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A Message from Concordia's Co-Founders

The world today is facing ever-increasing uncertainty. With a humanitarian crisis in Venezuela and resulting mass migration, a European continent facing its most significant threat to peace and security since World War II, and rising inflation, supply chain delays, and labor shortages impacting already-fragile economies, now is not the time to pull back or lose focus on the Western Hemisphere.

Concordia is based on the tenet that cross-sector partnerships represent the culmination of innovative ideas. Playing a vital role in charting pathways for progress, we foster impactful connections, we remain fiercely nonpartisan and genuinely inclusive, and we celebrate the power of in-person connection. 12 years since our founding and 35 summits later, it has been an honor to return to Miami to host our sixth Americas Summit, continuing an important legacy of our institutional focus on the Western Hemisphere.

Thank you to our Members, Partners, and Sponsors across the globe for participating in person and digitally, and thank you to our Leadership Council and Advisors for their ongoing inspiration, guidance, and support.

Let us deepen and engage more—not less—in our own neighborhood of the Western Hemisphere. Now is the time to show up, take concrete steps, and establish solutions that are rooted in a common bond: the desire to see this hemisphere reach its full potential.



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Innovative Technology



The Intersection Between Technology & Democracy

Please note: images link to recordings on YouTube.

While technology can be an invaluable tool for strengthening freedom of speech and giving a voice to traditionally-marginalized groups, it can also amplify misinformation, influence populations, and obstruct the democratic process. ***The Intersection Between Technology & Democracy***, moderated by **Andrés Oppenheimer, Journalist for The Miami Herald**, and hosted in partnership with the **University of Miami**, a 2022 Americas Summit Principal Programming Partner, explored the benefits and dangers of technology in democracy, and projected the technological future of the democratic process.

Technology plays an asymmetrical role in the democracy space, explained **Rony Abovitz, Founder & CEO of Sun and Thunder**. It's being used as a tool of oppression and influence when controlled by autocratic, large, superpower

companies, but—at the same time—there's an emerging possibility of democracy being moved to technology, with the emergence of blockchain and decentralized, autonomous organizations working to promote systems that preserve democracy. The impact of sophisticated technology is so strong, profound, and unknown to many, commented Abovitz, and it affects democracy and the act of governance in many ways.

Looking at the issue from the perspective of local leadership, **Alberto Ibargüen, President of the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation**, shared that the essential part of a democratic republic is an informed citizenry, but local news is increasingly lacking in quality. Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act protects platforms from any liability, but Ibargüen urged for publishers to be held accountable for the damage they cause. Funding research scholarships is the first step in the process, and the Knight Foundation has invested USD 60 million in research across the country to find legislative solutions to these challenges. We then need to bring these researchers together, publish their research, and use it to influence elected leaders.

At the Latin American level, technology is posing a threat in Venezuela, Cuba, and Nicaragua, where dictators are using it to their advantage, stated **Tamara Taraciuk, Acting Director of the Americas Division at Human Rights Watch**. Citing a specific example, Taraciuk explained how the Mexican government under Peña Nieto used

surveillance—a technology used to investigate crime—to harass and spy on human rights defenders and independent journalists playing a critical role in exposing corruption. Specifically, the government surveilled family members and independent experts who were investigating the disappearance of 43 students, instead of investigating the actual crime. Today, evidence suggests that China and Russia have intervened technologically in Latin American countries, driven by a lack of independent checks on power and accountability by an independent judiciary. Technology companies and foreign powers are taking advantage of the market that exists and using technology against key players in protecting democracy, which calls for fundamental structural change.

Technology can be used to defend democracy, though. Human Rights Watch uses technology in its digital lab to document human rights abuses and generate irrefutable evidence that can complement the reporting of independent journalists. Currently, satellite imagery shows that a growing number of areas in the south of Venezuela are being illegally mined for gold by armed groups, while open-source investigation is documenting police brutality and abuse during protests. Technology also has a number of other roles relating to exposing abuse, generating accountability, and strengthening democracy, such as verifying images and producing 3D reconstructions of human rights abuses. It's essential to use technology to provide accurate,

verified evidence that doesn't contribute to misinformation—using blockchain, as suggested by Abovitz, or artificial intelligence, as suggested by Ibarguen.

Dr. Julio Frenk, President of the University of Miami, explained that this session marks the third of a three-part series with the Knight Foundation on the way that current technologies can power both democratic and autocratic processes. Universities have a number of fundamental functions in conserving the values and practices of democracy, outlined Dr. Frenk: 1) Conduct fundamental research into technologies; 2) Convene and create neutral spaces in which divergent perspectives can come together to analyze critical topics; 3) Encourage critical thinking and questioning to counterbalance autocratic tendencies; 4) Adopt values and exhibit behaviors that serve as an example to the society in which they are a part; and, 5) Educate the next generation of leaders in the spirit of these values. Technologies have an incredible potential to threaten democracy and fuel autocratic regimes, which is happening in real time. To protect these technologies from corruption, the creation of a global constitutional convention should be explored as a pathway.

“Right now, technology is working against democracy, as a lot of the technology we know is controlled by autocratic, large, superpower companies,” Rony Abovitz, Founder & CEO of Sun and Thunder

“The problem is not technology in itself, and we need to be clear about that [...] it's the use. The

technology that we're talking about—particularly artificial intelligence—is qualitatively different in an interconnected world because of the pervasiveness with which it can falsify reality,” Dr. Julio Frenk, President of the University of Miami

“There’s a growing sentiment that democracy is under threat in the Americas—threatened not only by populist demagogues, but also by new technologies at their disposal,” Andrés Oppenheimer, Journalist for The Miami Herald

“We are headed into blindness. We have a structure for democracy that is based on geography [...] and for the first time in the history of the republic, we have decoupled the way we inform ourselves with the people we elect, the way we elect, the geographically-based structure we use,” Alberto Ibargüen, President of the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation

“Democracy requires informed citizens and technology can play a critical role in empowering people with quality information. Technology also exists and has an impact on human rights,” Tamara Taraciuk, Acting Director of the Americas Division at Human Rights Watch

As Latin America continues to undergo substantial industrial and trade policy reforms, the region increasingly represents an area of high-growth potential for a multitude of sectors, but further cooperation is required to unlock its full capacity.
Enhancing Trade & Investment Across the Region

explored opportunities for accelerating long-term economic growth across the Western Hemisphere. Moderating the panel, **Eric Farnsworth, Vice President of the Americas Society and the Council of the Americas**, contextualized the conversation: political shifts are taking place across the region, the U.S. dollar is at a historical high against global currencies, and exports from the region are incredibly competitive. By building its competitiveness, the region will be able to take advantage of this moment in time.



Enhancing Trade & Investment Across the Region

The U.S. Department of Commerce has three priorities for promoting trade and commercial competitiveness in the hemisphere, as outlined by **Ian Saunders, Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Western Hemisphere for the U.S. Department of Commerce’s International Trade Administration**: 1) Increasing competitiveness by examining the market and regulatory landscape to ensure the region’s advantages are able to shine through; 2) Creating transparency and ensuring companies understand the rules of engagement so that they can comply; and, 3) Prioritizing security

and avoiding shortcomings in supply chains. At the 9th Summit of the Americas, President Biden announced an economic framework in the context of the Americas, which—according to Sanders—is recognition of the importance of the U.S.-Latin America partnership. Work needs to be done now to define what is behind the four pillars of the framework and ensure that the conditions are right for companies to make corporate investments. **Jason Marczak, Senior Director of the Adrienne Arsht Latin America Center at the Atlantic Council**, shared this sentiment and raised the role of China: competition from China makes it difficult for U.S. companies to compete in the region and further erodes the transparency and legal certainty that is desired by U.S. and western companies, so China's increased trade and economic relationships across the region are increasing pressure on international companies.

The challenge facing supply chains in the hemisphere is the need for legal certainty, adaptation, and communication with the public and private sectors. To illustrate this point, Marczak spoke about the personal protective equipment shortages in the COVID-19 pandemic, which required the pharmaceutical industry and health ministers coming together to think through which regulatory barriers needed to be overcome in order to deliver health equipment. Today, with over 40 million people globally suffering from food insecurity amid Russia's invasion of Ukraine, certainty is crucial to enabling supply chains to respond to needs across the hemisphere.

For governments across the hemisphere, it's fundamental to have stability and the rule of law, as this establishes the risk-reward dynamics that businesses use to determine their investments.

Sharing a private sector perspective, **Jonathan Weinberger, Chief Advocate for Global Transportation Technology at General Motors**, shared that General Motors has recently announced an additional investment of USD 50 million into a plant in Colombia, which has directly created over 800 jobs. Colombia's environment of regulatory predictability allows for less risk and more reward. Citing the recent Indo-Pacific Economic Framework rolled out by the U.S. government, Weinberger urged for a similar economic framework in Latin America.

"The opportunity is now so shame on all of us if we don't seize it," Eric Farnsworth, Vice President of the Americas Society and the Council of the Americas

"One of the lessons that we've all learned from the pandemic is that supply chains are not guaranteed," Ian Saunders, Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Western Hemisphere for the U.S. Department of Commerce's International Trade Administration

"The world is quickly changing and our supply chains are quickly changing, and we need to update the way in which governments and the private sector are working together," Jason Marczak, Senior Director of the Adrienne Arsht Latin America Center at the Atlantic Council

“We [General Motors] are going to invest untold amounts of money somewhere and we need to make sure that where we do it the supply chain and access to labor and materials is secure and safe,” Jonathan Weinberger, Chief Advocate for Global Transportation Technology at General Motors



Industry Transformation: A Necessity for Public-Private Collaboration in Latin America

Innovation and transformation is required by a multitude of sectors in order to accelerate collective progress towards an improved consumption model. ***Industry Transformation: A Necessity for Public-Private Collaboration in Latin America***, moderated by **German Alcayde, Executive Chairman at Atlantic Business Consulting and Concordia Senior Advisor**, focused on regulation as a means for both consumer protection and market creation.

Governments play a leading role in strengthening transformation. According to **H.E. Laura Chinchilla, Vice President of World Leadership**

Alliance - Club De Madrid and Concordia Leadership Council Member, government has three key responsibilities: 1) Drive consultation and dialogue with different sectors and societies in order to establish short- and long-term priorities and achieve national agreements; 2) Adopt a pragmatic approach that puts aside ideological concerns; and, 3) Mobilize capital and financing resources. Ultimately, regulation should encourage economic growth, with President Chinchilla urging governments across Latin America to prioritize investment in human capital, education, and digital technology, and to close the income, digital, and gender gaps.

At the country level, **José Ignacio Paliza, Administrative Minister of the Presidency of the Dominican Republic**, explained that the Dominican Republic government has built an economy with diverse foundations, not only in tourism—which makes up 20% of the country’s GDP—but in other areas such as energy and mining. Last year, economic growth was over 12%, with 5-6% growth expected for this year. Over time, the government has developed the resilience to confront issues and challenges. For example, during the pandemic the Dominican Republic was the only country in the world to provide each traveler visiting the country with a COVID traveler’s insurance that covered any expense incurred due to COVID, allowing the country to secure the health of its people, open its borders, and keep the main motor of its economy moving forward. The most important role of the

government, Minister Paliza said, is providing education to prepare citizens for the future—not just to equip citizens with the capabilities to navigate technological disruptions and be part of the change that society is pushing, but to ensure they are prepared to transform industries, too.

At the industry level, **Grégoire Verdeaux, Senior Vice President, External Affairs at Philip Morris International** (PMI), shared the steps taken to develop less harmful alternatives to cigarettes in the tobacco industry. For PMI, the key was to remove combustion from the consumption of nicotine, given that the vast majority of harmful components are in cigarette smoke. In terms of managing regulation around the tobacco industry, governments must adopt a collaborative model. While the private sector understands its market, consumers, and drivers of innovation, it's crucial from the outset to have robust, science-based product standards and safeguards. Phasing in and regularly reviewing regulation is an ongoing challenge, as is educating the consumer to make sure that innovation shows up in the right hands in the right way.

“The ability for companies and governments to collaborate and exchange permanently in a way that’s consistent is so important,” Grégoire Verdeaux, Senior Vice President, External Affairs at Philip Morris International

“Everyone is talking about the transformation of the Dominican Republic,” German Alcayde, Executive

Chairman at Atlantic Business Consulting and Concordia Senior Advisor

“Governments will need to mobilize resources, because capital and financing will be critical in the years to come,” H.E. Laura Chinchilla, Vice President of World Leadership Alliance – Club De Madrid and Concordia Leadership Council Member

“The most important effort of government should be education and preparing our citizens for the future,” José Ignacio Paliza, Administrative Minister of the Presidency of the Dominican Republic



Creating Hope at Home: Building Resilience to Mitigate Migration

In recent years, forced migration from Central America has become a crisis that needs to be urgently addressed. Through the use of digital technologies, World Vision is addressing the root causes of migration by building improved and resilient livelihoods in agriculture, food security, and child wellbeing. In ***Creating Hope at***

Home: Building Resilience to Mitigate Migration, Jorge Galeano, National Director for World Vision Guatemala & Honduras, highlighted the challenges facing the Northern Triangle and explained how World Vision is working directly with over 600 communities to identify the most vulnerable families—using technology such as cellphones—and then introduce interventions to decrease this propensity. World Vision’s programs address at-risk youth, encouraging enrollment in school and in formal jobs, and providing training on starting a business. Galeano called for designing programs that can be scaled up to strengthen local and domestic capacities, working in partnerships with key stakeholders in countries, and creating more opportunities for economic empowerment.

