF THE SIXTH MEETING OF MINISTERS AND HIGH AUTHORITIES

 OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (VI REMCYT)

(Prepared by the Competitiveness, Innovation, and Technology Section

Department of Economic Development

Executive Secretariat for Integral Development)

# BACKGROUND

 On April 27, 2021, the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI) approved Resolution [CIDI/RES.348 (CXII-O/21)](http://scm.oas.org/IDMS/Redirectpage.aspx?class=CIDI/RES.&classNum=348&lang=e) convening the Sixth Meeting of Ministers and High Authorities of Science and Technology, to be held on December 7, 2021 under the theme *“Harnessing the* *Power of Transformative Science and Technologies to Drive our Communities Forward.*” The Government of Jamaica, through its Permanent Mission to the OAS, presented at CIDI on October 26, 2021, Resolution [CIDI/RES. 353(CXVIII-O/21)](http://scm.oas.org/IDMS/Redirectpage.aspx?class=cidi/RES.&classNum=353&lang=e) to extend by half-a-day the Sixth Meeting of Ministers and High Authorities of Science and Technology, to be held virtually on December 7 and 8 (half-day), 2021.

The objective of the VI REMCYT was for Ministers and High Authorities to advance a hemispheric cooperation agenda on science and technology within the framework of the *Declaration of Jamaica* and to engage in discussion on concrete, high-impact regional projects to support the recovery of the COVID-19 pandemic in member states through the use of transformative technologies.

The VI REMCYT was held virtually under the leadership of the Ministry of Science, Energy and Technology of Jamaica. The Meeting presented the progress made in the implementation of the mandates of the [*Declaration of Medellin*](http://scm.oas.org/IDMS/Redirectpage.aspx?class=XVIII.5%20CIDI/REMCYT-V/DEC%20&classNum=1&lang=e) adopted at the Fifth Ministerial Meeting held in Medellin, Colombia on November 2 and 3, 2017, and the [COMCYT Work Plan 2018-2021](http://scm.oas.org/IDMS/Redirectpage.aspx?class=XIII.3/CIDI/COMCYT/RPA.doc%20&classNum=4&lang=e).

In preparation for the Ministerial, two (2) informal meetings were held virtually among delegations on November 2 and November 17, 2021 respectively, under the leadership of the Permanent Mission of Jamaica to the OAS. A formal Preparatory Meeting was held in a virtual format on November 22, 2021 (with the participation of 19 delegations). Member states negotiated and agreed upon the *Declaration of Jamaica* to be adopted at the Ministerial Meeting. The Preparatory Meeting was chaired by Ms. Wahkeen Murray, Chief Technical Director, of the Ministry of Science, Energy and Technology of Jamaica.

Leading to the Ministerial Meeting, between July and December 2021, in the framework of the CIDI – chaired by Ambassador Audrey Marks, Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the OAS – thematic sessions dedicated to science, technology and innovation were held, with actionable proposals for the VI REMCYT Meeting on concrete hemispheric priorities and actions to be implemented through partnerships and regional cooperation.

The CIDI Sessions served as important fora for dialogue, making it possible for member states and public and private-sector experts to share their good practices and reflections on the opportunities and challenges of science, technology and innovation (STI) in the region, on topics such as: the role of STI in the COVID-19 recovery; youth - critical skills and readiness for industry 4.0; STI to promote the inclusion of women and girls and other populations in vulnerable situations; science for decision making, and financing innovation, among others. Speakers in the CIDI Sessions included 20 high-level authorities and experts on science and technology from MINCIENCIAS, Colombia; NIHERST, Trinidad and Tobago; CONCYTEC of Peru; MSET Jamaica; GWU of the United States, as well as the University of the West Indies; UNAM (Mexico); Elas Bank (Brazil); Texas A&M University; the U.S. Space Foundation and IBM, among others.

# PARTICIPANTS

One hundred and one (101) Ministers, high-level authorities and delegates from 32 OAS member states participated in the Sixth Meeting of Ministers and High Authorities of Science and Technology. The event was also attended by more than 45 special guests and observers from multilateral organizations, nongovernmental organizations, universities, and private entities interested in promoting and supporting the development of science, technology, and innovation in the Americas.

