

**CLDP Opening Ceremony Statement  
FCC Commissioner Olivia Trusty  
San José, Costa Rica  
March 14, 2026, 9:00am**

Pura Vida! It is a pleasure to be here in beautiful San José, Costa Rica for this important discussion on the future of connectivity in the Americas. Thank you to the Department of Commerce's Commercial Law Development Program, the Digital Connectivity and Cybersecurity Partnership, and the Costa Rican Ministry of Science, Innovation, Technology, and Telecommunications for hosting this event and for the warm hospitality.

I also want to acknowledge my fellow speakers sharing this opening session, Costa Rican Minister of Science, Innovation, Technology and Telecommunications Paula Bogantes, Chargé d'Affaires for the U.S. Embassy in San José, Jennifer Savage, and U.S. Department of State Deputy Assistant Secretary John Mills. It is an honor to join all of you to help launch this meaningful dialogue.

Let me start by giving special recognition to Minister Bogantes. Under your leadership, Costa Rica adopted new rules in 2023 designed to safeguard the integrity and security of Costa Rican telecommunications networks. That decision required both foresight and courage.

The adoption of policies like these is not always easy. In fact, these policies require governments to look beyond the short-term and to consider the enduring strength of national security, economic resilience, and the trust that underpins digital infrastructure. Costa Rica chose to take a long-term strategic view for its country and its citizens, and I believe that decision will pay dividends for years to come. Secure and trusted networks strengthen commerce. They protect public safety. They foster innovation. And they provide citizens and businesses

confidence that the digital infrastructure they rely upon every day is both resilient and trustworthy. Costa Rica's leadership ultimately demonstrates what is possible, not only here, but across Latin America and the broader Western Hemisphere.

The theme of this two-day gathering, “**5G in Latin America: Policy, Security, and Growth**,” captures an important truth: the future of 5G will be determined not just by the technology itself, but by our policy choices, security considerations, and expanding access to economic opportunity. Indeed, these three pillars, policy, security, and growth, are inseparable.

5G is not merely the next generation of wireless technology. It is the platform upon which modern economies will run. From smart agriculture and telemedicine, to logistics, manufacturing, and education, the opportunities enabled by advanced connectivity are enormous. But with those opportunities come new responsibilities.

As we know, the communications networks that power our economies are commercial assets. But they are national security assets too. And the policy decisions we make today about how these networks are built, who supplies them, how they are secured, and how they are governed, will shape the resilience of our economies and the safety of our citizens both now and into the future.

For these reasons, the United States has placed a strong emphasis on trusted and secure communications networks. A key pillar of President Trump's Cyber Strategy for America is the security of critical infrastructure, achieved in part by securing information and operational technology supply chains, and moving away from vendors and products supported by hostile actors. Consistent with the President's Cyber Strategy, at the Federal Communications Commission, we have

taken a number of steps to ensure that the infrastructure supporting the American communications ecosystem is secure, resilient, and reliable.

For example, in 2021 the Commission established what is known as the Covered List, a list of communications equipment and services that pose an unacceptable risk to U.S. national security. Companies on that list are prohibited from receiving FCC authorization for use or integration in our networks.

We also launched what is often referred to as the “Rip and Replace” program, an effort to remove and replace equipment from untrusted vendors that has already been deployed in parts of our telecommunications networks. This initiative reflects a simple but important principle: that one compromised component can expose an entire network to digital threats. And so, when vulnerabilities are discovered in critical infrastructure, they need to be addressed without delay.

Additionally, the Commission has withdrawn certification from laboratories that are owned or controlled by foreign adversaries and cannot be relied upon to provide a trusted or independent verification of equipment security.

And we have updated our rules to increase transparency regarding the extent of foreign ownership and control in entities that hold FCC licenses or authorizations. Greater transparency is essential to assessing risks, identifying supply chain manipulation, and preventing the disruption of critical infrastructure.

We have also invested in modernizing our licensing process for undersea cables to further protect our national security interests.

Across all of these initiatives, our objective has been the same: ensuring that the communications networks of the United States are built on trusted foundations.

But this leads to perhaps one of the most important points: communications networks do not stop at national borders. Data flows across continents in milliseconds. Fiber-optic cables connect nations beneath the ocean. Wireless ecosystems rely on global supply chains. And increasingly, our digital economies are intertwined.

Because of this, network security is not something any one country can achieve alone. Secure networks require cooperation, shared principles and trusted partnerships.

This is precisely why gatherings like this one are so important. They bring together policymakers, regulators, engineers, and private-sector leaders to share experiences and develop common approaches.

I commend efforts to foster cooperation that are already happening across the hemisphere. Costa Rica's leadership is a powerful example. And we have other examples to look to as well. The FCC has worked across Latin America and the Caribbean, at the request of a number of regulators including Paraguay, Panama, El Salvador and the Bahamas, on projects ranging from spectrum auction pricing to trusted cloud infrastructure.

Countries taking these proactive steps to strengthen their communications infrastructure are creating benefits that extend far beyond security alone. Trusted networks encourage investment. They create stable environments for innovation. They support the growth of digital services and new industries. And they build confidence among consumers, businesses, and international partners. When networks are secure, everyone wins. Businesses benefit because they can operate with confidence in the infrastructure that supports their services. Governments benefit because they can rely on resilient systems for public safety, emergency

response, and national defense. And citizens benefit because they gain access to reliable, high-quality connectivity that powers economic opportunity and social progress.

Looking ahead, the transition to 5G, and eventually to future generations of wireless technology, will only increase the importance of these policy choices. As that transition unfolds, safeguarding the security and resilience of communications infrastructure will remain a shared responsibility. The United States is committed to working with partners throughout Latin America and the Caribbean in support of this effort.

At the FCC, we stand ready to collaborate, whether through technical consultations, regulatory exchanges, spectrum policy discussions, or sharing lessons learned from our own experience. Across the U.S. government, programs like the Digital Connectivity and Cybersecurity Partnership and the Commercial Law Development Program help bring together expertise from multiple agencies to support countries as they develop policies and frameworks that promote secure digital growth.

Our goal is to work alongside partners in the region to promote open, interoperable, reliable, and secure communications networks. Because when countries adopt these principles, the benefits ripple outward. Investment grows. Innovation accelerates. Trade expands. And the entire region becomes more resilient in the face of emerging technological and geopolitical challenges.

The bottom line is that the more we work together, the stronger our digital ecosystems will become. The more we align around shared principles, the safer and more resilient our networks will be. And the more we invest in trusted

infrastructure, the more opportunity we will create for our citizens and businesses alike.

So thank you again to our hosts, to our partners here in Costa Rica, and to all of you participating in this important dialogue. I look forward to the conversations over the next two days and continuing the work of building secure, resilient, and prosperous digital networks across the Americas. Thank you very much.