



Source:

Institutional Communication Office

Beijing, People's Republic of China, October 18, 2023.

The Minister of Communications of Cuba, Mayra Arevich Marín, participated in the Panel on "Strengthening the links of International Cooperation in the Digital Economy for the shared benefit of all," which took place at the Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation.

Mayra Arevich, said that the new Initiative launched, "Beijing Belt and Road Initiative for International Cooperation in the Digital Economy," aims to establish a community of shared interests that allows better coordination of policies, development of connectivity infrastructures, and promotes cooperation in digital transformation. Promoting research, development and innovation (R&D), expanding commercial exchange, strengthening international, technical and financial cooperation between our peoples and advancing the 2030 Agenda.

However, she noted that achieving universal inclusion in the digital economy and eliminating existing inequalities between countries is a major concern for humanity, noting that only 15% of the SDGs are on track to be achieved and others are in regression. 30% of the SDG targets have stagnated or regressed. More than 1.2 billion people live in poverty; the digital divide persists, 2.6 billion people don't have access to the Internet. With developing countries being the hardest hit, inequalities are deepening with increasing wealth in a minority of countries and extreme poverty in the majority.

The Minister mentioned the main challenges that humanity is facing due to the prevailing unfair international economic order, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, climate disasters, geopolitical conflicts, the application of unilateral coercive measures, financial economic crises, food and energy insecurity and the persistent digital divide, for which there is an urgent need to build a more just, equitable and inclusive world, where international solidarity and cooperation prevail.

In this regard, she said that these were issues that were also discussed extensively by the Heads of State and Government who participated in the G-77 and China Summit held in Havana, Cuba.

Mayra Arevich emphasized the need to strengthen multilateralism and international cooperation as the only way to solve the global challenges of the present and the future.

Regarding the digital transformation process, she mentioned that progress is being made despite the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed on Cuba by the United States of America for more than sixty years.

She informed that the available coverage of telephonic services in Cuba is 83% and the population coverage in standard digital television is 89% and 72% in high definition. On the latter, she highlighted the importance of international cooperation for the development of countries, mentioning that the achievement reached in the deployment of Digital Terrestrial Television is the result of international cooperation with China, adding that Cuba was the first country in the Western Hemisphere and the only one in Latin America to employ the Chinese Digital Television Standard.

Finally, the Minister of Communications reiterated Cuba's commitment to strengthen international cooperation, collaboration and solidarity in order to create a shared digital future in a connected world and build a community with a shared future in a safe and accessible cyberspace for all the inhabitants of the planet.

---