The List of Participants compiled by the Secretariat is available under “List of Participants” on the [webpage of the Ministerial](https://www.oas.org/en/sedi/desd/st6m/).

# OUTLINE OF THE SESSIONS

## Inaugural Session

The Meeting began with welcome remarks from Luis Almagro, OAS Secretary General, who underscored the potential of transformative technologies to drive the social and economic development of the region, address and overcome its historical challenges such as poverty, inequality and low productivity, especially through the training of the youth of the Americas to ensure their readiness for the jobs of the future.

Ambassador Audrey P. Mark, Chair of CIDI and Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the OAS, called for new and emerging technologies to be the cornerstone of the regional COVID-19 recovery and to address the region’s skills gap and talent shortage through accessible training and education.

The Most Honorable Andrew Holness, Prime Minister of Jamaica, highlighted the new opportunities in the global technological revolution, one where a new division of labor will soon prevail, among humans, machines, and algorithms. The Prime Minister encouraged all member states to accelerate their investments in the markets and in training the professionals of tomorrow, so that the region may get its fair share of the new digital economy jobs.

## First Plenary Session

In accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI), the Minister of Education, Sports and Culture of St. Kitts and Nevis, the Honourable Jonel Powell, opened the session as Acting Chair. He then invited delegations to take the floor to propose candidates to be the Chair of the Meeting. The Horourable Dr. Louis Zabaneh, Minister of State of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Technology of Belize, proposed the Honourable Daryl Vaz, Minister of Science, Energy and Technology of Jamaica, as Chair of the Sixth Meeting of Ministers and High Authorities of Science and Technology. Minister Vaz was elected Chair by acclamation. In accepting the position, he thanked the attendees for their vote of confidence and submitted the draft agenda ([CIDI/REMCYT-VI/doc.1/21](http://scm.oas.org/IDMS/Redirectpage.aspx?class=XVIII.6%20CIDI/REMCYT-VI/DOC.&classNum=1&lang=e)), draft annotated agenda ([CIDI/REMCYT-VI/doc.2/21 rev.1](http://scm.oas.org/IDMS/Redirectpage.aspx?class=XVIII.6%20CIDI/REMCYT-VI/DOC.&classNum=2&lang=e)) and draft schedule ([CIDI/REMCYT-VI/doc.3/21 rev.2](http://scm.oas.org/IDMS/Redirectpage.aspx?class=XVIII.6%20CIDI/REMCYT-VI/DOC.&classNum=3&lang=e)) for the consideration of the plenary. All three documents were approved without modification.

In accordance with article 23 of the Rules of Procedure, the Chair proposed that the Style Committee be composed of the following member states: Brazil for Portuguese; Canada for French; Peru for Spanish and Jamaica for English. This was approved without objections.

The Chair then invited Mrs. Kim Osborne, Executive Secretary for Integral Development of the OAS, to report on the activities carried out by the Technical Secretariat of the Inter-American Committee on Science and Technology (COMCYT) during the 2018-2021 period. Secretary Osborne highlighted the following:

- Two (2) Planning Meetings of Authorities of the COMCYT carried out in May 2018 and July 2020 (virtual), as well as the hosting of the Ninth Regular Meeting of the COMCYT in December 2019 at OAS Headquarters in Washington, D.C.

- In response to the pandemic, two (2) high-level virtual dialogues under the theme: *"STI to mitigate the effects of COVID-19: Good Practices from COMCYT Members and Partners,"* held on April 29 and May 22, 2020, during which 15+ member states shared their national strategies to address the COVID-19 pandemic (750 participants from 26 countries attended).

- Launch of the first *Prospecta Americas* Seminar on October 24-25, 2019, in Lima, Peru in collaboration with the CONCYTEC of Peru and PUCP, with more than 25,000 participants (in-person and via webcast). The Seminar focused on future trends and opportunities for the Americas in 10 transformative technologies, namely: Big Data; Robotics; Blockchain, virtual and augmented reality; artificial intelligence; quantum computing; gene editing; biomedical engineering; additive manufacturing and new nanostructured materials.