“*Opportunities bring hope*,” Jorge Galeano, National Director for World Vision Guatemala & Honduras

Recent financial expansion in Latin America, stemming from technological development and increasingly favorable financial policies, has highlighted the region’s untapped financial potential. With a significant demand for new financial technology and infrastructure in many Latin American countries, this increase marks the beginning of a surge in financial potential across Latin America. ***The Future of Finance in Latin America***, moderated by **Teryn Wolfe, Founder & CEO of Measurement Matters, Director of Corporate Development at Matrix Food**

Technologies, and Concordia Advisor, discussed the future prospects for financial development and increased commercial activity in Latin America.



The Future of Finance in Latin America

Honing in on Brazil and the country’s efforts to achieve financial inclusion, **Luis Felipe Monteiro, CEO of CATENO**, explained that Brazil digitized the entire population during the COVID-19 pandemic, following three key steps: 1) All government services and transactions were digitized, putting Brazil in seventh place of the most digitized governments in the world, according to the World Bank; 2) Competition was increased, with the central bank instituting an instant payment platform that replaced cash; and, 3) The 65 million Brazilians that received emergency aid during the pandemic were given a digital account for payments and cash transfers.

The private sector plays a crucial role in digitizing governments and ensuring that the population benefits from financial inclusion. According to **Jagruti Solanki, CFO of BitPay**, the private sector

must be open to alternative forms of payment that are digital. At some point, Solanki sees a world in which we have digital currencies issued by governments or crypto currencies that use blockchain technology. She noted that BitPay, which processes crypto payments, is witnessing a significant uptick in private sector adoption, suggesting that digital currencies are the future. Indeed, merchants are increasingly offering crypto as a form of payment to consumers.

Technology is integral to advancing financial education. **Matt Keller, Director of Impact & Inclusion at the Algorand Foundation**, explained that many children fell behind in reading, writing, and math during the pandemic. Uruguay, however, did particularly well: in 2007, the country implemented a one laptop policy, where every child received a laptop and had access to the Internet, meaning that, when the pandemic hit, the country seamlessly shifted to virtual learning. When technology is incorporated as a way to supplement education in times of crisis, it works well. With technology being rapidly adopted in every sector of our lives, it's crucial that children are equipped to deal with a future that is becoming increasingly digital. As highlighted by Keller, entrepreneurs on the ground are really creative in terms of how they increase access to payments and banking—in some cases using WhatsApp where Internet access is low. In Brazil, Monteiro explained, the telecommunications infrastructure agency is responsible for making sure that telecom companies can reach distant areas, with satellites being used to widen Internet access.

In terms of financial inclusion, there's still a large gender gap, as well as an ethnic gap—across accounts and transactions—that needs to be addressed. Blockchain technology, said Keller, allows the unbanked 1.7 million people in the world—the majority of whom are women—to utilize financial services as well as local and global marketplaces. Providing access to the global economy with low transaction costs increases the amount of money people have which, over time, decreases the inequalities. As raised by Monteiro, it's crucial to first give women financial independence, for which female entrepreneurship programs are key.

Looking ahead, regulation is key to cultivating financial inclusion. Monteiro recommended that governments regulate the financial sector as an open environment in which multiple companies can share data about their clients to increase the number of products and services they provide. The role of the public sector is to create the environment, regulation, and platforms in order for private sector companies to work more easily. For Solanki, it's crucial to work with regulators—be that licensing or tax authorities—to educate them around consumer and merchant behaviors.

“To include the unbanked in this world, blockchain technology is the way to bring people in and increase the amount of money they have, which—over time—will decrease the grotesque inequality we see in this world,” Matt Keller, Director of Impact & Inclusion at the Algorand Foundation

“There’s still a very large gender gap in terms of financial inclusion, but also an ethnic gap across accounts and transactions. How do we address that?”

Teryn Wolfe, Founder & CEO of Measurement Matters, Director of Corporate Development at Matrix Food Technologies, and Concordia Advisor

“Policymakers and government officials should understand that digital currencies, technologies, and finance are the future,” Luis Felipe Monteiro, CEO of CATENO

“The biggest thing for the private sector specifically is being open to alternative forms of payment that are digital,” Jagruti Solanki, CFO of BitPay

Key Takeaways & Next Steps

- While technology is being used to subvert democracy, it has the potential to preserve democracy if regulated correctly. Technology can be used to fight misinformation through image and footage verification.
- The key drivers of migration must be addressed, and technology can be used to target aid and support to the groups most vulnerable to migration.
- A lower risk-to-reward ratio, an environment built on regulatory certainty and rule of law, and resilient supply chains are key to enhancing investment and trade across Latin America.
- Policymakers and central banks must

understand that digitized financial systems and digital currencies are the future of finance. Crucially, the supporting digital infrastructure needs to be improved to ensure equitable access, while crypto systems need to be simplified for both merchants and users.

- Governments play a leading role in transformation, but consultation and dialogue with other sectors is vital; these dialogues must be pragmatic and attempt to put ideological concerns to one side.
- Government regulation is needed to encourage economic growth and investment in human capital, but “innovation by permission” should be avoided as this stifles the creative potential of companies.
- Mass access to technology is required to enable the workforce to keep pace with industry transformation.

Environmental Sustainability



Introductory Remarks: Benjamin Backer

Opening the topic of environmental sustainability, **Benjamin Backer, Founder & President of the American Conservation Coalition (ACC)**, gave an insight into how local governments and municipalities can adapt cities into climate-smart urban spaces across the Western Hemisphere, using Miami as a case study. The ACC is the largest youth organization dedicated to a more centrist version of fighting climate change, with market-based ideals and innovation reforms. Contrary to expectations, cities like Miami with a conservative-leaning mayor, are leading pro-climate efforts, while more left-leaning cities like Seattle are falling behind. Comparing the two cities, Backer said that Seattle is looking to ban energy sources outside of wind and solar, while Miami has taken an approach to prioritizing energy sources that make economic sense while

also decreasing emissions. As Backer explained, listening to people and figuring out what they need in their individual communities—paired with achieving emissions reductions as a country—is the best path forward.

“Miami is leading from the front, serving as a hopeful model for other cities across the world that are looking to take action on climate,” Benjamin Backer, Founder & President of the American Conservation Coalition

As mining and alternative energy companies pursue new opportunities in the Americas, best practices in the “E” and “S” of ESG (environmental, social, and governance) will be vital to ensure that they adequately engage with local communities and stakeholders and protect the local environment in which they operate. In ***ESG in Latin America: How Mining & Alternative Energy Companies Can Learn From Each Other*** with 2022 Americas Summit Patron Programming Sponsor Veracity Worldwide, **Benjamin Weiss, Managing Director of Asia-Pacific at Veracity Worldwide**, outlined three key considerations for Latin American companies to take into account when implementing their ESG initiatives: 1) The local context and operating environment should be front and center; 2) Stakeholder engagement is a strategic imperative; and, 3) Politics and geopolitics must be paid attention to. In the ESG conversation currently, local context is missing

from many ESG-related business decisions, as well as from the metrics, ratings, and rankings on which investors so frequently rely. An in-depth understanding of the dynamics of challenging markets is essential, and Veracity Worldwide uses its on-the-ground networks and access in difficult places to illuminate those issues for clients.



ESG in Latin America: How Mining & Alternative Energy Companies Can Learn From Each Other

In conversation with **Ambassador Paula J. Dobriansky, Ph.D., Former Under Secretary of State for Global Affairs, Senior Fellow at the Harvard University Belfer Center for Science & International Affairs, and Concordia Leadership Council Member**, Weiss shared three guiding principles for mining and alternative energy companies operating and investing in Latin America to take into account in order to balance sustainability and responsible business practices. First, gaining social license is essential. It's something to be earned (a point shared by Guido Patrignani, CEO of Greenwood Energy in the session *Advancing Environmental Sustainability & Clean Energy Across the Western Hemisphere*) and an

in-depth understanding of your local stakeholder and community environment—and their considerations and expectations—should be taken into account throughout the life of your operations and investment, rather than as a box-ticking exercise. Second, clean energy does not necessarily mean clean business. A deep appraisal of impact investments is crucial to ensure that the rationale for those investments is not undermined by other probity concerns. Third, you are as good as the weakest link in your supply chain. Understanding your supply chain means identifying potentially high-risk aspects, grasping the overarching operating environments, and knowing potential suppliers.

The political environment is often the missing piece when it comes to the assessment of ESG risks and opportunities in particular markets, Weiss shared. In Latin America, a number of key ESG considerations are being affected by political developments in both the region as a whole and in particular markets, shaping the environment for any company already operating in or looking to enter into these markets. In Colombia, the incoming president has made it clear that clean energy will be a major focus of his administration. In Ecuador, mass protests over recent weeks have raised concerns about mining activity and indigenous community considerations, curbing oil output. In Chile, a new constitution is being considered, with ESG issues front and center, and the government has already brought cases of alleged environmental degradation against BHP

and other miners. In Brazil, record deforestation in the Amazon is prompting the opposition campaign to place environmental issues at its core ahead of October's elections.

Geopolitical forces playing out globally are creating an environment in which companies need to be aware of their influence on ESG issues. According to Weiss, mining companies have been ahead of the game in terms of viewing ESG as a strategic imperative and putting weight and rigor behind ESG considerations, while alternative energy companies haven't yet reached this point. Alternative energy companies, therefore, can learn from the mining sector in order to capitalize on this moment of transition.

"A difficult stakeholder environment can make or break your business. Understanding that is paramount," Benjamin Weiss, Managing Director of Asia-Pacific at Veracity Worldwide

"Geopolitics really matters. With Russia's invasion of Ukraine, we have a disruption of food supplies and supply chains. What's the connection between ESG and geopolitics today?" Ambassador Paula J. Dobriansky, Ph.D., Former Under Secretary of State for Global Affairs, Senior Fellow at the Harvard University Belfer Center for Science & International Affairs, and Concordia Leadership Council Member

With climate change threatening the economies and energy accessibility of Latin American countries, environmental sustainability remains a critical issue for private and public sector leaders. ***Advancing Environmental Sustainability & Clean Energy Across the Western Hemisphere***, moderated by **Dr. Norma Kenyon, Vice Provost for Innovation at the University of Miami**, 2022 Americas Summit Principal Programming Partner, explored the role of Latin American governments and businesses in promoting environmental sustainability to maximize long-term socioeconomic prosperity and access to low-cost energy within the region.



Advancing Environmental Sustainability & Clean Energy Across the Western Hemisphere

Any effective transition to environmental sustainability requires cooperation between Latin American countries. An example of such regional cooperation, highlighted by **Hon. Ana Irene Delgado, Senator, Republic of Panama**, was a declaration made at COP26 by the governments of Panama, Costa Rica, Ecuador, and Colombia to create the largest transboundary marine biosphere reserve. Panama, meanwhile, is one of

three carbon-negative countries in the world and has passed legislation in three key areas with a direct impact on the environment: 1) Electrical mobility cars; 2) Reduction in single-use plastic; and, 3) Granting nature the ‘right to exist’.

With climate change threatening the reliability of certain methods of generating energy, such as hydropower, private sector companies play a crucial role in promoting cost-effective energy diversification. According to **Guido Patrignani, CEO of Greenwood Energy**, development in Latin America must be approached in a substantial, comprehensive way, placing the needs and involvement of local, indigenous communities at the core. Greenwood Energy prioritizes environmental and social impact just as much as monetary returns, illustrated by the company’s recent launch of its Terra initiative. This utility-scale solar project has extensive environmental and social impact and has been developed jointly with indigenous peoples of Colombia, providing housing, jobs, education, and healthcare to over 1,000 people.

Support for private sector initiatives must come from the public sector, particularly in terms of its promotion of international agreements and its ability to bring new stakeholders into the equation, highlighted **Maria Eugenia Brizuela de Avila, Executive Coach and Former Minister of Foreign Affairs for the Republic of El Salvador**. Initiatives like the Equator Principles—a risk management framework for financial institutions

to identify, assess, and manage environmental and social risks when financing projects—is a way of bringing in other participants, as the public sector can convert such initiatives into policies that will support those visionaries looking to introduce more sustainable development. Working with civil society, local government, and the private sector is key to driving climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts and, as a result, bring resilience to communities. Without measures of adaptation, at least 3.9 million people are estimated to migrate from the Northern Triangle to the U.S. in the next decade.

Returning to the theme of smart cities as explored in Backer’s opening remarks, **Renaud de Viel Castel, COO & Head of Global Expansion at Rubicon**, explained how technology helps Rubicon—a company whose mission is to end waste in all its forms—capture data on so much more than waste streams. With the right technology, sensors, and algorithms, Rubicon’s trucks act as a mobile data center that regularly roams a city’s streets, providing an insight into many dimensions of a city, from air quality and graffiti to potholes and damaged curbsides. This data can be passed to the relevant city departments—for example, areas with graffiti will be flagged to the police as such areas may be more susceptible to crime—allowing cities to preemptively address certain issues.

