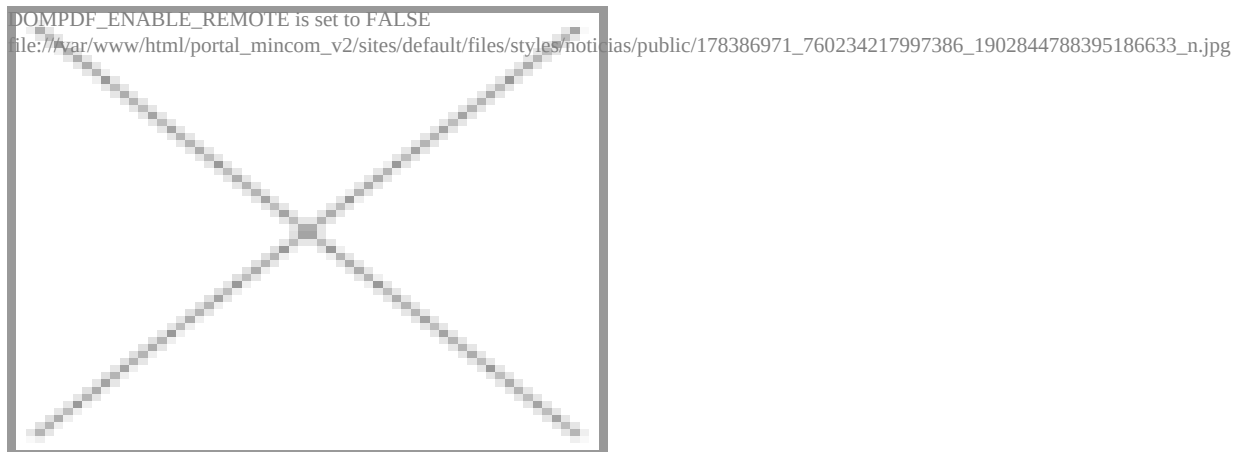




Source:

Office of Institutional Communication

Cuba, represented by the minister of Communications, Mayra Arevich Marín, participated in the high level thematic debate about digital cooperation and connectivity celebrated on April 27, in the General Assembly Hall at the Headquarters of the United Nations in New York.

This high level thematic debate was organized under the theme "Whole-of-Society Approaches to End the Digital Divide" and its purpose is to remark the importance and urgency of a political commitment at the highest level to address the digital divide and back up the efforts of adaptation, response and recovery when facing COVID-19.

In her speech, the Cuban minister of Communications, Mayra Arevich Marín, said:

Mister President,

Distinguished delegates:

Information and Communication Technologies are essential tools for economic, political and social growth in all countries.

In spite of the progress achieved in terms of connectivity, innovation and access to those technologies, a digital divide between developed and developing countries still persists.

These divides have been enlarged even more during the pandemic. The COVID-19 scenario has granted ICTs greater importance to work, study, trade and live under the current circumstances.

That situation has reaffirmed the necessity of having a telecommunications infrastructure that favors the access of all on equal terms and helps counter the big challenges faced by the nations in the digital environment.

Cuba works with an Economic and Social Development Plan aligned with the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which conceives the development of telecommunications among the strategic sectors and pillars of the economy. In that sense, there's a broadband program with indicators and objectives to achieve by stages.

Cuba has continued with the expansion of telecommunication services in spite of the economic, commercial and financial blockade from the government of the United States of America, which has been strengthened during the pandemic. Currently, more than 64% of the Cuban population accesses the Internet, and mobile telephony features 6.6 million users, the 4G network is growing and 76% of the population enjoys the

coverage of the digital television signal.

Your Excellences:

Cuba makes a call for unity and solidarity globally, and for the end of unilateral coercive measures that violate International Law and the United Nations Charter, and which also limit the ability of nations to have access to the universal and safe use of ICTs as tools to effectively face the pandemic and contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda.

Based on those principles, we restate the need to strengthen international solidarity and cooperation to build a fair, egalitarian, inclusive and better connected world.

Speech of the Cuban minister of Communications, Mayra Arevich Marín, in the high level thematic debate on digital cooperation and connectivity which took place on April 27, in the General Assembly Hall at the Headquarters of the United Nations in New York.

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