- A virtual Edition of *Prospecta Americas* in November 2020 under the theme *“Technology Foresight in the Americas: Challenges of a New Reality”* as well as two (2) Strategic Sessions on Blockchain and Artificial Intelligence, held in October 2021, organized by the Government of the State of Hidalgo, Mexico in collaboration with the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs of Mexico, the Permanent Mission of Mexico to the OAS, CONACYT and the OAS. .

- Four (4) editions of the *HUB on Technology Transfer and Commercialization for the Americas*, held between 2018 and 2020 in Chile, Panama, Colombia and Dominica with over 480 applications received to accelerate technologies and solutions “from idea to market.”

- Launch of two (2) online platforms of the HUB – COMCYT Central and COMUNITT (in collaboration with the University of California Riverside) – to provide discussion forums, reference articles and additional mentoring opportunities to accelerate promising technologies, innovative businesses and solutions “from idea to market.”

- Six (6) thematic sessions (virtual) of the COMCYT held between April and June 2021 based on priorities identified by member states for the VI Ministerial Meeting, such as Innovation and Entrepreneurship; Policies of Artificial Intelligence in the Americas; Inclusive Innovation and Women in STEM; Impact Engineering; National Quality Infrastructure; and Bioeconomy.

Secretary Osborne ended her presentation by highlighting the support and financial contributions received from the CONACYT of Mexico, MINCIENCIAS of Colombia, the CONCYTEC of Peru, CORFO Chile and the SENACYT in Panama, to host and support the activities of the COMCYT, including the HUB program and *Prospecta Americas*. A special recognition was also made to all the strategic partners of the COMCYT, mentors and members of the Working Groups including regional engineering institutions, national technology transfer offices, universities, and private sector entities, who have helped multiply the reach of the OAS Technical Secretariat and its capability to serve member states.

The full report on the activities of the Technical is available under document [CIDI/REMCYT-VI/doc.5/21](http://scm.oas.org/IDMS/Redirectpage.aspx?class=XVIII.6%20CIDI/REMCYT-VI/DOC.&classNum=5&lang=e)

## Second Plenary Session

* Youth: Improving Skills and Readiness for Industry 4.0
* Science, Technology, Innovation (STI) and Entrepreneurship to reduce the digital divide and promote the inclusion of women and girls, rural and indigenous communities, and other populations in vulnerable situations

Ms. Lynne Genik, Director of the High Throughput and Secure Networks Challenge Program at the National Research Council of Canada (NRC), presented on NRC’s initiative to increase broadband access for indigenous rural communities of Canada (currently connected at 34%), to access government services and benefits such as employment, healthcare, education and economic development. The $16M program follows Canada’s Gender-Based Analysis Approach (GBA+) and counts on the collaboration of industry, academia, NGOs and other partners.

Ms. Jannixia Villalobos Vindas, Director of Social Appropriation of Knowledge of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Telecommunications (MICITT) of Costa Rica presented on the Costa Rican “National Policy for the Equality between Women and Men in Training, Employment and in Benefiting from the Products of Science, Technology, Telecommunications and Innovation.” She highlighted some of the concrete initiatives carried out by her Ministry, including a recent national mapping that uncovered over 605 activities promoting gender equity and equality in STEM, to close the gender gap in all areas of life including in education, research, industry, and even at home.

Dr. Claire Saundry, Director of International and Academic Affairs of the National Institute of Science and Technology (NIST) of the United States and President of the Inter-American Metrology System (SIM), presented on SIM’s efforts at the international, national and local level to improve women’s access to technology, information, science education and technical training and to strengthen their position as scientists, technologists and metrologists in the region.

Ms. Cynthia Delgado, Executive Secretary of the National Council of Science, Technology and Innovation (CONACYT) of Paraguay offered a panorama of the gender gaps in the educational system of Paraguay, where an increase of women in all areas of knowledge has been observed, except in the fields of engineering and technology. The delegate of Paraguay highlighted a few specific activities carried out by the CONACYT of Paraguay to showcase women in science and increase the visibility of women researchers in the country.

Ms. Marleen Lord-Lewis, President of the National Institute of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (NIHERST) of Trinidad and Tobago offered an overview of NIHERST multiple programs to encourage youth, and especially women and girls, to engage in science, technology and entrepreneurship activities, such as the “STEM professionals program” where young people can spend a day in the life of a STEM professional; the “Meet the entrepreneurs” sessions; the “First Lego league” in collaboration with the NASA Robotics Education Project; the NIHERST “Fab Academy” to promote Fabrication Labs all over the country and the “Girls in ICT day.”

