GLOBAL POLICY PERSPECTIVE REPORT

TECH DIPLOMACY
& Latin America and the Caribbean

Towards a Regional Strategy for Digital Sovereignty,
Cooperation with Big Tech Companies,
and Global Technology Governance

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EIIS EUROPEAN INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

SELA LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN ECONOMIC SYSTEM

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Publication series:
Global Policy Perspective Report. European Institute of International Studies (EIIS), Stockholm, Sweden.

ISBN: 978-980-6458-52-9
Legal Deposit: DC2026001350

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First edition · August 2026

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FOREWORD

The technological transformation the world is undergoing is one of the most far-reaching processes of our time. The rapid evolution of artificial intelligence, the data economy, advanced computing, digital connectivity and other disruptive technologies is redefining not only models of production and development, but also the economic, political and geopolitical relationships that shape the international system.

In this context, Latin America and the Caribbean face a twofold challenge. On the one hand, there is the need to bridge the technological gaps that still limit their competitiveness, productivity and innovation; on the other, there is a historic opportunity to position themselves as a strategic player in shaping the new global technological order. Our region possesses significant comparative advantages, including natural resources that are critical to the technological transition, substantial renewable energy potential, a growing digital economy and valuable human capital. However, transforming these assets into strategic capabilities requires strengthening regional cooperation, promoting innovative public policies and consolidating a shared vision of the role of technology in sustainable development.

The Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA), in fulfilment of its mandate to promote consultation, consensus-building, cooperation and regional integration, considers that digital transformation represents an opportunity to strengthen the strategic autonomy of our countries, promote innovation, attract high value-added investment and expand the region's participation in international technology governance processes.

Against this backdrop, this *Global Policy Perspective Report*, produced by the European Institute of International Studies (EIIS) in collaboration with SELA, represents a valuable contribution to the regional debate on the challenges and opportunities presented by so-called Tech Diplomacy. The report offers an innovative reflection on the need to incorporate technology as a strategic dimension of foreign policy and is geared towards developing a regional strategy to strengthen digital sovereignty, promote cooperation with leading technology companies and expand the participation of Latin America and the Caribbean in global technology governance. It also provides an analysis of the transformations in international order and sets out a programme of recommendations aimed at strengthening the institutional, diplomatic and technological capacities of Latin America and the Caribbean.

One of the key contributions of this publication is to position the region as a player with the potential to play a more active role in international technology governance. Beyond identifying the challenges associated with technological dependence, the report sets out a forward-looking vision based on regional cooperation, the strengthening of human capital, innovation, digital sovereignty and the forging of strategic alliances with the world's leading technology hubs.

SELA has consistently promoted forums for dialogue, research and cooperation on the impacts of emerging technologies on the region's economic and social development. This publication forms part of that institutional effort and also reflects the fruitful academic collaboration developed in recent years with the European Institute of International Studies, aimed at generating applied knowledge to support public policymaking and strengthen regional integration.

We trust that this report will contribute to the debate amongst governments, international organisations, the private sector, academia and civil society, and serve as a basis for the design of strategies that will enable Latin America and the Caribbean to participate more actively, in a more coordinated and strategic manner, in shaping the digital future.

Ambassador Lesly David

Permanent Secretary
Latin American and Caribbean
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Editor's note

Global Policy Perspective Report *is a series of publications by the European Institute of International Studies (EIIS).* This edition is published in collaboration with the **Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA),** within the framework of the inter-institutional cooperation agreement signed in 2019.

This public policy report is aimed at governments, regional integration mechanisms, international organisations and development banks in Latin America and the Caribbean. The recommendations set out herein constitute a proposal for regional policy and do not represent the official position of the participating institutions.

Executive summary

The emergence and rapid advancement of various disruptive technologies such as artificial intelligence, the data economy, cloud computing and digital infrastructure have made technology a central component of economic power, security and foreign policy. For Latin America and the Caribbean, the challenge lies in moving from a predominantly consumer-based and fragmented role to one of active, coordinated, productive and normative participation in the new global technological order.

- The region possesses strategic assets — talent, markets, renewable energy and critical minerals — but still faces gaps in connectivity, investment in research and development, computing capacity, data governance and regulatory coordination.

- Tech Diplomacy provides a framework for coordinating foreign policy, security, defence, productive development, investment attraction, knowledge transfer, cybersecurity and participation in the development of international standards.

