

## Chamber Hosts Outlook on the Americas Conference



Last week, the Chamber’s Association of American Chambers of Commerce in Latin America and the Caribbean (AACCLA) held its annual “Outlook on the Americas” conference, which convened business and government leaders from across the hemisphere.

**COVID relief is priority #1:** The session focused on western hemisphere trade and investment priorities and the 2021 economic outlook, with COVID-19 relief and recovery featuring prominently. In a conversation with Trade Ministers from Panama and the Dominican Republic, Colombian Minister of Trade, Industry and Tourism José Manuel Restrepo emphasized Colombia's efforts to “guarantee civilian vaccination and prepare for safe [economic] reactivation, while looking to prioritize intraregional and international trade.”

**Digital dominance:** U.S.-Colombia Business Council (USCBC) Chair and Millicom Chief Executive Officer Mauricio Ramos focused on the need for a digital upgrade, with the COVID-19 pandemic providing “that now, more than ever, digital connectivity should be at the core of all priorities – from healthcare, to education [to] government services.” While the pandemic hit the region hard, it also accelerated a digital transformation that World Bank Chief Economist Martin Rama suggested could provide new opportunities to improve productivity and reduce red-tape and corruption. (Watch our previous conference on [Digitalization, Competitiveness and Strengthening the Rule of Law in Central America](#).)

**What’s next:** The U.S.-hosted IX Summit of the Americas can be a key platform to work jointly on issues of common interest for the hemisphere. According to U.S. Chamber Head of International Affairs Myron Brilliant, strengthening rule of law in Central America and across the hemisphere is another opportunity for collaboration.

Watch