After thanking the panelists for their contributions, the Chair announced the Launch of the OAS Youth Academy on Transformative Technologies. This initiative aims to provide the youth with the necessary skills and internationally recognized credentials to thrive in the new labor market and be competitive in the Industry 4.0.

The goal of the Academy is to train 10,000 youth in transformative science and technologies by 2024. Among those, women and girls, rural and indigenous communities and other populations in vulnerable situations are a top priority. At the heart of this initiative are strategic partners, such as Meta and Structuralia (Spain), who have already committed to provide free online courses and certification on digital skills for the youth of the Americas. Other partners, such as IBM, the George Washington University and the CONCYTEC of Peru have also expressed their interest in supporting this initiative and offering further free online training.

During the Ministerial Dialogue, multiple countries, such as Venezuela, Belize, El Salvador, Trinidad and Tobago, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Dominica took the floor to express their interest in the OAS Youth Academy and offered their support to distribute the information among the youth of the region and in expanding the course offerings.

## Third Plenary Session

* Technology Foresight as Input for Public Policy Decisions
* Science for Decision Making

Mr. Juan Rodriguez, Executive Director of the National Research and Advanced Studies Program (PROCIENCIA) of the National Council of Science, Technology and Technological Innovation (CONCYTEC) of Peru, presented on the initiative *Prospecta Americas*, which Peru-co-founded with the aim of fostering greater expertise and readiness in transformative technologies in the Americas. He explained that over 1,700 transformative technologies are currently available in the world today, at different levels of development, ranging from biotechnology to nanotechnology, information and communication technologies and cognitive sciences. One of the goals of *Prospecta Americas* is to use technology foresight to provide input for the design of public policies, in an effort to anticipate the required investment, labor force and infrastructure that will be needed for businesses, universities and communities of the region to take advantage of these technologies.

The Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation of Argentina, Daniel Filmus, called for more regional articulation and integration in science and technology under the umbrella of the OAS. The COVID-19 pandemic has put in evidence the disparities of more developed nations over developing ones, resulting in some countries having ample access to vaccines and others struggling to secure doses. Considering that many countries of the region face common challenges, more integration in science and technology is needed to maximize resources and find and implement joint solutions. The Minister stressed the need to have joint research and pool resources for the region to become a leader in the energy sector, biotech, telecommunications and airspace. He noted that it is crucial that countries increase collaboration in science, technology and innovation to add value to their productive sectors and initiate their transitions towards the knowledge economy.

Ms. Astrid Harsch, Advisor of the Ministry of Science, Technology, Knowledge and Innovation (MinCiencia) of Chile presented on Chile’s National Policy of Artificial Intelligence, elaborated in close collaboration with its scientific community and civil society. The policy is the country’s first attempt at developing a policy that takes into account future scenarios and technological developments using technology foresight. The policy is said to be at the forefront of the national and regional science and technology agendas and will be useful in providing a framework for the use of A.I to address some of the most pressing national and regional challenges of our time, such as COVID-19, climate change and the digital revolution.

The above-mentioned presentations were followed by the announcement of the first two (2) Regional Centers of Excellence of Prospecta Americas: 1) on Blockchain in Hidalgo, Mexico, presented by Mr. Laman Carranza Ramirez, Head of the Strategic Planning and Foresight Unit of the Government of the State of Hidalgo, Mexico; and 2) on Artificial Intelligence and Robotics in Barranquilla, Colombia, presented by Dr. Paola Amar, Vice Chancellor for Research, Outreach and Innovation of the University Simon Bolivar in Colombia. Each speaker presented the specific lines of research of their respective Center of Excellence as well as their projected capacity building initiatives and collaborative projects.

The objectives of the Centers of Excellence will be to: a) lead research and foresight studies on top transformative technologies and assess their possible economic, social and environmental impacts in the Americas; b) map and identify current and future trends and technological developments to address challenges in OAS member states, and; c) provide technical assistance, support capacity building, training and exchange of experts among some of the most advanced labs and research centers in the Americas.