“Latin America has already been significantly affected by climate change, including drought, flooding, and deforestation [...] 17 million people are

expected to migrate out of Latin America due to the effects of climate change over the next 30 years,” Dr. Norma Kenyon, Vice Provost for Innovation at the University of Miami

“We believe that we have a huge opportunity when developing projects in Latin America because we have learned from our mistakes in other parts of the world,” Guido Patrignani, CEO of Greenwood Energy

“The Northern Triangle is responsible for less than 1% of greenhouse gas emissions in the world, but because of climate change impacts, it is necessary that we not only engage in mitigation but also in adaptation [...] Climate adaptation brings resilience to communities,” María Eugenia Brizuela de Ávila, Executive Coach and Former Minister of Foreign Affairs for the Republic of El Salvador

“Lots of cities and countries are behind in terms of how to treat and trace waste and recycling,” Renaud de Viel Castel, COO & Head of Global Expansion at Rubicon

“Local communities, especially indigenous communities, need to feel that they are part of it [the solution],” Hon. Ana Irene Delgado, Senator, Republic of Panama

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) represent approximately 90% of the world’s businesses, serving as a central pillar in efforts

to recenter the global economy around more sustainable business practices. Nonetheless, the lack of surplus capital available for both SMEs and minority-owned businesses can limit their ability to effectively implement such sustainability initiatives, particularly compared to big businesses. ***The Growing Role of SMEs in the Transition Towards Sustainability***, introduced by **Nelson Reyneri, Principal for the ESG Practice at Point B**, and moderated by **Angie Lassman, Correspondent for NBC 6**, explored actionable steps that SMEs and minority-based businesses can take to move towards more sustainable practices.



The Growing Role of SMEs in the Transition Towards Sustainability

The conversation must start with SMEs, said **Anthony Casciano, President & CEO of Siemens Financial Services, Inc.**, which are the core of the supply chain, representing more than 90% of all companies and 50% of employment. Financing is key to helping small companies shift to sustainability—and Siemens is looking to finance this shift—while embracing digitization and automation is crucial to improving production

and supply chain resiliency. We must create an environment that enables innovation, that opens up the workforce and retrain workers so that they can participate in this shift, and that understands that employment with a purpose is key.

Latin American-based companies play a crucial role in driving more sustainable practices. Latino-owned or minority-owned businesses are twice as likely to export goods or have relationships in other markets, due to linguistic and cultural ties, said **Alejandra Castillo, Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development at the U.S. Department of Commerce**, urging for the U.S. to leverage its diversity. Access to capital remains the number one impediment to the growth of minority-owned businesses and SMEs.

An ecosystem of actors across academia, government, small businesses, nonprofits, communities, and philanthropists is crucial to driving innovation. The U.S. Department of Commerce is anchored in creating this ecosystem, helping SMEs pivot to e-commerce through embracing technology (specifically broadband), diversifying their business plan, and implementing sustainability and workforce development initiatives. By working with the International Trade Administration, the Department is helping SMEs find new markets and build opportunities to export. Meanwhile, Siemens is working with the Stevens Institute on the academic side to build an online place for companies to seek capital, and with the Department of Energy to build an ESG

maturity tool to help companies calculate their carbon emissions.

“Small business is the lifeblood and backbone of our economy,” Nelson Reyneri, Principal for the ESG Practice at Point B

“90% of the world’s businesses are SMEs, many of which are minority based,” Angie Lassman, Correspondent for NBC 6

“Out of challenging times come the greatest innovation,” Anthony Casciano, President & CEO of Siemens Financial Services, Inc.

“One of the unique benefits of the U.S. is our diversity so we need to leverage that diversity [...] We know we need to grow our country with equity in mind,” Alejandra Castillo, Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development at the U.S. Department of Commerce

Key Takeaways & Next Steps

- Mining and alternative energy companies operating and investing in Latin America must have an in-depth understanding of the local context, earn and maintain social licenses, and know their supply chain.
- Working directly with indigenous communities is essential in sustainable development.
- Multinational agreements between Central and South American countries are needed to

achieve positive climate goals.

- Capital remains the main impediment to the growth of SMEs. Cross-sector partnerships are key to allowing SMEs to embrace technology, boost efficiency, and bring their workforce along with them.
- Read geopolitical risk and market intelligence advisory firm Veracity Worldwide's [*Three ESG Principles for World-Class Companies*](#).

Cultural Diplomacy & Youth Advocacy



Enabling the Upward Mobility of Migrants & Refugees in Latin America

Education and accreditation is critical to the upward mobility of refugees and migrants entering the U.S. and Europe, as explored in *Enabling the Upward Mobility of Migrants & Refugees in Latin America*. Moderated by **Tatiana Torres, Vice President of Public Affairs at SKDK and Concordia Advisor**, who migrated to the U.S. from Colombia 35 years ago when she was just five years old, the session highlighted the work of Aid Live, a non-profit organization created by young entrepreneurs in response to the humanitarian crisis in Venezuela. As shared by **Jose Carrillo, Executive Director of Aid Live**, the organization addresses the mid and long-term challenges facing migrants—in particular, Venezuelan migrants in Colombia.

There are currently more than 80 million refugees worldwide, faced with many challenges—mental, cultural, financial, physical, spiritual. With these challenges, though, come opportunities—not just for them and their families, but for the countries receiving them. As highlighted by Carrillo, migrants in employment become contributors to society through economic growth. If companies view migration as an opportunity as opposed to through the lens of humanitarian aid, they will promote inclusion and economic development, while also helping people out of poverty. The Colombian government is a prime example of viewing migration as an opportunity, granting more than 2 million Venezuelans with legal status and the ability to work. Investing in the education of migrants can allow countries, like Colombia, to fill the gap of bilingual employees.

“Colombia is a living example of how economic growth can be created by receiving migrants from different countries,” Jose Carrillo, Executive Director of Aid Live

“I would not be sitting here if it hadn’t been for the sacrifices that people in our lives made to bring us to where we are, but also the mentors and the sponsors that took time to invest at all levels and at all costs,” Tatiana Torres, Vice President of Public Affairs at SKDK and Concordia Advisor

The universal power of football to promote cohesion, inclusion, and skills development in young

people is widely acknowledged. **FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022: A Legacy Beyond Qatar** hosted in collaboration with the **Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy**, 2022 Americas Summit Lead Programming Partner, was moderated by **Hanne Dalmut, Senior Director of Partnerships at Concordia**. The panel explored the partnership between the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy’s Generation Amazing, B4Development, and CONCACAF over the next four years to ensure that the legacy of the 2022 World Cup impacts disenfranchised people around the world.



FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022: A Legacy Beyond Qatar

The approach of the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy is rooted in partnership, with each partner having unique goals and objectives and contributing a unique area of expertise. Generation Amazing is the human and social legacy program under the 2022 FIFA World Cup, as shared by **Nasser Al Khori, Executive Director of Generation Amazing at the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy**, which helps refugees in the region through football. Generation Amazing has built over 35 football pitches in over 10 countries over the past 10 years, and recently launched its

first project in Rwanda. Over the next four years, Generation Amazing is working across 41 countries to secure a legacy for the 2022 Qatar World Cup. Its programs include football for development, education, and youth advocacy, with the overarching goal of providing safe spaces for communities while promoting life skills and the UN Sustainable Development Goals through football. For Al Khor, building capacity and enabling communities to replicate these interventions in other countries is key to success on a larger scale.

As explained by **Jason Roberts, MBE, Director of Development at CONCACAF**, the strategic partnership between CONCACAF and the Qatar Football Association focuses on football for social change—specifically, creating a volunteer network that engages young people through sports—with programs to be rolled out in 41 different countries over the next four years. CONCACAF and the Qatar Football Association have created a curriculum aligned with Generation Amazing’s work around the world that equips volunteers with an understanding of how to interact with young people, conduct monitoring & evaluation exercises, and prioritize child protection, with the aim of inspiring wider impact throughout the region. Key to a partnership’s success, in Roberts eyes, is being aligned in vision and approach, particularly when the partnership is working in multiple countries, each facing unique challenges.

For B4Development—one of the legacy initiatives of the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy—

incorporating evidence-based learning and policy making is crucial to the development of the curriculum. As outlined by **Dr. Fadi Makki, Director of B4Development at the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy**, B4Development focuses on three steps: 1) Diagnosing behavioral challenges to understand the biases at stake; 2) Designing behavioral interventions that steer people in the right direction; and, 3) Conducting experiments and randomized control trials. B4Development focuses on capacity building by sharing its behavioral insights and evidence-based policies. For the first time, this year’s World Cup is using behavioral science in a systematic way, at the tournament itself—looking at fan engagement and behaviors—but also to shape legacy initiatives that survive beyond the tournament and at the 2026 World Cup.

As highlighted by **Mark Mungal, Director & Co-Founder of the Caribbean Sport & Development Agency**, the Caribbean Sport & Development Agency is focused on introducing safeguarding guidelines, developing a curriculum built around introducing coaches to good practice and abuse, and creating guidelines for coaches to adopt in their practice and for delegates to adopt in their competitions. The result is that trainers have access to coaching education manuals and workbooks, which are being shared with the 41 member associations. Four years from now, Mungal sees success as training more teachers and having larger numbers of grassroots volunteers who understand safeguarding and how to report and

respond to individual cases, with the cumulative result being good practice embedded across the region. Governments should commit to partnering with CONCACAF to strengthen their safeguards for children across sports, schools, and communities.

“This conversation is around human and social development, and the impact of global initiatives on local and national development,” Hanne Dalmut, Senior Director of Partnerships at Concordia

“I can’t stress enough how important it is to partner with organizations—sports and non-sports,” Mr. Nasser Al Khorī, Executive Director of Generation Amazing at the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy

“Football can speak to people in a way that not many things can,” Jason Roberts, MBE, Director of Development at CONCACAF

“We [B4Development] value capacity building. When we work with organizations [...] we’re passing on the behavioral insights, the designing of experiments, the rethinking of programs, so that you are integrating insight from behavioral science in the program’s entire journey,” Dr. Fadi Makki, Director of B4Development at the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy

“It’s important for governments to partner with CONCACAF to strengthen their safeguards for their children across different sports, schools, and communities,” Mark Mungal, Director & Co-Founder of the Caribbean Sport & Development Agency



Using Sports to Strengthen Youth Engagement

As nations look for innovative ways to engage younger generations, one avenue stands out: sport. ***Using Sports to Strengthen Youth Engagement*** heard from University of Miami student-athlete leaders on the importance of sport in creating social impact. Moderator **José R. Mas, CEO of MasTec and Co-Owner of Inter Miami**, asked all panelists to share what sport means to them and how they can use their voice from an activist perspective.

For **Debbie Ajagbe, All-American Miami Hurricanes Thrower at the University of Miami**, sport got her out of her shell, meeting people and having courage with herself. She has the ability to advocate for others, not just as a student-athlete, but for Black women and people. Being herself, through sport, is activism enough. For **Karla Erjavec, Basketball Guard and FIBA Women’s EuroBasket Competitor at the University of Miami**, sport was never a big thing in her home country of Croatia. Across university campuses, the voices of student-athletes are valued, and it’s fulfilling to

have an impact at such a young age and be able to witness how these voices can be used to empower others.

For **Lou Hedley, Hurricanes Punter at the University of Miami and Co-Founder of Canes Worldwide**, who grew up in Australia and began a career in construction, college football created a new social realm. For student-athletes, community service is key to providing a voice for the younger generation. And, finally, for **Demetrius Jackson, Former Miami Hurricanes Defensive End at the University of Miami**, thinking about how to use your voice is key, whether it's taking the knee, doing community service, or supporting the LGBT or Black Lives Matter community. Sport should be used to open up opportunities for kids, rather than put pressure on them. Educating communities, particularly around financial literacy, is important.

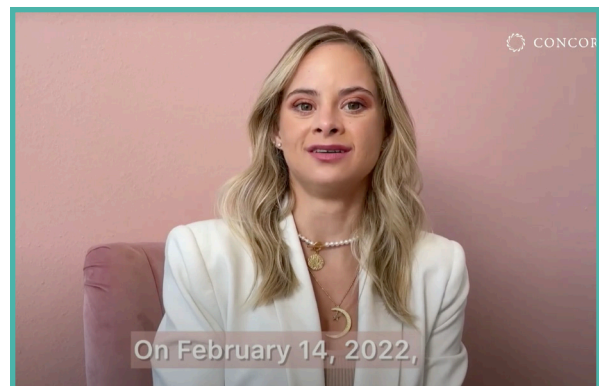
"In the U.S., college sports are so important to our everyday living [...] Our athletes have a role that many others in the region may not, but through their voices they have so much power to effectuate change," José R. Mas, CEO of MasTec and Co-Owner of Inter Miami

"Chase your dreams. No matter where you're are or who you're surrounded with, make sure you chase what you want in life," Karla Erjavec, Basketball Guard and FIBA Women's EuroBasket Competitor at the University of Miami

"We do have a voice, it's just how you use it, whether it's taking the knee, doing community service, supporting the LGBT community, supporting BLM," Demetrius Jackson, Former Miami Hurricanes Defensive End at the University of Miami

"Now it's about, how do I create and become part of this community where as a Black woman I'm able to speak up," Debbie Ajagbe, All-American Miami Hurricanes Thrower at the University of Miami

"Our voices [as student athletes] are a lot louder than others," Lou Hedley, Hurricanes Punter at the University of Miami and Co-Founder of Canes Worldwide



In **ACCESSability for All**, **Sofia Jirau, Model & Entrepreneur, Inprende**, the first Victoria's Secret model with Down syndrome, shared her experience of becoming a model and entrepreneur. Highlighting the importance of believing in your-

self, Jirau shared her No Limits campaign, which shows how the Down syndrome community can achieve their dreams through hard work and overcoming barriers.

