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Dear friends,

It is remarkable that we are half-way through 2023. These past six months have been busy for all of us, finally coming back to a new normal and meeting old and new friends again in a sensation of quasi-normality. We've had the chance to discuss our industry's trends and challenges and comment on the news that made headlines over these past two years. Therefore, it seemed a good time to reflect and share a few thoughts with all of you.

This week, I went back to what was home for me for more than 20 years. I am currently in Brussels attending **the 3rd EU-CELAC Summit of Heads of State and Government that will be held until tomorrow. It is a historic occasion to bring together European, Latin American and Caribbean leaders to renew and strengthen relations between the two regions after almost a decade of absence of bi-regional dialogue at the highest political level. The summit´s theme is:** "Renewing the bi-regional partnership to strengthen peace and sustainable development".

During the last days and months, we have heard more and more of risks related to cyber threats, artificial intelligence, the future of the Metaverse, privacy risks, etc. We also heard about what we need:
• New policies to enable scale in the telecoms sector.
• Fair contribution by Big Tech to the investment effort of telecoms operators rolling-out inclusive fiber and 5G networks.

So, are we in front of new challenging times in our industry?

My father used to tell me "often challenges are opportunities in disguise". That is how I view challenges, and that is how I want you to view challenges as well.

Indeed, I think that we can all agree that digital and financial inclusion are fundamental to make our society a more connected and prosperous one. And that the private sector, from the telecoms operators to the so-called Big Tech, play a significant role as agents of change, which in turn makes us capable of a profound impact on the our regions transformation.

Without a doubt, our sector's investments are the foundational building blocks of our countries digital infrastructure. The future success of both our sector and our countries is intertwined, their growth depends on our digital highways and vice versa.

MillicomTigo is a digital enabler of future services that will help our people and our countries grow and prosper. Without our spectrum, our infrastructure, our expertise and know-how, the digital services we are imagining for the future such as AI, the metaverse, will never be a reality. These services require strong and robust underlying connectivity with high levels of capacity and wide levels of coverage. However, the public and private sectors must become more effective partners to achieve our goals and for the good of our society.

And you all know, I believe that sustainable development will become a reality if we are able to fully embrace a real Digital Transformation. Now is the time to take further steps, based on smart digital regulation (neutral, global and innovative), and public-private partnerships (including increasing the capital of development banks).
We call for a comprehensive regulatory revamp to prepare for the challenges of the upcoming 20 years, not just for the next few quarters. Data protection and privacy, IP protection, anti-piracy efforts, cheaper access to and efficient management of spectrum, and tax reform are key areas.
I'd like to conclude this brief commentary by congratulating the newly elected President of Paraguay, Santiago Peña, whose leadership will be key to the economic growth and social development of this country where we have the honor to be present for more than 30 years. Congratulations!
Below you will find a compilation of what happened in the first half of the year that I hope you will find interesting.

Karim Lesina, EVP Chief External Affairs Officer, Millicom/Tigo.

Our journey in the news

Latin América more connected than ever

Region-wide: we reached a milestone in conectivity. We launched a bioceanic corridor, connecting Bolivia and Paraguay for the first time, allowing us to establish a direct connection from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean.

In Guatemala: Tigo Money and Bantrab Financial Group signed a joint agreement to promote new opportunities for financial inclusion by enabling interoperability between the banked and the unbanked Guatemalans. The alliance is carried out with the support of the Government of Guatemala and the Ministry of Economy, which seeks to promote financial inclusion, entrepreneurship, and savings.

In Colombia: Tigo Colombia and Movistar signed a memorandum of understanding to develop a shared mobile access network in Colombia.

Public-private partnerships to for more inclusion

Public-private alliances are a fundamental tool for accelerating the closing of the digital and financial gap, one of our objectives as a company. Therefore, in this first half of the year we have joined forces through new agreements with the Development Bank of Latin America (CAF), and the Ministry of Education in Panama.
We also continued to strengthen our alliance with Glasswing International and the Real Madrid Foundation in mentoring and digital skills training projects, respectively, carried out in El Salvador, with the participation of Mauricio Ramos, CEO of Millicom/Tigo.

Experts talk

A year generating spaces for discussion

Why every Latin American habitant must have access to the Internet, the importance of developing digital skills, the increased focus on Smart Cities, the way the Metaverse will reach our region...

These were some of the topics of conversation we engaged in when participating in the Mobile World Congress, the Concordia Americas Summit, Annual LatAm & Caribbean Telecommunications & Media Forum of the International Institute of Communications (IIC), GSMA's Mobile 360 and ASIET's Latin American Digital Transformation Congress.

It's also been a year since we've co-created a space for debate with the Financial Times Live, under the initiative entitled Spotlight on Latin America. This semester we had them in Cartagena (Colombia) and Denver (United States), bringing together experts from different sectors. We already have a date for the next one in New York City this September.

Podcasts and more

What are the global trends for journalism and media? Oxford University and Reuters Institute detail it in this podcast: **Digital News Report**

If you like fiction, **Case 63** was one of the most listened to podcasts in 2022.

The **@Times** recommendation of books you can't miss this 2023.

Get to know the **music Millicom's External Affairs team** vibes to.

Recommended reading

What are the recommended incentives for effective connectivity? The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Global Symposium for Regulators (GSR) 2023 shared this document: **Best Practice Guidelines Regulatory and Economic Incentives for an Inclusive and Sustainable Digital Future.**

Did you konw?

In early 2023, CNN asked four experts to predict which technologies will shape our lives this year. Here's what they had to say: **The tech trends that will dominate in 2023 (cnn.com)**

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