The Chair invited all member states to consider hosting a Center of Excellence of Prospecta Americas on one of the 10 technologies identified as promising for our region.

During the Ministerial Dialogue, Venezuela, Mexico and Nicaragua welcomed the initiative of Prospecta Americas and its Centers of Excellence on Transformative Technologies and expressed their interest in engaging in dialogue with other member states on technology foresight. Costa Rica highlighted the interest of the MICITT to explore the possibility of hosting a Center of Excellence on Artificial Intelligence and Sustainable Development.

## Fourth Plenary Session

* Levelling the playfield for active participation in the global economy by Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) through STI
* Science and Technology to Build Resiliency in the framework of Sustainable Development and COVID-19 Recovery

The Honourable Dr. Louis Zabaneh, Minister of State in the Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Technology of Belize presented on the initiatives of Belize to support innovation and tech-based MSMEs. Minister Zabaneh highlighted Belize’s Investment Summit 2021, during which the “Innovation Pact Manifesto” was signed – a symbolic commitment from the public and private sectors, academia and civil society to create a culture of innovation in the country, and to recognize the contribution of science, technology and innovation as engines of growth and prosperity for all Belizeans.

Ms. Doralisa Niachimba, Deputy Secretary of Research, Innovation and Technology Transfer of the National Secretariat of Higher Education, Science, Technology and Innovation of Ecuador presented on the country’s seven (7) HUBs on Innovation and Technology Transfer – one in each sub-region – created to foster public-private-academia collaboration and to serve the productive sector of each sub-region according to their territories strengths and needs. Created in 2019, the HUBs have helped to strengthen linkages between universities and industry in rural areas of Ecuador as well as to support tech-based MSMEs through business services and Open Calls.

Ms. Ana Romero, Executive Deputy Director of the Honduran Institute of Science, Technology and Innovation (IHCIETI) presented on Honduras’ good practices in supporting MSMEs before and during the pandemic. She mentioned the creation of Honduras’ first online Portal dedicated to supporting and accelerating the emission of business permits, called “Mi Empresa en Línea” (“My Business Online”), cutting-back the processing times from months to only two weeks. Since 2016, the IHCIETI has also supported the program Honduras Start-Up, through which over 30,000 young tech entrepreneurs have received training in business administration, marketing and digitalization to help support their promising start-ups and the jobs they generate.

Mr. Julian Ferro, Director of Knowledge Transfer of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MINCIENCIAS) of Colombia presented on initiative to support technology transfer and technology-based MSMEs in Colombia. The “Innovation Pact” (“Pacto para la Innovación”) is a novel program that focuses on the MSME auto-evaluation of their innovation processes, to later provide them with appropriate financing opportunities and be connected with other actors of the national innovation ecosystem. Other programs include ColInnova, which helps connect Universities with the Industrial sector throughout the country and Colombia Bio, which focuses on the expansion of the biotech sector, in-line with the recommendations of the International Mission of Experts called “Mision de Sabios.”

Mr. Alberto Majo, Head of the National Directorate for Innovation, Science and Technology (DICYT) of the Ministry of Education and Culture of Uruguay, presented the country’s mitigation strategies in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. He emphasized that Uruguay’s response was developed in close collaboration with the scientific community which in fact resulted in a “reconnection” between the Government’s decision-making processes and scientists from across the country. Mr. Majo also highlighted good practices from the educational and health sectors who were able to maintain the reach of their services thanks to the rapid digitalization of their processes and the creation of apps. Lastly, he stressed the importance for Uruguay to increase its investment in the R&D sector, especially as it relates to supporting small tech-based companies, as more research and innovation is needed to help the country become a knowledge-based economy.

Dr. Genaro Rodríguez Martínez, Vice Minister of Science and Technology of the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology (MESCyT) of the Dominican Republic presented on lessons learned from the pandemic, highlighting that the Dominican Republic was able to continue its activities and limit the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic thanks to its robust system of online transaction and electronic commerce as well as its capacity to deliver online education. Among the next steps in the post-pandemic recovery, the Dominican Republic wishes to execute an ambitious innovation Agenda; strengthen its telecommunications sector; reach gender equity and equality in STEM as well as increase the number of women entrepreneurs, and establish an active and engaged diaspora network with Dominican academics and entrepreneurs abroad who are looking to maintain linkages with, and contribute to the development of the Dominican Republic.