“I want to show the world that inside and out there are no limits,” Sofía Jirau, Model & Entrepreneur, INprende

Key Takeaways & Next Steps

- Educating the next generation is key to enabling the upward mobility of migrants and refugees. Concordia is collaborating with Aid Live and Westfield Business School to offer 25 partial scholarships to Latin American students seeking refuge in or emigrating to the U.S. or Europe. More information can be found [here](#).
- Migration creates economic opportunities for host countries in the way of increased tax contributions and consumer bases.
- There is a unifying power in sport, which can open doors for young people. The voices of student athletes are amplified and can be a powerful tool to engage younger generations and enact positive change.
- Generation Amazing, the program working across 41 countries to secure a legacy for the 2022 Qatar World Cup, understands the universal power of football to promote cohesion, inclusion, and skills development in young people.

Health Opportunities & Challenges

As several countries across the Western Hemisphere, particularly within Latin America, are experiencing low levels of healthcare expenditure and direct investment, coupled with a scarcity of qualified healthcare professionals, the region's healthcare systems are facing significant challenges amid the pressures of a post-pandemic world. Exploring mediums including the deployment of new technology, intra-regional programs for medical training, and cross-sector partnerships, ***Health Opportunities & Challenges Across the Western Hemisphere*** discussed the most pressing challenges in the healthcare sector and how to navigate potential solutions for future durability.



Health Opportunities & Challenges Across the Western Hemisphere

Moderating the conversation, **Rachael Baitel**, Chief of Staff at Russell Street Ventures and Concordia Advisor, asked the panelists about the

role of cross-sector partnerships in increasing access to healthcare, especially for communities that are impacted by adversity in Latin America. For **Dr. Felicia Knaul, Director of the Institute for Advanced Study of the Americas and Hemispheric & Global Affairs at the University of Miami**, patients are the greatest partners in the context of health systems in Latin America. Thinking institutionally, intersectoral partnerships—across health, education, nutrition, and women’s empowerment—are key to strengthening health systems. Similarly, public-private partnerships play an integral role: public financing is key to guaranteeing financial protection, as is competition on the delivery side, with the post-pandemic leapfrog in telemedicine a prime example of this. For **Michael Hall, Senior Advisor for Strategic Philanthropy at International Medical Corps (IMC)**, partnership is at the center of the IMC’s approach. IMC partners with private sector companies such as FedEx, which stores equipment in Memphis on behalf of IMC and can deliver materials anywhere in the world at a moment’s notice. To drive long-term recovery and create solutions tailored to the unique needs of each community, it’s crucial to work directly with local communities and form on-the-ground partnerships with local health ministries and organizations.

As highlighted by Hall, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates a worker shortage of 18 million people globally by 2030. However, there are a number of opportunities that can be taken

advantage of to reduce this number. To address Latin America’s aging population, we must make investments in telemedicine, as this will allow medical professionals to reach more patients. We also need to invest in training community health workers, as this will keep clinical staff away from nonclinical work and in the clinics, while proactively targeting pre-existing conditions.

Building on Hall’s comments around community health workers, Dr. Knaul raised the issue of gender composition in the health workforce. Research shows that the vast majority of healthcare, both paid and unpaid, is produced by women, who are underpaid, unrecognized, and uncounted. On the paid side, many poor people in Latin America lack access to care, yet those who have been trained to provide that care are without employment. The aging population must be approached as an opportunity by making use of the underutilized potential of health workers in a dignified and gender-equitable way. Dr. Knaul also highlighted the importance of closing the connectivity gap between patients and healthcare providers and training a health workforce that is comfortable with using technology as a form of communication.

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated health inequality and underfunded health systems, highlighted Hall, as well as structural barriers, commented Dr. Knaul, particularly in terms of access to healthcare and the fact that the majority of late-disease detection, especially breast

cancer and diabetes, hit women in poor, marginalized municipalities. During the pandemic, some countries in Latin America paused their structural reforms, while others maintained their momentum. Going forward, Dr. Knaul explained the importance of prioritizing higher education and professional training with a focus on technology, stating that the chaos and tragedy that we've witnessed during the pandemic can spur the types of reforms needed to address the medical apartheid.

"COVID has launched this momentum, but how can this be translated into a roadmap for long-term recovery?" Rachael Baitel, Chief of Staff at Russell Street Ventures and Concordia Advisor

"The World Health Organization estimates a worker shortage of 18 million people globally by 2030. The health worker shortage is the question for this group and for the health community," Michael Hall, Senior Advisor for Strategic Philanthropy at International Medical Corps

"How can we continue to move forward on reforms to get to a point where we don't have the medical apartheid," Dr. Felicia Knaul, Director of the Institute for Advanced Study of the Americas and Hemispheric & Global Affairs at the University of Miami

Mainstage sessions took a closer look at one of the biggest challenges facing healthcare: the mental

health crisis. Mental health affects over a billion people worldwide, and there is a suicide in the U.S. every 17 minutes. However, discussing mental health remains stigmatized, especially for executives and high performers, who are more likely to struggle with it and less likely to seek help for fear of being judged. In ***Silence Solves Nothing: How our Stories can Address the Mental Health Crisis***, Beth Doane, CEO of Main & Rose, shared her own adoption story. Illustrating how we can embrace our own stories in a way that lets us grow, succeed, and help others, Doane conveyed that one must not be defined by their DNA—particularly in terms of mental health—but, rather, upbringing and nature is the most powerful force in shaping our identities.



Silence Solves Nothing: How our Stories can Address the Mental Health Crisis

"Our stories are the most powerful tool we can use to create change," Beth Doane, CEO of Main & Rose

Though mental health has been underfunded, socially stigmatized, and underappreciated as a policy priority in societies well before the pandemic, we are now at a critical juncture in terms of both need and opportunity. From increased rates of depression and social anxiety disorder among younger demographics to the systematic burn-out among healthcare professionals and essential workers, the wake of the pandemic has provided fertile grounds for cross-sector collaboration to drastically improve access to cognitive therapy and novel medications, enhance public awareness on the matter, and advance critical initiatives to support collective mental health, as explored in ***Addressing the Mental Health Crisis*** with **Dr. Vivek Murthy, U.S. Surgeon General, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services**, and **Shawn Singh, CEO & Director of VistaGen Therapeutics, Inc.**

Dr. Murthy shared three key statistics with the audience to illustrate the scale of today's mental health crisis in the U.S. First, in the decade before the pandemic, there was a 57% increase in the suicide rate among young people, which has risen significantly following the pandemic. Second, it takes 11 years, on average, from the time that a child first shows symptoms of mental health struggles to when they actually receive evidence-based care. Third, 42% of high school students feel persistent feelings of hopelessness and sadness. Dr. Murthy outlined three steps to address the crisis: 1) Change access to treatment, including providing better treatments, a workforce that can deliver them, and technology that brings

the treatments to people; 2) Introduce preventative measures through school and community programs; and, 3) Overcome stigma around how we think about mental health.



Addressing the Mental Health Crisis

A key pillar of mental health and wellbeing is social connection and wellbeing. Dr. Murthy explained that when people struggle with loneliness, other healthcare risks increase, including anxiety, depression, dementia, cardiovascular disease, premature death, and sleep disturbances. Rebuilding social connection in our communities, therefore, is key to health outcomes. On an individual level, we can look for opportunities to help others in our community. On an institutional level, workplaces can take steps to promote connection, schools can invest in social and emotional learning, and governments can create policy solutions, bring sectors together, and invest in research to identify the most effective strategies to enhance connection. Enhancing community will not only improve health, but it will enhance performance in the workplace, too. Ultimately, by coming together as a society, we'll be able to confront challenges

such as the pandemic, climate change, and misinformation. Over recent decades, community metrics across the country have declined, with fewer people engaging with friends and belonging to social groups, and more people feeling isolated and lonely, so now is the time to reinvest in social connection.

Medication must play a role alongside enhanced connectivity, suggested Singh, who explained that the U.S. Food & Drug Administration has been focused on developing a new generation of medications that work more quickly and safely with fewer side effects. Enhancing access to these medications will be key, with the recent uptick in telehealth an encouraging sign. Singh stressed that today's mental health crisis is fixable through strong public-private partnerships, efforts to destigmatize mental illness, and steps to encourage community connection.

"With strong public-private partnerships, enhanced awareness to destigmatize mental illness, and the encouragement of community connections, this [the mental health crisis] can get fixed," Shawn Singh, CEO & Director of VistaGen Therapeutics, Inc.

"Mental health is the fuel that allows us to do everything we do in life, and right now we've got problems with that supply and we've really got to address it, which is why it's a domestic and global crisis," Dr. Vivek Murthy, U.S. Surgeon General, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services

Another challenge for the healthcare community is the ongoing battle against cancer. While significant medical advances have been made, greater emphasis must be placed on providing aid to those living with cancer and ending the disease as a whole. ***Cancer Moonshot & Caring for At-Risk Women*** heard from two breast cancer survivors, **Ambassador Nancy G. Brinker, Co-Founder of the Promise Fund of Florida, and Concordia Leadership Council Member**, in conversation with **Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz, Representative from Florida's 23rd Congressional District**.



Cancer Moonshot & Caring for At-Risk Women

Multi-sector efforts are crucial in this fight, and organizations like the Promise Fund of Florida are helping to move past symbolic actions to create meaningful progress towards ending cancer. Contextualizing the conversation, Ambassador Brinker explained that Palm Beach County is the third-largest county in the third-largest state with

some of the worst healthcare outcomes in the U.S., due to low Medicaid coverage, for-profit medicine, and a disadvantaged population in the west of the county. As a result, patients are increasingly being diagnosed with late-stage diseases. With research showing that breast and cervical cancer can be almost 99% curable found in the earliest stages, the Promise Fund of Florida is on track to treat over 20,000 women—particularly at-risk and minority women—by November 2022. The Fund has invested in 11 patient navigators who work directly with women in local communities, and built a federally-qualified women’s health-care center. The Fund has carried out screenings to detect early-stage disease, as well as funding the social determinants of care, including child-care and transportation, and even the care itself for those who can’t afford it.

Florida has the highest rate of uninsured people who are 65 and under in the entire country, shared Congresswoman Schultz. Recently, President Biden reignited the Cancer Moonshot program, with the goals of reducing annual deaths by half in the next 25 years through improved access to screening and treatment, while the Protecting Access to Lifesaving Screenings Act preserves coverage for routine breast cancer screening for women in their 40s. The pandemic has had a damaging impact on access to care, with breast and cervical screening down around 87%. As we emerge from the pandemic, we need to bring this rate down and focus on delivering care in low-resource environments.

“We do have some trouble in states where we haven’t expanded Medicaid and we still have people uninsured,” Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz, Representative from Florida’s 23rd Congressional District

“Palm beach county is the third-largest county in the third-largest state with some of the worst health-care outcomes in America,” Ambassador Nancy G. Brinker, Co-Founder of the Promise Fund of Florida, and Concordia Leadership Council Member



Recovery & Resiliency: The Past & Present Impact of COVID-19

Recovery & Resiliency: The Past & Present Impact of COVID-19, moderated by **Dr. Julio Frenk, President of the University of Miami**, took a deeper dive into the region’s recovery from the health and economic impact of the pandemic, and highlighted the importance of installing robust infrastructure for continued resilience. Reflecting on national responses and key takeaways from the pandemic, **H.E. Laura Chinchilla, Vice President**

of World Leadership Alliance - Club De Madrid and Concordia Leadership Council Member, emphasized the importance of preparedness at the country level, along with international cooperation and inter-regional dialogue. The former Costa Rican President highlighted the fact that Latin America was the hardest-hit region in the world among emerging economies, as the pandemic magnified pre-existing issues, namely economic inequality, gender disparities, government distrust, and poorly-funded health systems. **Hon. Mark Green, President & CEO of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars and Concordia Leadership Council Member,** cited three key takeaways for the Americas: 1) The interdependence of countries; 2) The importance of investing in frontline healthcare workers, facilities, and distribution systems; and, 3) The importance of government responsiveness and investing in democratic leaders and communication systems that people can trust.

Fostering multilateral cooperation is key to the success of domestic agendas. As highlighted by President Chinchilla, the pandemic arrived at a time when the Western Hemisphere faced difficulties in terms of bringing governments together to articulate a collective response and, therefore, elicit collective action. Going forward, the region will need to strengthen the Pan American Health Organization, mobilize regional and multilateral cooperation, and speak with one voice to the WHO, citing the potential for a new legally-binding treaty that demands transparency from nations

during pandemics. More broadly speaking, President Chinchilla explained that strategies must not only be established for a fast, inclusive, and sustainable recovery, but structural challenges must be addressed by investing in human capital and innovation, tackling gender, income, and digital inequality, taking advantage of opportunities for environmental sustainability, and improving governance.

For the former Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), we need better global governance and more continuous dialogue at the highest levels. We must also vaccinate vulnerable populations, particularly healthcare workers, throughout the region before we implement the mass distribution of vaccines across a nation. Expressing skepticism at the effectiveness of a new treaty, Ambassador Green suggested creating a separate entity responsible for monitoring and reporting on weaknesses in healthcare systems, giving the example of FuseNet, a famine early-warning system, developed by USAID, which warns of vulnerabilities in food security and helps ensure that resources are directed accordingly. Indeed, the creation and enforcement of a system requiring countries to report on outbreaks on a timely basis is one of the weak links that will hopefully be corrected, said Dr. Frenk.