- Relations with the United States, China and the European Union must be based on open strategic autonomy: diversifying alliances, avoiding exclusive dependencies and negotiating verifiable outcomes in terms of local capabilities.

- SELA can act as a regional platform for consultation, training and cooperation, in partnership with development banks, specialised agencies, academia and the private sector.

- The report proposes a Regional Roadmap for Tech Diplomacy in Latin America and the Caribbean 2030, accompanied by mechanisms for governance, funding, monitoring and performance indicators.

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Introduction

The era of disruptive technologies is redefining the foundations of international power (Torres Jarrín, 2024). The rapid development of Artificial Intelligence (AI), the data economy, advanced computing and global connectivity, amongst other factors, is profoundly transforming the economic, social and political structures of the international system.

The development of international relations has been closely linked to technological advancements, as well as to progress in the field of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on the global development agenda, which has altered the way we perceive our environment in contrast to our everyday lives. AI is integrated into our digital lives, as simply as in the recommendation of personalised content based on our interests and preferences (Herrera, 2024). Technology is no longer confined to the realm of scientific innovation and economic growth; it has become a strategic asset that shapes foreign policy, security, defence, development and global digital governance (Torres Jarrín, 2025a).

In this new landscape, access to, the development of, and governance of critical technologies — such as artificial intelligence, semiconductors, quantum computing, digital infrastructure and data ecosystems — are increasingly determining states' ability to innovate, strengthen their competitiveness, exercise strategic autonomy and project influence within the international system. Consequently, technological capability has established itself as a new structural source of international power and as one of the main factors explaining the reconfiguration of the geopolitical balance in the 21st century.

This *Global Policy Perspective Report,* ***T*****ech *Diplomacy* and Latin America and the Caribbean. Towards a Regional Strategy for Digital Sovereignty, Cooperation with Big Tech Companies and Global Technology Governance**, analyses the emergence of Tech Diplomacy as a new dimension of contemporary diplomacy and argues for the need for countries in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) to develop a regional strategy capable of transforming current technological challenges into opportunities for sustainable development, innovation, international cooperation and strategic positioning within the new global technology governance framework (Torres Jarrín, 2025b), which is led by the so-called Big Tech Companies. Their economic capacity, accumulation of capital, and global influence make them the new geopolitical actors on the international stage, thereby ushering in a new global technological order.

LAC possesses strategic assets that are fundamental to the new global technology-driven economy. In addition to a population of over 650 million, it has a progressively digitised society, a highly skilled workforce, expanding scientific capabilities and

significant renewable energy potential. The region holds a significant proportion of the critical natural resources required for the technological transition and the manufacture of advanced technologies. Strategic minerals, including lithium, copper, nickel, graphite, cobalt and other critical minerals, as well as resources associated with so-called rare earth elements, are essential components for technology sectors such as advanced batteries, electric vehicles, renewable energy, semiconductors, energy storage, digital infrastructure and artificial intelligence systems.

Consequently, LAC not only represents a strategic market for the technologies of the future, but also a key region within the new global technology supply chains. However, this potential must be transformed into strategic capacity. The availability of natural resources, on its own, does not guarantee technological development or global influence. To become key players in the new global technological order, the countries in the region need to develop public policies aimed at adding value, strengthening industrial capabilities – particularly in the technology sector – seeking partnerships that enable them to promote technology transfer, driving research and innovation, and establishing mechanisms for strategic cooperation with the leading global technology players: Big Tech Companies.

In this context, Big Tech Companies are key players in the new global technological ecosystem. Most of the leading companies in artificial intelligence, cloud computing, digital platforms, semiconductors and technology services originate primarily in the United States and China, two of the world's leading technological powers. This reality must be understood not only as a challenge, but also as a strategic opportunity. For most countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, the United States and China are key trading partners, significant sources of foreign direct investment and central players in their international economic relations. This existing network of economic, commercial and diplomatic ties provides a platform upon which new models of cooperation between governments and Big Tech Companies can be built.

The region has the opportunity to establish itself as a global facilitator of cooperation and innovation amongst the world's leading technology hubs. The countries of Latin America and the Caribbean can become a strategic bridge in the future global technological order, connecting technological capabilities, strategic resources, emerging markets, human talent and the geopolitical interests of various international actors. To achieve this objective, it will be necessary to move beyond a traditional view of international relations and advance towards a foreign policy geared towards the technology sector, capable of integrating diplomacy, innovation, economic development, foreign investment, digital security and technology governance. In addition to moving beyond the political aspiration of seeking to integrate into the international system, the region must—and has the capacity to—seek to be a global player rather than a global observer.