During the Ministerial Dialogue, Venezuela and Costa Rica shared their national strategies to support MSMEs through science, technology and innovation as well as their experiences as the region moves into the later stages of the post-pandemic economic recovery.

## Fifth Plenary Session

* Effective Public-Private-Academia Collaboration to Enhance Competitiveness and Quality of Life

Ms. Ana Chan, National Secretary of Science and Technology (SENACYT) of Guatemala, presented the strategic lines of the “Declaration of the Alliance for the Development of Science, Technology and Innovation in Guatemala” signed on February 26, 2021, by 102 national and international institutions from the public and private sectors, as well as from academia and civil society. The Declaration seeks to increase inter-sectoral articulation among all sectors to support human capital development in STEM; coordinate research efforts and increase Guatemala’s scientific contributions worldwide; support businesses through technology transfer and intellectual property regulations and training opportunities; and to promote the social access to knowledge and use of science and technology products and discoveries among all Guatemalans.

Mr. Alberto De Ycaza, Director of Business Innovation at the National Secretariat of Science, Technology and Innovation (SENACYT) of Panama discussed the most recent edition of Panama’s National Competitiveness Forum dedicated to the theme of “Digital Infrastructure.” He highlighted Panama’s commitment to developing and implementing a state-of-the-art technological and digital infrastructure through public-private-academia partnerships, as it has proven to be an essential piece of the country’s mitigation plan during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as a key factor for its continuous economic growth through online commerce and the creation of online jobs. Mr. De Ycaza also stressed the importance of training human resources in information technology to support this infrastructure.

The second part of the plenary session involved the participation of four (4) strategic partners of the COMCYT, from the private and academic sectors. They were invited to share their experiences and offers of collaboration with member states. Dr. Ignacio De Leon, CEO of IPP Block and President of the Kozolchyk National Law Center at the University of Arizona, presented on the potential and opportunities offered by Blockchain in the region, providing ample examples of its applications and uses in Central America and the Caribbean, and reiterated his interest in collaborating with the Center of Excellence of Prospecta Americas on Blockchain in Hidalgo, Mexico.

Mr. Jared Yarnall-Schane, Director of Innovation at the Biomimicry Institute (United States), presented on the practice of “biomimicry,” which learns from and mimics the strategies found in nature to solve human design challenges. He stressed that biomimicry is set to generate 10 trillion dollars in business opportunities and over 395 million jobs over the next 30 years. He highlighted that given Latin America and the Caribbean’s very rich biodiversity, the region could consider embracing this practice as part of its economic development plan.

Ms. Andrea Escobedo, Government and Regulatory Affairs Leader at IBM Mexico, presented on IBM’s capacity to respond to global challenges thanks to strong public-private-academia partnerships all over the world. One of the best examples she provided was how IBM was able to quickly deploy their research team and resources towards mitigating the COVID-19 pandemic, providing supercomputing analysis of the rate of propagation for example, as well as virus tracking, and citizens’ assistance to answer questions in real-time during the pandemic and avoid the spread of misinformation.

Dr. Omar Costilla-Reyes, Senior Research Scientist at the Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Laboratory (CSAIL) at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), presented on the research carried out by his institution on Artificial Intelligence, as well as opportunities for collaboration with MIT. He invited all countries of Latin America and the Caribbean to actively participate in the 2022 AI Latin American SumMIT, where researchers, scientists, and experts will gather to discuss the next technological advances and applications of AI, as well as their social and economic implications for the future of the region. Of note is the participation of IBM-Watson, Meta, Nvidia and Oracle in the event, as well as the annual publication of the “*AI LATAM Book*”, a portfolio of scientific articles on AI, as a result of the previous Summit.

During the Ministerial Dialogue, Venezuela, Nicaragua and Costa Rica expressed the commitment of their countries to enhance effective public-private-academia collaboration for competitiveness and to increase the quality of life of their people. Costa Rica highlighted that they wish to follow-up with the Biomimicry Institute and identify collaboration opportunities.