Closing the panel, Ambassador Green stressed the importance of not losing sight of the longer-term picture. Mobilizing vaccines, food assistance, emergency shelter, and water—while critical—is

not a substitute for the longer-term investments needed to help build capacity. If we're only thinking about emergency responsiveness, we're falling short. Rather, the goal of foreign assistance should be to help countries build capacity to tackle crises themselves.

"Sometimes we create this false dichotomy between action at the global level and the national level. The truth is that everything is both global and local at the same time. You can't be effective as a national leader if you're not engaged locally," Dr. Julio Frenk, President of the University of Miami

"It's a mistake to blame the pandemic for some of the problems the region is facing. What we should be doing now is not only putting in place strategies for a fast, inclusive, and sustainable recovery, but—most importantly—tackling those structural challenges for good," H.E. Laura Chinchilla Vice President of World Leadership Alliance - Club De Madrid and Concordia Leadership Council Member

"We need better dialogue at the highest levels—dialogues that are continuous and continual among heads of state and government," Hon. Mark Green, President & CEO of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars and Concordia Leadership Council Member

in the healthcare space across Latin America. To address deep-rooted health inequities, it's important to form cross-sector partnerships, work directly with local communities and patients, invest in higher education and training opportunities with a focus on technology, and ensure women have more representation in leadership roles.

- Preparedness is key, so long-term investments must be made now to bolster healthcare systems and medical supply chains.
- While the mental health crisis is one of the biggest crises we are facing, it is fixable with strong public-private partnerships, destigmatization, and innovative programs. Individuals need to invest in boosting their own human connection, and employers need to lead by example and create cultures of connection in their workplaces. Innovative treatments for mental health conditions are required, but medication must be augmented by talking therapies.
- We must figure out how to deliver the best care in a low-resource environment, removing any obstacles from women accessing care, such as insurance, transportation, and childcare.
- Moving forward it is essential to expand Medicaid and target care to people without medical insurance, ensuring that they also have access to care and preventative care.

Key Takeaways & Next Steps

- The pandemic exacerbated existing problems

Democracy, Security & Geopolitical Risk



Democratic Backsliding: Freedom of Speech & Human Rights

The Western Hemisphere is facing a crisis of democratic backsliding. From suppression of free speech, widespread corruption, and increased populist sentiment to fully-fledged dictatorships, democratic ideals in the hemisphere are under threat and immediate action must be taken to prevent further democratic regression. *Democratic Backsliding: Freedom of Speech & Human Rights* explored the state of democracy across the hemisphere, moderated by **Rodrigo Arenas, CEO of Republica**, a 2022 Americas Summit Media Partner.

Contextualizing the geopolitical landscape, **Tamara Taraciuk, Acting Director of the Americas Division at Human Rights Watch**, expressed concern about the state of democracy across

Latin America, citing dictatorships in Venezuela, Cuba, and Nicaragua, where people can't exercise their freedom of speech and are met with repression in the streets when attempting to express and expose what is happening within their own country. However, Taraciuk stressed the importance of looking across the entire region: in many countries, democratically-elected leaders get into power through elections but, once in power, turn their back on basic democratic guarantees, on judicial independence, and on the ability of human rights defenders and independent journalists to do their work. The silver lining of this dark situation, said Taraciuk, is that many brave people are still working to hold people accountable. Turning to solutions, Taraciuk urged for investment into protection mechanisms for human rights defenders and independent journalists in order to support their on-the-ground work.

Latin America ranks highest in the world in terms of impunity of crimes against journalists, shared **Melanio Escobar, Executive Director of RedesAyuda**. Examining the role of the U.S. government, Escobar emphasized that crimes against journalists and free media must be addressed at the same level as other political crimes against humanity. Democracy is multi-faceted, consisting of free speech, the rule of law, and due process, so if a country lacks a protected free speech environment, full democracy does not exist. In agreement, Taraciuk shared that the U.S. government has a responsibility to ensure an environment that is conducive to freedom of speech and expres-

sion, which is where many of these governments that are not dictatorships—such as Mexico and El Salvador—are failing. One of the ways the U.S. can address the issue of people being forced to flee dictatorship is by strengthening the rule of law in these countries, which can be done by creating mechanisms to protect journalists and supporting commissions to investigate corruption. It's crucial that these mechanisms strengthen local capacity.

“The majority of countries in the Americas are suffering democratic regression, most of them by socialist populist regiments supported by, or acting as, drug cartels, and some of them still deciding how radical they’re going to become,” Rodrigo Arenas, CEO of Republica

“When you think of Central American countries, like Mexico, another big problem in terms of journalists is the very poor protection mechanisms that exist,” Tamara Taraciuk, Acting Director of the Americas Division at Human Rights Watch

“The first thing that we have to understand is that Latin America right now has the number one rank on impunity of crimes against journalists,” Melanio Escobar, Executive Director of RedesAyuda

Latin America remains a key region in determining the future security of the Western Hemisphere, with the exponential increase in technological innovation and globalization generating a new

security landscape defined by traditional and new, gray-zone security threats. ***Security in the Western Hemisphere***, moderated by **Stephenie Foster, Co-Founder & Partner at Smash Strategies LLC and Concordia Advisor**, discussed the current realities of security challenges in the hemisphere and the measures needed to ensure security interests.



Security in the Western Hemisphere

General Laura J. Richardson, Commander of the U.S. Southern Command, gave an overview of the security landscape in Latin America and outlined the threats and opportunities. The U.S. Department of Defense’s national defense security focuses on putting “integrated deterrents” into action across the region. The call to action to address ongoing security threats is to adopt a whole-of-government approach, incorporating academia, industry, and nonprofits, to create a strategy of Western Hemisphere investment in the region. General Richardson shared that the People’s Republic of China has invested over USD 50 billion over the past five years in the region’s deep water ports, 5G, technology, and space, all under the guise of

infrastructure investment. When looking at the recent military build up in China's homeland, these investments are concerning and undermining democracy. Transnational criminal organizations, counter narcotics, human trafficking, and illegal mining are in abundance across the region, creating a wedge of insecurity and instability that causes irregular migration and opens the door for competitors like the People's Republic of China and Russia to move in and flourish. Concluding her remarks, General Richardson stressed the importance of thinking about inclusion in the effort to build more stable societies.

There are five factors that are affecting the security of the hemisphere, shared **Hon. Carlos Vecchio, Ambassador of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United States**. First is the presence of Russia and China, with China looking for political and economic interest and Russia using soft power to create political and social instability. Second is the fact that there are 6 million Venezuelan refugees and migrants across the region, which is creating chaos—particularly on the border with Mexico—and impacting Chile, Canada, and the U.S., and allowing countries such as Russia to take advantage of this chaos to create instability. Third is the fact that since the signing of the Inter-American Democratic Charter in 2001, the region has come closer to dictatorships and populist governments, particularly in Cuba, Venezuela, and Nicaragua. Fourth is the corruption and transnational crime surrounding dictatorships, which requires an international task force to ensure a policy of law

enforcement in order to hold up democracy. Fifth is that the only way to create energy security for the hemisphere is to allow Venezuela to develop its energy capacity and be seen as a reliable supplier of oil for the region and world.

Global powers are meddling in Latin America, putting democracy at risk, explained **H.E. Juan Carlos Pinzon Bueno, Ambassador of Colombia to the United States**. Criminal economies are becoming larger and are strongly connected to political power, media, and international trade. Meanwhile, governments are not focusing enough resources on dismantling these connections or addressing money laundering and the fact that political actors are, in many cases, being funded by criminal money. To confront the global power competition, we need to stop criminal activity from being used as a way to destabilize the region. 2022 might be the first time in 200 years in which the U.S. is less influential than ever in the Western Hemisphere, commented the Ambassador, explaining that democracy, freedom, rule of law, and human rights are being weakened across the country.

“There are so many ways we think about security and they're changing. We're focusing more now on issues of human and civilian security,” Stephenie Foster, Co-Founder & Partner at Smash Strategies LLC and Concordia Advisor

“Transnational criminal organizations in the region create the wedge of insecurity and instability that

causes irregular migration, opening the door for competitors like the People's Republic of China and Russia to move in and flourish," General Laura J. Richardson, Commander of the U.S. Southern Command

"2022 might be the year in 200 years in which the U.S. is less influential than ever in the Western Hemisphere," H.E. Juan Carlos Pinzon Bueno, Ambassador of Colombia to the United States

"Venezuela is for Russia today what Cuba was for the Soviet Union during the 1960s. Venezuela is in chaos and Russia is using Venezuela to export chaos to the region," Hon. Carlos Vecchio, Ambassador of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United States

For nations to thrive during times of turbulence in the international community, enhanced regional cooperation is required. ***The Importance of Regional Cooperation in Advancing Investment & Economic Development Across the Region***, in partnership with Global Citizen Forum, a Patron Programming Partner for the 2022 Americas Summit, and moderated by **Armand Arton, President of Arton Capital and Concordia Senior Advisor**, explored the importance of regional cooperation in bolstering economic growth and crises response.

For Caribbean countries, deepening regional cooperation and advancing multilateral efforts

is imperative to driving not just sustainable economic development, but to addressing security and climate change, explained **Hon. Ralph E. Gonsalves, Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines**. CARICOM approaches development on four pillars: 1) Economic integration, which includes a common market with a common external tariff; 2) Cooperation on matters like health and education; 3) Coordination of foreign policy; and, 4) Citizen and national security. The Caribbean and CARICOM region has sought to drive a paradigm shift from a colonial economy to a modern, competitive, diversified post-colonial economy that is national, regional, and global and in which there's a reliance on limited suppliers of skilled labor and limited subsidies. Prime Minister Gonsalves urged for small island developing states to be given the space within the global system to not just survive, but thrive.



The Importance of Regional Cooperation in Advancing Investment & Economic Development Across the Region

Diplomacy and trade dialogue is bedrock for cooperation amongst nations, according to **Hon. Philip E. Davis, Prime Minister of the Common-**

wealth of The Bahamas. If the pandemic exposed anything, it's that we are dependent on each other and stronger together. Sharing experiences during the pandemic, Prime Minister Davis posited that many developed and industrialized countries demonstrated a lack of sensitivity to smaller island developing states, like The Bahamas, in some cases hoarding vaccines. The Bahamas is built on two pillars: tourism, which makes up 80% of GDP, and financial services. The country is among the most vulnerable to climate change, as one of the major carbon sinks in the world, with more than 50% of its national debt a direct result of the consequences of climate change. For nations like The Bahamas, it's crucial to make the industrial world accountable for its actions.

"The migration of people impacts economies around the world," Armand Arton, President of Arton Capital and Concordia Senior Advisor

"We're [island nations] very often disappointed by global forces and external shocks beyond our control," Hon. Philip E. Davis, Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas

"We have to allow small island developing states to have the space within the global system to not just survive, but thrive," Hon. Ralph E. Gonsalves, Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines

As Latin America continues to experience large-scale displacement and irregular flows of migra-

tion, propelled largely by two trajectories—from the Northern Triangle countries of Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala across Mexico to the U.S., and from Venezuela to neighboring South American nations—the humanitarian crisis persists. ***A Crisis Unfolding: Migration & Refugees in Latin America*** was moderated by **Dr. Felicia Knaul, Director of the Institute for Advanced Study of the Americas and Hemispheric & Global Affairs at the University of Miami**, and explored the different ways to support the resettlement and social integration of refugees.



A Crisis Unfolding: Migration & Refugees in Latin America

There's currently an absence of an imminent political solution to the crisis in Venezuela, so what can activists, diplomats, and others do to respond to this ongoing humanitarian crisis? **Miguel Pizarro, Commissioner to the United Nations for the Interim Government of Venezuela**, shared two important UN numbers: 7 million Venezuelans are now in need of desperate assistance inside of Venezuela, while 6 million Venezuelan migrants are outside of the border. Added together, we have almost half of the Venezuelan population in need

of some form of assistance from the international community. With 90% of Venezuelans living below the poverty line, the trend of migration into the U.S. and Central and South America will continue to grow, yet the Venezuelan crisis is one of the most underfunded in the world. Pizarro outlined the importance of implementing a humanitarian response plan that provides food security, water, sanitation, and access to health and education, as well as regional response efforts to receive migrants and refugees, emphasizing that this is a man-made humanitarian crisis rooted in corruption.

The COVID-19 pandemic disproportionately exacerbated the refugee and migration crisis, with a lack of access to vaccines and damaging economic impacts prompting migration. **Alfonso Quiñonez, Ambassador of Guatemala to the United States**, explained the importance of addressing the push factor of migration, which he listed as lack of opportunities back home, but also the pull factor, which is the existence of jobs in the U.S. In the case of Guatemala, 90% of migrants migrate due to a lack of opportunities, and addressing this requires a concerted effort that incorporates government and the private sector. If the main foreign policy objective for the U.S. is to reduce migration, the government has to work to create an enabling environment that attracts private sector investment. Short term, the U.S. must increase numbers of temporary working visas for those migrating and make the process less cumbersome for those visas to be granted. Meanwhile, the Latin Ameri-

can region must look to open markets, make trade more dynamic, and adopt the appropriate rhetoric for its countries.