In this context, Tech Diplomacy is emerging as the most appropriate strategic tool to enable countries in Latin America and the Caribbean to play an active role in shaping the new global technological order. It allows states to develop the capacity to:

- negotiate strategic partnerships with Big Tech Companies;
- attract high value-added technology investment;
- promote technology transfer and talent development;
- strengthen digital sovereignty;
- play a part in setting international standards;
- promote ethical and responsible governance of artificial intelligence;
- transform its human and natural resources into competitive advantages.

The region is at a critical juncture. On the one hand, the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean possess unique strategic advantages: critical natural resources, renewable energy potential, geographical location, biodiversity, human talent and dynamic markets. On the other hand, structural challenges persist, relating to technological dependence, limited investment in research and development, regulatory fragmentation, digital divides and the lack of coordinated regional strategies to deal with major global technology players.

Against this backdrop of profound technological transformation and the reshaping of the international order, Latin America and the Caribbean urgently need to strengthen their institutional, technical and diplomatic capacities in order to respond strategically to the challenges and opportunities arising from disruptive technologies. In this regard, the development of a regional Tech Diplomacy strategy makes sense for the countries in the region, but this will not depend solely on the availability of technological infrastructure or the ability to attract international investment; rather, it will depend fundamentally on the existence of specialised human capital capable of understanding the new technological geopolitics, developing the skills to negotiate with major technology companies, actively participating in regional and global governance processes on digital matters, and designing public policies aimed at inclusive, sustainable and responsible technological development.

1. Technological revolution and transformation of the international order

Humanity is undergoing an unprecedented technological transformation that is reshaping the economic, social and political structures of the international system. The so-called Fourth Industrial Revolution, a concept developed by Klaus Schwab, founder and executive chairman of the World Economic Forum (WEF), describes a new historical phase characterised by the convergence of digital, physical and biological technologies (Schwab, 2016), in which artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, advanced robotics, quantum computing, biotechnology, the Internet of Things (IoT), cybersecurity and space technologies are redefining economic production, public administration, international security and power relations (WEF, 2023).[1]

For the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, this disruption presents both pressing challenges and unprecedented opportunities. The region possesses high-value strategic assets: reserves of critical minerals, an energy mix with high renewable potential, dynamic digital markets and a young population well-suited to integrating into the knowledge economy. However, deep-rooted structural barriers persist, namely: technological dependence, pronounced digital divides, low investment in research and development (R&D), regulatory fragmentation and limited institutional capacity to influence the definition of global rules governing the digital environment.

The global economy is moving towards a model driven by data, knowledge and innovation. AI, automation, advanced robotics and digital transformation are the drivers that will redefine international competitiveness in the coming decades, with direct impacts on patterns of production, employment and investment (OECD, 2025). Furthermore, the OECD highlights the value of data as a strategic input for growth, innovation and public policymaking. In the digital economy, technological infrastructure — data centres, cloud capabilities, next-generation networks and AI ecosystems — is an essential prerequisite for boosting productivity and attracting foreign direct investment.

However, this interdependence gives rise to systemic vulnerabilities. Cyberattacks on critical infrastructure, industrial espionage, disinformation, the theft of intellectual property and the malicious use of AI have made cybersecurity an indispensable pillar of security and defence agendas. Protecting electricity grids, financial systems, digital public services and healthcare infrastructure requires renewed models of cooperation between states, multilateral organisations, the private sector and the scientific community. The contest for technological leadership has taken centre stage in

[1] Schwab argues that the defining feature of this technological revolution is not merely the individual innovation of each technology, but the systemic interaction among them, which is driving exponential transformations in the economy and society.

contemporary geopolitics. Control over artificial intelligence, semiconductors, quantum computing, advanced networks and critical minerals demonstrates that technology is a determining factor in geopolitical and economic power.