## Sixth Plenary Session

The Chair presented for the consideration of all delegations the Draft Declaration of Jamaica “*Harnessing the Power of Transformative Science and Technologies to Drive our Communities Forward.”*

The Honourable Jonel Powell, Minister of Education, Sports and Culture of St. Kitts and Nevis thanked the Chair and the Delegation of Jamaica for such a relevant and thorough document, especially during these times where science, technology and innovation have a crucial role to play in the future of the region. He highlighted the key role of the OAS Youth Academy on Transformative Technologies and proposed that the Declaration of Jamaica be adopted by acclamation.

The representative of Costa Rica, Mr. Carlos Redondo Gomez, Director of Research and Technological Development of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Telecommunications (MICITT), requested the floor and highlighted the inclusive nature of the Declaration as well as its emphasis on the training and capacity building of the youth of the Americas in transformative technologies, leading Costa Rica to second the proposal made by St. Kitts and Nevis to approve the Declaration by acclamation.

The Declaration of Jamaica was then approved by acclamation by all delegations without modification.

1. Closing session

Mrs. Kim Osborne, OAS Executive Secretary for Integral Development, thanked the Government of Jamaica, Minister Daryl Vaz, and his team for their excellent work, leadership and dedication in organizing the VI REMCYT, as well as the delegations in attendance for having contributed to its success.

She declared that the objectives of the Meeting had been met and emphasized that the youth of the Americas now count on a dedicated mechanism to support their skills development and integration in the digital economy, thanks to the launch of the OAS Youth Academy on Transformative Technologies – a major effort towards bridging technological gap with other regions of the world. She invited all delegations, strategic partners and special guests of the Meeting to attend the launch of the first training certification activity on Augmented Reality under the OAS Youth Academy on December 15, 2021, in collaboration with Meta. In closing, she asked for the support of member states to elevate the recommendations emanating from the *Declaration of Jamaica* – especially as it relates to ensuring connectivity for all – to the Ninth Summit of the Americas to be hosted by the United States in 2022.

The Chair then took the floor to conclude the meeting. Minister Vaz expressed his heartfelt appreciation to his team for their efforts and work in making this Ministerial a success. He also thanked Ambassador Audrey Marks, Chair of CIDI and Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the OAS, as well as Executive Secretary Kim Osborne and her team, for the continuous support and dedication of the OAS Technical Secretariat in organizing the Meeting. Minister Vaz provided a summary of the deliverables of the Ministerial, including the launch of the OAS Youth Academy; as well as the announcement of the first two (2) Centers of Excellence of Prospecta Americas on Blockchain in Hidalgo, Mexico, and on Artificial Intelligence and Robotics in Barranquilla, Colombia. He then invited all OAS member states to consider hosting a Center of Excellence on one of the 10 transformative technologies identified under Prospecta Americas as promising for the region.

Minister Vaz encouraged all member states to continue working towards the development of policies that promote diversity and inclusion in STEM, and that aim to expand the opportunities of women and girls, rural and indigenous populations, and other vulnerable populations in the digital economy. He expressed that his Ministry was looking forward to engaging with the OAS member states in this endeavor starting in early 2022 and wished all delegations a safe and peaceful holiday season.

The Meeting was brought to a close on December 8, 2021, at 12:21 pm EST.

The audio record of the Ministerial Meeting can be found at the following links:

             December 7, 2021 – AM

[http://scm.oas.org/audios/2021/DCMM/VI REMCYT-12-07-2021-AM.zip](http://scm.oas.org/audios/2021/DCMM/VI%20REMCYT-12-07-2021-AM.zip)

             December 7, 2021 – PM

[http://scm.oas.org/audios/2021/DCMM/VI REMCYT-12-07-2021-PM.zip](http://scm.oas.org/audios/2021/DCMM/VI%20REMCYT-12-07-2021-PM.zip)

             December 8, 2021 – AM

<https://scm.oas.org/audios/2021/CIDI-RMCYT_12-8-2021.mp3>

The list of documents can be found at: [CIDI/REMCYT-VI/doc.8/21](http://scm.oas.org/IDMS/Redirectpage.aspx?class=XVIII.6%20CIDI/REMCYT-VI/DOC.&classNum=8&lang=t)

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