In light of the recent Los Angeles Declaration on Migration and Protection, **Dr. Andrew Selee, President of the Migration Policy Institute**, spoke to the challenge of developing a hemispheric approach and common policy to mass migration movements when the root causes of migration differ from country to country. While there's a collective commitment to create migration systems, share information, and invest in countries that are doing their part to take in large displaced populations, a one-size-fits-all approach doesn't work when it comes to solutions. The biggest issue, said Dr. Selee, is creating the legal pathways for people to move.

"In a world in which we hear daily about the plight, difficulty, courage, and resilience of those who cross borders and migrate in ways that are irregular and often forced, we know that about one in four come from our region, the Americas," Dr. Felicia Knaul, Director of the Institute for Advanced Study of the Americas and Hemispheric & Global Affairs at the University of Miami

"It's important to understand the nature of our [Venezuela's] crisis. We are not in this situation because of a war or a natural disaster. It's a man-made crisis of corruption, of lack of public policies, and it's a political decision to have people leaving in this spiral of misery," Miguel Pizarro, Commissioner to the

United Nations for the Interim Government of Venezuela

“We as government have to help in creating the enabling environment for the private sector to thrive,” Alfonso Quiñonez, Ambassador of Guatemala to the United States

“A gender lens really matters, because so much of the integration efforts tend to be focused [...] on men getting jobs,” Dr. Andrew Selee, President of the Migration Policy Institute



Addressing the Economic Drivers of Forced Migration

Though gender-lens investing has consistently proved effective in advancing the overall financial stability and performance of a community, opportunities for digital upskilling and economic mobility in the Northern Triangle and Southern Mexico remain disproportionately low, resulting in irregular and forced migration of women. ***Addressing the Economic Drivers of Forced Migration in the Northern Triangle & Southern Mexico***

with 2022 Americas Summit Lead Programming Partner Google.org explored Google.org's partnership with Pro Mujer to strengthen the ecosystem for minority-owned businesses and women-led microenterprises.

The panelists, moderated by **Charity Wallace, Founder & President of Wallace Global Impact and Concordia Senior Advisor**, focused on the inclusion of women in fostering economic empowerment and opportunity. The proportion of women to men that migrate from the Northern Triangle has doubled in the last few years, with gender-based violence and domestic violence increasing during the pandemic, shared **Dr. Rebecca Bill Chavez, President & CEO of the Inter-American Dialogue**. Urging the audience to pay close attention to the drivers of migration—lack of hope, pervasive poverty, crime and violence, and poor governance—Dr. Chavez highlighted the importance of including the gender and climate change lens when looking at migration from the Northern Triangle. There is a clear intersection between economic empowerment and violence for women: research shows that the greater the economic opportunities of women, the lower the risk they are from experiencing gender-based violence.

Pro Mujer, a social enterprise focused on advancing gender equality in Latin America, is working to address the growing credit gap for women, explained **Carmen Correa, CEO of Pro Mujer**. The organization has been working in Latin America for over 32 years to give access to financial services

and inclusion, education, and healthcare for low-income women, understanding that including women in the economy yields better economic results. Today, just 50% of women participate in the economy in Latin America, compared to 69% for men, and women are earning 20% less than men in the same positions. To address this issue, Pro Mujer works with women in communities on the ground, listening to and learning about their unique needs and tailoring interventions to address those unique needs.

Partnership is core to Pro Mujer's work, with Google.org one such partner. According to **Hector Mujica, Head of Economic Opportunity at Google.org**, progress has been made over the last decade towards bridging gender gaps, much remains to be done. In the pandemic, it became apparent that women were twice as likely to be displaced from a job than men, and that girls were less likely to return to school after they reopened than their male counterparts. When women and girls have the opportunity and resources to turn their economic potential into power, they not only benefit their own lives, but change the fabric of empowered societies and communities. Over the last 10 years, Google.org has invested over USD 50 million in Latin America, with a deep lens into economic mobility and opportunity for women. At the 9th Summit of the Americas, the CEO of Google announced a USD 1.2 billion commitment to the region over the next five years, with USD 300 million of that a commitment from Google.org focusing on providing women with greater access to economic opportunity.

The partnership between Pro Mujer and Google.org centers on the Northern Triangle and directly responds to the unique drivers of economic instability through servicing women across sectors. Looking at the role of the digital economy, the pandemic has accelerated certain trends, creating greater efficiency and livelihoods for people. However, this shift has the potential to drive greater inequality if we're not intentional and diligent in addressing the factors that are keeping individuals from participating in a digital economy. This was a point raised by Mujica, who went on to explain that 90% of jobs will require at least a baseline understanding of digital skills by 2030 and while the majority of individuals gain those skills through a four-year university degree, the fact that only one in five individuals in Latin America has access to a university degree is a gap that must be addressed. Meanwhile, over 85% of the workforce in Latin America is employed in small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs), which are a critical driver of economic stability and upward mobility. However, 75% of women-led SMBs lack access to capital to start, sustain, and grow a small business.

Pro Mujer and Google.org are working to provide alternative pathways to economic opportunity, addressing barriers to employment and providing women with the capital and skills they need to be competitive in a digital economy. Partnerships not only ensure that services can be deployed, but they also create greater efficiency, attract more investment, and ultimately enable more people to be reached, explained Correa. For Mujica, civil

society—which is most proximate to the on-the-ground issues impacting people—plays a key role in ensuring that the partnership accurately reflects the community it’s serving. It’s important to be intentional about creating an ecosystem of government relationships and international organizations. For Dr. Chavez, local-level solutions at the municipal level are of paramount importance, citing the Inter-American Dialogue’s partnership with CAF Development Bank on a cities initiative.

Each panelist shared their call to action. Dr. Chavez urged people to get involved with action-oriented groups like Pro Mujer and to keep in mind that migration is a region-wide problem that cannot be solved by a single actor. Correa highlighted the importance of incorporating a gender perspective and collaborating with existing partners as opposed to reinventing the wheel. Mujica encouraged funders to focus on marginalized communities and to look for organizations that are proximate to the issue, reiterating that a nuanced—rather than one-size-fits-all—approach is key.

“If women are more fully integrated into the economic fabric, global GDP would go up,” Charity Wallace, Founder & President of Wallace Global Impact and Concordia Senior Advisor

“I think it’s really important to include the gender and climate change lens when we’re looking at migration from the Northern Triangle,” Dr. Rebecca Bill Chavez, President & CEO of Inter-American Dialogue

“Partnerships not only allow us to develop programs,

but they allow us to open new networks and have more impact in a shorter period of time,” Carmen Correa, CEO of Pro Mujer

“When women and girls have the opportunity and resources to turn their economic potential into power, they not only benefit their own lives, but we change the fabric of empowered societies and communities,” Hector Mujica, Head of Economic Opportunity at Google.org



The Importance of Gender Equality & Representation in Political Leadership

Female access to political power and resources remains limited within a traditionally male-dominated field. In ***The Importance of Gender Equality & Representation in Political Leadership*** in partnership with 2022 Americas Summit Patron Programming Partner the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States, **H.E. Luis Almagro Lemes, Secretary General of the Organization of American States and Concordia Leadership Council Member**, said that a

world with more women in power would be a more democratized world.

In discussion with **Paola Serna, Journalist at NTN24**, a 2022 Americas Summit Media Partner, Secretary Almagro painted a bleak picture of female political leadership across Latin America: currently, there are just two females at the head of government in the whole hemisphere, in Barbados and Honduras. We have a long way to go to make it possible for women to access the most relevant positions in politics and this requires affirmative action to change cultural patterns and a patriarchal mold, and to create fair conditions that attract women to politics rather than estrange them within the system. To increase access to political power for the LGBTQ+ community, we must have stronger convictions about equality, a political commitment, and education.

“We need affirmative action, we need to change the cultural patterns, we need to change the patriarchal mold that we permanently have, and we need to have fair conditions for competition in politics that can attract women and not estrange them within the system,” H.E. Luis Almagro Lemes, Secretary General of the Organization of American States and Concordia Leadership Council Member

“We only have two women in the continent serving as head of government, and according to the UN, 70% of parliaments in Latin America are men,” Paola Serna, Journalist at NTN24



Women in National Security: Contributions to Security in the Public, Private & Civil Society Sectors

In order to achieve more effective policies and long-term solutions, we must acknowledge the critical role of female voices in national security discussions. ***Women in National Security: Contributions to Security in the Public, Private & Civil Society Sectors***, moderated by **Kari Kammel, Director at A-CAPP Center**, examined the role of women in national security and discussed what can be done to ensure diversity in positions of national security decision making.

Looking at women's contribution to national security in organized crime and corruption, **Ana Linda Solano, Consultant at EUROsociAL+**, shared her perspective that we live in a world where the perspective of men is the neutral way of thinking. Political will is crucial to reversing deeply-entrenched biases and ensuring that women face equal conditions in society. Evidence shows that peace agreements with women negotiators have higher possibilities of success over the long term.

For **Heather Fischer, Senior Advisor for Human Rights Crimes at Thomson Reuters Special Services**, we must work around issues of tokenism to ensure that women are not a lone voice or suppressed in the national security conversations. Role models play a crucial role in fostering a female-led peace and security community, and we must achieve pay parity for the same roles. Women can make a unique contribution to the national security dialogue, particularly in terms of looking at situations holistically. For **Cecilia Perez Rivas, Ministra Asesora en Asuntos de Seguridad, Presidencia de la República del Paraguay**, her role as Minister Justice was challenging in an environment dominated by men, but mentorship programs and role models are crucial in cultivating equity. Panelists agreed on the importance of acknowledging the wider problem and understanding how it presents itself in individual contexts.

“Biases exist both for men and women, but how do we change that?” Kari Kammel, Director at A-CAPP Center

“In Latin America it’s very hard for women to get into leadership positions,” Cecilia Perez Rivas, Ministra Asesora en Asuntos de Seguridad, Presidencia de la Republica del Paraguay

“Women see all this work integrated. It’s really hard for me to silo human trafficking from national security from women’s economic empowerment and workforce development. We see it as all the above and

I think that’s unique,” Heather Fischer, Senior Advisor for Human Rights Crimes at Thomson Reuters Special Services

“It’s not about having a woman in a certain position, it’s about the quality of the representation [...] We need access to certain positions or to be part of the decision making [...] but when we are there we need quality of representation, quality of voice, quality of being listened to,” Ana Linda Solano, Consultant at EUROsocial+



China's Growing Influence in South America

From energy to infrastructure, pandemic relief, and even space programs, Chinese investment has grown exponentially in South American economies. China has even surpassed the U.S. as South America’s largest trading partner and has strengthened its military ties with nations like Venezuela. ***China’s Growing Influence in South America***, moderated by **Hon. William Zarit, Senior Counselor at The Cohen Group** and

Concordia Senior Advisor, analyzed the impact of China's burgeoning influence on the future of the international political landscape. Looking at a key element of China's influence throughout the world, the panel began with **Dr. June Teufel Dreyer, Professor of Political Science at the University of Miami**, providing an overview of the significance of the Belt and Road initiative (BRI), started in 2013 by Xi Jinping. Designed to supply connectivity through roads, ports, and railroads, the BRI is financed by the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, which was set up by China, is headquartered in Beijing, and today consists of over 100 members.

Examining the trends in China's influence in Latin America, **Margaret Myers, Director of the Asia & Latin America Program at Inter-American Dialogue**, explained that there's been an expectation since 2018—when the BRI was extended to Latin America and the Caribbean—that there would be a rapid expansion in China's economic and political engagement in the region, and we have seen that come to pass. Accompanying growing trade ties, Chinese influence over decision making at the policy level has expanded significantly. Currently, we're witnessing three key trends in relation to China-Latin America relations. First, while trade continues to underpin the relationship, we're witnessing a tapering of Chinese activity in foreign direct investment—specifically mergers & acquisitions and greenfield investment—across the region as China grapples with less capital to invest overseas. Second, China is investing in technology and innovation-related

sectors—for example, high-speed trains, renewable energy, and artificial intelligence-related systems—both at home and abroad. These sectors are critical to China's domestic growth in order to overcome the middle-income trap and ensure that the country continues to grow over the coming years. Third, we're seeing a continuous localization of Chinese activity in Latin America at the subnational level, with deals regularly taking place at the provincial or municipal level. This has serious implications for competition with U.S. companies.

Moving to China's motives, Dr. Dreyer spoke to the pushback from certain countries, such as Brazilian President Bolsonaro, but explained that Brazil remains China's largest trading partner. The dynamic between China and Latin American countries is scenario dependent, with some countries reaching the stage where they are beholden to China. With the Taiwanese government active in Latin America, one of China's key motives in the region is to wean away the last of Taiwan's allies, stated Dr. Dreyer.

Commenting on steps the U.S. should be taking to address China's influence, Myers stated that China has a remarkable advantage in many ways, bringing extensive resources to bear in the form of finance, capital, and human resources. For the U.S., it's crucial to have a presence in Latin America and recognize how critical the region is as a trade and economic partner. Establishing initiatives for economic engagement and developing

institutions such as the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation can help ensure that the private sector can invest in the region, while also demonstrating that real resources are being committed. What the region should not expect from China, said Myers, is perpetual engagement, due to China facing domestic uncertainty in a number of areas.

“It’s important to be aware of China’s activities in Latin America and how these activities can be used in a positive way,” Hon. William Zarit, Senior Counselor at The Cohen Group and Concordia Senior Advisor

“One of the Chinese motives in Latin America is to wean away the last of Taiwan’s allies,” Dr. June Teufel Dreyer, Professor of Political Science at the University of Miami

“When you look at the resources China brings to bear, it’s challenging to think of how the U.S. can compete effectively. The best way is for the U.S. to have a presence in Latin America, to prioritize the region, and to recognize how critical the region is as a trade and economic partner,” Margaret Myers, Director of the Asia & Latin America Program at Inter-American Dialogue

Public-private partnerships (PPPs) are key to countering illicit economics and related corruption across borders, as explored in the **Regional**

Dialogue on Free-Trade Zones, Trade-Based Money Laundering & Port Security, with 2022 Americas Summit Patron Programming Partner the International Coalition Against Illicit Economies (ICAIE). Framing the discussion, **David Luna, Executive Director of ICAIE**, explained that the global community increasingly faces complex and evolving threats from a wide range of illicit factors. Illicit supply chains, non-regulated ports, and free-trade zones (FTZs) around the world enable cartels and other criminal organizations to transport illegal goods, expand illicit international trade, export criminality and violence, and launder the revenues of their illegal activities. While illicit trade was already booming prior to the pandemic, the proliferation of counterfeits has been accelerated—in particular, pharmaceutical products, PPE, and therapeutics. The severity of today’s cross-border illicit threats ranges from narcotics to the flow of dangerous opioids, such as fentanyl, with the collective global illegal economy constituting between 7% and 15% of GDP—or several trillion dollars a year.

PPPs are vital to combating illicit trade and boosting security and enforcement. While no single entity can solve the problem alone, building long-lasting partnerships based on shared goals, in-depth expertise, and resources is key to long-term success. To illustrate this point, **Steve Francis, Acting Executive Associate Director of the Homeland Security Investigations at the Department of Homeland Security**, shared how the Department of Homeland Security is work-

ing with international and private sector partners across the Western Hemisphere to enforce over 400 laws and regulations focused on illicit trade, travel, and finance. Representing over 90 countries, the Department is currently addressing threats in three key areas: 1) National security and the illegal exportation of munitions and dual-use technologies; 2) Public safety and the opioid crisis; and, 3) Border security and human trafficking. Illustrating the importance of partnership to the work of the Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), Francis summarized three initiatives. The Transnational Criminal Investigative Unit is embedded in countries across the hemisphere to encourage governments to work with the U.S. to combat national security. Operation Stolen Promise, launched in April 2020, brings together all divisions of the HSI, as well as partnerships with pharmaceutical, financial, and cyber companies, to protect the homeland from the evolving threat posed by COVID-related fraud and criminal activity. Finally, the OECD Task Force on Countering Illicit Trade works with the private sector to ensure transparency in FTZs around the world.

The Department Against Transnational Organized Crime of the Organization of American States (OAS DTOC) was created in 2016 to help countries implement the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime. According to **Gastón Schulmeister, Director of the Department Against Transnational Organized Crime of the Organization of American States**, the OAS DTOC works with its many counterparts, such

as Interpol, in the fight against money laundering, promoting the sharing of information and experiences. High-impact organized crime, such as human trafficking and illegal mining, require structures of corruption at different levels. Prevention is key, with emphasis needed on promoting mechanisms for the surveillance of actions within institutions in order to identify risks and warning signs.



Regional Dialogue on Free-Trade Zones, Trade-Based Money Laundering & Port Security

The private sector has its own responsibility, according to **Grégoire Verdeaux, Senior Vice President, External Affairs at Philip Morris International (PMI)**. The role of the private sector is to provide investment and investigations, but it can only do so with the support of regulatory frameworks and enforcement. As shared by Verdeaux, PMI is engaged in the fight against illicit trade—specifically, of nicotine products—in FTZs. A particular challenge in the region is the Colón Free-Trade Zone in Panama, where cigarette trafficking from Asia is having damaging economic repercussions in the form of missing taxes. While

resolutions have been adopted in the country, they've not been enforced and there is a notable lack of prosecutions. According to Verdeaux, the private sector must take the matter into its own hands. PMI, for example, is creating alternatives to cigarettes, and research shows that wherever you have double-digit growth in cigarette alternatives, illicit trade is coming down. Private sector innovation is therefore a key part of the response.

The pandemic has exacerbated illicit trade on e-commerce platforms, particularly of pharmaceutical products. **Dr. Anthony Zook, Executive Director of Product Integrity at Merck** (known as MSD outside of the U.S. and Canada), explained how Merck is working with other industry partners and governments to combat illicit trade holistically—both online and in retail markets. Merck's Product Integrity unit, which is dedicated to protecting patients from the dangers of illicit trade, focuses on three strategic areas: 1) Protecting the supply chain of legitimate medicines; 2) Investigating high-value targets operating outside of legitimate supply chains and bringing law enforcement action against them; and, 3) Driving advocacy and raising awareness among stakeholders both inside and outside Merck. From a private sector standpoint, Merck shares its tactics and capabilities freely among the industry with its pharmaceutical company peers, cultivating open dialogue among the COVID-19 vaccine and therapeutic manufacturers to share threats and identify areas of vulnerability.

In Guatemala, the government has created a tax fraud and customs control integration board, which in 2021 led to more than USD 5 million of goods being confiscated from illicit organizations. Key to its success is private sector support, stated **Janio Rosales, Minister of Economy for the Republic of Guatemala**. Working with its private sector partners as well as the U.S. government, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and other Central American countries, the Guatemalan government is working to install the first permanent inter-agency check point and analysis center to confront illicit trade and strengthen the ability of government entities to fight tax fraud. Looking at the role of China in enabling bad actors, **Chad Wolf, President of Wolf Global Advisors**, explained that the Belt and Road initiative has created opportunities for Chinese criminal organizations to carry out trade-based money laundering through FTZs in the Americas. It's crucial, therefore, to engage China positively to address this issue, which can be done in a number of ways. For example, on the government side, President Trump signed a trade agreement with China in 2019, which required the Chinese government to commit to curbing the counterfeits coming out of the country. On the private sector side, e-commerce platforms that provide a marketplace for illicit goods coming out of China have a responsibility to work more directly with governments.

For a PPP to succeed, it's crucial to build trust between the public and private sectors, highlighted **Ana Linda Solano, Consultant at EURO-**

sociAL+. However, rather than stemming from a foundation of people knowing one another, this trust must be built in a way that's sustainable and institutional in order for information to be exchanged and threats confronted. In agreement with this point, Verdeaux explained that trust can be built gradually on an interpersonal level, but this puts entire corporations at risk, particularly when people move on from roles.

It's important to understand the underlying dynamics and confront the root of the problem, as raised by both Solano and Minister Rosales. For Solano, illicit economies must be understood as illicit ecosystems, and looking at the issue holistically requires creating economic systems and financial alternatives that can compete with these illicit ecosystems. For Minister Rosales, the issue of organized crime and corruption must be addressed not just from a political lens, but from an economic and social one, too. If we don't place the individual front and center and generate employment, education, health, and economic opportunities, as well as a route for entrepreneurs, crime will continue to grow.

Also key to addressing illicit economies is education and communicating the harms of counterfeit goods to a wider audience, highlighted Wolf. There's not just a physical threat from these goods harming people; there's also an economic threat, given the negative impact on company bottom lines and the resulting loss of taxes for economies, and a national security threat, with profits financing the operations of terrorist organizations. Wolf

cited the work of United to Safeguard America from Illegal Trade to communicate the threats to a wider audience, while Francis shared that HSI is working with PMI to proactively educate the public, through publications in the Wall Street Journal to initiatives designed to raise awareness among younger generations about the origins of counterfeit products.

Ultimately, the issue of illicit economies is a global threat, requiring global, cross-border collaboration and collective action. As raised by Solano, we need both inter-agency and international cooperation, and to share intelligence across borders. Rather than working in bilateral groups operating within different countries, we need to create transnational task forces that work as one group to address an entire issue, be it human trafficking or illicit trade, for example. According to Wolf, robust international agreements are required to stop counterfeits entering other countries. Partnership between the federal government and the private sector is critical to success, with the private sector contributing state-of-the-art technology and innovation, and governments providing an intelligence, investigation, and prosecution function. For Dr. Zook, the ability to engage across companies in a non-competitive manner allows intelligence on bad actors to be consolidated and the true scale of the threat to be identified as a collective industry, rather than as a single company. Taking the time to proactively build those relationships before they become necessary to support an investigation or enforcement action is key.

“The collective global illegal economy constitutes between 7% and 15% of GDP—or several trillion dollars a year,” David Luna, Executive Director of the International Coalition Against Illicit Economies

“We talk about disruptions and investigations, but we also need to be much better with education and awareness around illicit trade,” Steve Francis, Acting Executive Associate Director of the Homeland Security Investigations at the Department of Homeland Security

“Collective action and cross-border collaboration between sectors is critical to mitigating illicit trade,” Janio Rosales, Minister of Economy for the Republic of Guatemala

“Partnership between the federal government and the private sector is critical if you want to have success [...] the two absolutely have to work hand in hand,” Chad Wolf, President of Wolf Global Advisors

“We know how opportunistic organized crime is, so we need to have a much faster response,” Grégoire Verdeaux, Senior Vice President, External Affairs at Philip Morris International

“Organized crime needs corruption, and corruption needs organized crime,” Gastón Schulmeister, Director of the Department Against Transnational Organized Crime of the Organization of American States

“We need trust between the public and private sectors, but how do we make that trust sustainable and institutional? [...] When you have that, you can exchange information and go after these threats,” Ana Linda Solano, Consultant at EUROsociAL+

“From a private partnership standpoint, we share our tactics and capabilities freely among the industry with our pharmaceutical company peers. That ability to engage across companies in a way that’s non-competitive allows us to consolidate intelligence on bad actors and identify the true scale of the threat as an industry and as a collective, rather than as a single company,” Dr. Anthony Zook, Executive Director of Product Integrity at Merck

Despite significant strides toward democracy over the past two decades, the future of democracy in Latin America remains uncertain as increased corruption, human rights abuses, and economic inequality have led to democratic regression in certain governments. ***The Future of Democracy in Latin America*** was moderated by **Ambassador Paula J. Dobriansky, Ph.D., Former Under Secretary of State for Global Affairs, Senior Fellow at the Harvard University Belfer Center for Science & International Affairs, and Concordia Leadership Council Member.**

H.E. Luis Almagro Lemes, Secretary General of the Organization of American States and Concordia Leadership Council Member, outlined

the state of democracy in Latin America today: 1) Inequality is the biggest problem facing democracy; 2) Organized crime is affecting electoral processes, the financing of campaigns, and the way people can participate in politics; and, 3) We need better participation in politics and stronger institutions that can deliver better results for societies. Urging institutions to face the challenges of the 21st century, Secretary Almagro shared the work of the Organization of American States in the fight against corruption, as well as its efforts to enhance digitization and government transparency, and support electoral processes. Ultimately, the best democracies in the region have better development, security, institutions, and access to rights.



The Future of Democracy in Latin America

There are five key challenges facing Latin America, according to **H.E. Álvaro Uribe Vélez, Former President of the Republic of Colombia and Concordia Leadership Council Member**: 1) The illicit economy and the impact of criminal groups on the rule of law; 2) The USD 131 billion per year

in remittances received by Latin American countries, with a notable lack of political co-responsibility; 3) Threats to the rule of law; 4) Poverty; and, 5) A challenging environment for private sector investment. We must widen the concept of democracy to incorporate prosperity, shared **H.E. Luis Alberto Lacalle, Former President of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay and Concordia Leadership Council Member**. The U.S. has an important role to play in enabling the rule of law, separation of power, and freedom of press, but must remember that prosperity forms the basis of this democracy.

“Political rights matter, as does the economy,” Ambassador Paula J. Dobriansky, Ph.D., Former Under Secretary of State for Global Affairs, Senior Fellow at the Harvard University Belfer Center for Science & International Affairs, and Concordia Leadership Council Member

“The best democracies [in the region] have better development, security, institutions, and access to rights,” H.E. Luis Almagro Lemes, Secretary General of the Organization of American States and Concordia Leadership Council Member

“Government allowing the private sector to prosper is the only way to overcome poverty and create more equal societies,” H.E. Álvaro Uribe Vélez, Former President of the Republic of Colombia and Concordia Leadership Council Member

“The private sector is a real motor of the economy,” H.E. Luis Alberto Lacalle, Former President of the

Oriental Republic of Uruguay and Concordia Leadership Council Member

Key Takeaways & Next Steps

- Free speech is integral to a fully functional democracy, and the U.S. government has a role to promote the right to free speech across the region.
- China and Russia are using soft power to create political instability and unrest in the Western Hemisphere, requiring the region to create a plan centered on the use of integrated deterrents and strategic investment.
- Countries across the Caribbean and CARICOM region must prioritize regional cooperation and multilateralism to drive sustainable economic development.
- This human-made crisis of mass migration in the Western Hemisphere has human-made solutions. We need to address the push and pull factors of migration, and the objective needs to be human and social development rather than stopping people from moving. We need to create opportunities at home and open up markets to make trade more dynamic.
- Investment must be made in countries that are receiving and integrating migrant populations.
- It is vital to consider the gender lens both in the drivers of migration, and also in the efforts to integrate women migrants once they have migrated.
- The more economic opportunities women have, the less risk they have of facing violence, so incorporating a gender perspective is crucial in any strategies tackling the drivers of migration.
- To reach gender equality in politics, we need affirmative action and to change deeply-entrenched patriarchal patterns in society.
- China's influence in Latin America is leveling off, and the country is focusing on technology and innovation-related sectors, which is key to domestic growth. To be competitive in Latin America moving forward, the U.S. needs to have more of a presence, prioritize building and maintaining strong relations, and demonstrate the commitment of resources.
- To combat illicit trade it's crucial to build sustainable trust between the public and private sectors, educate consumers around the multi-faceted dangers of purchasing illicit goods, and address the root cause of organized crime and corruption by generating alternative economic opportunities for people.

Keynote Town Halls



Opening Remarks: Carmen Castillo

Opening the 2022 Americas Summit, **Carmen Castillo, President & CEO of SDI International Corporation**, a 2020 Concordia Americas Summit Patron Sponsor, and **Concordia Leadership Council Member**, summarized the evolution of Concordia's Americas Summit, which began in Miami in 2016 and addressed the humanitarian crisis in Venezuela, democracy, energy, trade, and regional security. Since then, programming themes have expanded to include cultural diplomacy, youth advocacy, technology, environmental sustainability, and public health. Castillo congratulated President Duque, winner of the 2022 Concordia Leadership Award on behalf of the public sector, for his many accomplishments, in particular his groundbreaking policies to expand healthcare and maternity leave and elevate cultural industries.

"Latin America has remained a focal point for Concordia since its founding," Carmen Castillo, President & CEO of SDI International Corporation and Concordia Leadership Council Member



Keynote: Eduardo Padrón

Castillo formally introduced **Dr. Eduardo J. Padrón, Ph.D., President Emeritus of Miami Dade College and Concordia Leadership Council Member**, who is credited with elevating Miami Dade College—the largest degree-granting institution in the U.S.—into a position of national prominence. Awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Obama in 2016 for being a prominent national voice for access and inclusion in higher education, Dr. Padrón's work has been hailed as a model of innovation in higher education. As Dr. Padrón shared, Concordia has built a powerful platform and brand in Latin America over the past seven years, and this year's Americas Summit brings together a myriad of political and industry leaders working to solve the most press-

ing issues of our time. For Dr. Padrón, an educator, it's particularly important to hear from today's youth, as elevating the voices of younger generations is critical during this rapidly-shifting era.

"These conversations are happening at a pivotal time for the Western Hemisphere, and I firmly believe that they have the potential to lead to real impact," Dr. Eduardo J. Padrón, Ph.D., President Emeritus of Miami Dade College and Concordia Leadership Council Member



Keynote: H.E. Guillermo Lasso Mendoza

H.E. Guillermo Lasso Mendoza, President of the Republic of Ecuador, delivered keynote remarks on the state of Latin America following the pandemic and Ecuador's recent civil unrest. President Lasso cited the recent protests in Ecuador led by indigenous organization CONAIE, with respect for independence and democratic values key to reaching an agreement and restoring peace. Today, Ecuador provides democratic liberty and

freedom of expression to all of its citizens. In closing, President Lasso said that lasting solutions to the world's most pressing issues—including hunger, climate change, and migration—require joint efforts across the private, public, academic, and civil society spheres.

"I'm sure that this Concordia Summit will help us find innovative ways to face the challenges of our global reality," H.E. Guillermo Lasso Mendoza, President of the Republic of Ecuador



Introductory Remarks: María Paula Correa

Introducing President Duque to the stage, **María Paula Correa, Chief of Staff to the President of Colombia**, reflected on the last four years in Colombia. Against the backdrop of the pandemic, President Duque has led Colombia on a path of progress and growth, with the country reporting the highest rate of economic growth in the region, succeeding in the energy transition, and providing temporary protection status to more than 1.8

million Venezuelans. The 2022 Americas Summit formally announces President Duque as the public sector recipient of the [2022 Concordia Leadership Award](#), an annual award that recognizes global leaders within the public, private, and nonprofit sectors who inspire others through their ability to turn vision into impact.

“[In President Duque] I have seen a true leader lead Colombia into a path of progress and growth,” María Paula Correa, Chief of Staff to the President of Colombia



Leadership Award Presentation

The *Leadership Award Presentation* was formally introduced by **Nicholas Logothetis, Co-Founder & Chairman of the Board of Concordia**, and **Ambassador Paula J. Dobriansky, Ph.D., Former Under Secretary of State for Global Affairs, Senior Fellow at the Harvard University Belfer Center for Science & International Affairs, and Concordia Leadership Council Member.** Amba-

sador Dobriansky cited President Duque's many accomplishments, starting with the advancement of the U.S.-Colombia relationship. As one of the longest-standing democracies and first constitutional government in South America, Colombia has remained a steadfast ally of the U.S., committed to democracy, the rule of law, and free enterprise. Reinforcing the bilateral defense relationship between the U.S. and Colombia, Ambassador Dobriansky touched on President Biden's announcement to designate Colombia a major non-NATO ally during President Duque's visit to Washington, D.C. in March 2022. Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, President Duque supported the U.S., condemning Russia's actions, calling for a withdrawal of Russian troops, and offering advice to NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg on migration management.

One of the biggest challenges President Duque has faced domestically, Ambassador Dobriansky explained, is the number of Venezuelan migrants fleeing the Maduro regime, for which he has been lauded worldwide for his efforts. By March 2021, 32% of all Venezuelan migrants in Latin America were residing in Colombia, gaining rights to an education and work for 10 years—the largest temporary protection status program in the history of the hemisphere. Under his leadership, Colombia has also been a regional leader in countering drug efforts and increasing sustainable investment in the rural parts of the country.

“Iván has been one of Concordia’s most impactful supporters since day one. He has supported us as a politician, a private citizen, and a president,” Nicholas Logothetis, Co-Founder & Chairman of the Board of Concordia

“President Duque has displayed tremendous courage, strong leadership, and strategic vision [...] His resilience and fighting for his convictions, values, and goals will endure and ensure that his legacy in Colombia and around the world will live on,” Ambassador Paula J. Dobriansky, Ph.D., Former Under Secretary of State for Global Affairs, Senior Fellow at the Harvard University Belfer Center for Science & International Affairs, and Concordia Leadership Council Member



Keynote: H.E. Iván Duque Márquez

H.E. Iván Duque Márquez, President of the Republic of Colombia and recipient of the 2022 Leadership Award on behalf of the public sector, opened his keynote address reflecting on Concor-

dia’s evolution over the past 12 years. Fostering an identity based on multiplicity of thought and putting pieces together to find common solutions, Concordia has grown into one of the most important annual gatherings taking place where the private and public sectors meet to agree actions in favor of humanity. Today, Concordia is an institution that defends democracy across the world, with a focus on respect for independent institutions, private sector initiative, rule of law, and free press.

At the 2018 Concordia Americas Summit in Bogotá, President Duque shared a vision for Colombia. However, a once-in-a-century pandemic, a migration crisis of a scale never experienced before in Latin America, and a category 5 hurricane destroying the island of Providencia contributed to a crisis of a magnitude not experienced before. Against this backdrop, ongoing disinformation, algorithm manipulation, and polarization threatened democratic values.

As President, Duque had to turn adversity into opportunity—at some moments making unpopular decisions—in order to meet his national plan. Today, Colombia has the lowest rate of informal employment ever recorded, the highest real increase in the minimum wage in 50 years, the highest-ever number of citizens contributing to the pension system, and a 100% recovery in lost jobs from the pandemic. Meanwhile, the country is recording strong economic growth, helped by the government’s pro-business approach, nota-

bly lower corporation taxes and more transparent taxation regulation. To drive this growth and expand foreign direct investment in Colombia, it's crucial to guarantee an environment in which the private sector can excel, while maintaining a generous and sustainable social policy.

The climate crisis is the biggest challenge of our time, said President Duque, who urged nations to reduce their carbon footprint and achieve carbon neutrality. Colombia represents just 6% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions, but it is one of the countries that is more threatened by the effects of climate change. Over the past four years, Colombia has led the fight against climate change, declaring 30% of the country's territory a protected area, investing in unconventional renewable energy, and seeing the highest amount of electrical vehicles per capita in Latin America and the Caribbean.

"Concordia has become one of the most important—if not the most important—annual gatherings taking place where the private and public sectors meet to agree actions in favor of humanity," H.E. Iván Duque Márquez, President of the Republic of Colombia

Closing day one of the 2022 Americas Summit, **Hon. Francis Suarez, Mayor of the City of Miami**, attributed Miami's efforts to drive prosperity to three simple rules: low taxes, safety for communities, and leaning into innovation. According to the

Mayor, the kryptonite to democracy is division. Enemies abroad have been successful in using that kryptonite, while the U.S. has become a willing participant in allowing division to fester and grow, which allows socialist and communist ideologies to thrive. The world is getting more dynamic and disruptive than ever before, and the true measure of success for cities and countries is how to deal with that disruption. Following the Mayor's remarks, **Laurie Silvers, Chair of the Board of Trustees at the University of Miami**, reiterated the University of Miami's commitment to working towards shared solutions.



Closing Keynote: Francis Suarez

"The world is getting younger and is more dynamic and disruptive than ever before. The true measure of success for cities and countries is how do we deal with that disruption?" Hon. Francis Suarez, Mayor of the City of Miami

"One thing has resounded throughout our conversations: the only way that we can secure a bright future for our region is by working together," Laurie Silvers,

Chair of the Board of Trustees at the University of Miami



Laurie Silvers

Western Hemisphere nearshoring. Miami is strategically positioned for goods, consumables, and perishables grown in the hemisphere to flow into the U.S., and PortMiami is making investments to enhance that.

"The supply chain crisis wasn't caused—but rather exposed—by the pandemic. It shows what happens when long supply chains break, and when there's not cooperation and collaboration on how to solve them," Andrew Hecker, Deputy Director & CFO of PortMiami



Opening Remarks: Andrew Hecker

Opening day two, **Andrew Hecker, Deputy Director & CFO of PortMiami**, highlighted PortMiami's commercial presence and strategic importance as a conduit for international trade across the Western Hemisphere. The pandemic exposed the supply chain crisis, and efforts are now underway to build out a supply chain that is more aligned



Opening Remarks: Ramiro Cavazo

As highlighted by **Ramiro Cavazos, President & CEO of the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce**, Fortune 500 firms today do less than 1% of their purchases with Hispanic-owned businesses, while less than 1% of the U.S. government's purchases go to Hispanic-owned businesses. To rebuild the global economy, it's crucial to provide equity and diversity for women and other disenfranchised groups. 96% of the U.S. marketplace is outside the

U.S. and, what's more, 50% of the country's recovery from the Great Recession came from small businesses, and the other 50% from businesses doing exports. During challenging times, small and minority-owned businesses keep the economy moving forward. By 2040, one in four people in the U.S. will be Hispanic, so Hispanic-owned businesses are the vendor of the future.

"Today, Fortune 500 firms, which are talking about supplier diversity, do less than 1% of their purchases with Hispanic-owned businesses," Ramiro Cavazos, President & CEO of the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

Democracy is the essential ingredient to the future of the Americas, stated **Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz, Representative from Florida's 23rd Congressional District**. Today, the combined challenges of the existential threat of climate change, the pandemic and resulting global inflation, and the war of aggression in the Balkans are a toxic recipe for nationalism, unrest, and tyranny. Our most potent weapon to confront these threats is an abundance of healthy democracies that rest upon stable foundations, the rule of law, and robust institutional checks and balances. To maintain these democracies, we must confront our own autocrats. As Congresswoman Schultz explained, if we start from the premise that democracies are the best antidote to autocracy, we must protect and promote a diversity of compet-

ing opinions. Yet, a robust left-right dichotomy inherent in all democracies cannot dictate how we view and confront autocrats as these perspectives are often too restrictive and impede our ability to challenge political repression. Latin America has pioneered many legal tools to address authoritarian legacies. Recently, President Biden announced an investment of USD 42 million into U.S. Agency for International Development activities to protect and promote the civic space in Central America, while a new U.S.-Caribbean partnership on climate is designed to elevate cooperation on climate adaptation, energy security, and clean energy investment. Bipartisan efforts like these will help to foster stability and combat autocracy.



Keynote: Debbie Wasserman Schultz

"If we start from the premise that democracies are the best antidote to autocracy, inherent within that we must protect and promote a diversity of competing opinions," Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz, Representative from Florida's 23rd Congressional District

Stewart D. McLaurin, President of the White House Historical Association and Concordia Senior Advisor, offered attendees a copy of the book *To Live On Lafayette Square* by historian William Seale, which details the rich history and microcosm of the presidential neighborhood in Washington, D.C.



Remarks: Stewart D. McLaurin

"We've been talking about the neighborhood of the Americas here the past two days," Stewart D. McLaurin, President of the White House Historical Association and Concordia Senior Advisor

Closing the Summit, **Hanne Dalmut, Senior Director of Partnerships at Concordia**, reflected on the key themes of healthcare, regional investment, and climate and national security, explored through a variety of lenses. There is no single answer or solution to these pressing challenges, but with the collective energy and gathering of ideas, we're making progress for the region.



Closing Remarks: Hanne Dalmut

"We've opened new lines of communication, forged new partnerships, and problem solved new ways forward." Hanne Dalmut, Senior Director of Partnerships at Concordia ■

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