In this context, digital sovereignty takes on central importance. Far from implying autarky or isolation, this concept refers to the capacity of states to design and implement autonomous policies on data, infrastructure, AI and cybersecurity, thereby mitigating strategic vulnerabilities within a highly interdependent environment. For the LAC region, achieving effective digital sovereignty requires action on several fronts simultaneously: strengthening regulatory capacities, consolidating innovation ecosystems, training specialised talent and diversifying international partnerships. The region possesses substantial competitive advantages: reserves of lithium and copper, a renewable energy mix and a growing digital market. Capitalising on these conditions requires a comprehensive vision that integrates foreign policy, productive development and innovation.

Big Tech Companies have moved beyond the strictly corporate sphere to establish themselves as global players with the capacity to shape and transform the international order (Adler-Nissen & Liebetrau, 2026). Companies such as Apple, Microsoft, NVIDIA, Alphabet, Amazon, Meta and Tesla not only develop cutting-edge solutions, but also control critical digital infrastructure, manage massive volumes of data and determine a large part of global technical and regulatory standards. With a combined market capitalisation exceeding the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of many nations (CompaniesMarketCap, 2026), they represent an unprecedented concentration of economic and technological power. These figures make them de facto geopolitical actors in the international system, with the capacity to influence decision-making on key issues of global governance. This dynamic is driving two key transformations on the international stage (Torres Jarrín, 2025c, 2026), both of which are led by the Big Tech Companies:

1. The emergence of global technology governance: a multi-level, multi-stakeholder model is taking shape, characterised by the growing influence of Big Tech Companies, whose technological, economic and transnational capabilities enable them to play an increasingly significant role in global governance. Control over strategic technologies, digital infrastructure, data and innovation ecosystems is expanding their ability to shape decision-making processes, participate in the formulation of rules and standards, and influence the priorities of the international agenda. This transformation is redefining the relationships among states, technology companies and international organisations, creating new challenges for regulation, technological sovereignty and international cooperation.

2. The consolidation of a new technological order: the ability to develop, control and deploy strategic technologies is emerging as a key determinant of states' global power, strategic autonomy and international influence. At the same time, the growing concentration of technologies, digital infrastructure, data and innovation capabilities within Big Tech Companies is reshaping traditional relations between the public and private sectors, making the interaction and competition between states and large technology corporations a central axis of contemporary geopolitics, with direct implications for international security, technological sovereignty and global governance.

2. Tech Diplomacy: definition, development and international significance

In response to the challenges described above, two countries – one from the Global North and the other from the Global South – are launching initiatives relating to a foreign policy focused on the technology sector, seeking to establish formal relations with the new geopolitical players, the major technology companies.

Faced with the need to manage the influence of the tech giants, tech diplomacy emerged as an institutional practice. In the Global North, in 2017, Denmark introduced three new concepts that would reshape the way international relations are conceived: Tech Diplomacy, Tech Embassies and Tech Ambassadors (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, 2017). This involved establishing formal relations between the Danish government and the Big Tech Companies, opening diplomatic missions in Silicon Valley and Beijing, and appointing the first-ever Tech Ambassador, Casper Klynge, with a global mandate. The creation of this role stemmed from the recognition that the Big Tech Companies possess:

- greater economic clout than that of many states;
- influence over millions of citizens;
- control over critical digital infrastructure;
- the ability to set de facto technological standards.

The appointment of the Klynge Tech Ambassador made Denmark the first country to recognise that large technology companies had become players with geopolitical influence comparable to that of some states (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, 2026); this development led to a redefinition of diplomacy.

In the Global South, Brazil presented its own vision of technology diplomacy in 2017 with the launch of its Innovation Diplomacy Programme (García, 2026). This was understood as the systematic integration of science, technology and innovation into

the strategic objectives of Brazil's foreign policy. The programme sought to utilise Brazil's diplomatic network to promote science, technology and innovation as instruments of foreign policy.

Unlike the Danish model, Brazil's approach is not primarily driven by the need to regulate the power of large technology companies, but rather by the need to strengthen its national technological capacity and connect Brazil to international innovation ecosystems. As noted by Torres Jarrín (2022), Bjola and Kornprobst (2025), and Torres and Riordan (2019; 2023), technology diplomacy represents a qualitative shift in the architecture of foreign policy. Defined as the institutional framework for dialogue, negotiation and cooperation among states, large technology companies and the scientific and technological ecosystem, this instrument seeks to anticipate, regulate and channel the economic, social and geopolitical implications of the goods and services designed, produced and marketed by large technology companies.

Whilst Denmark views technology diplomacy primarily as a tool for managing the geopolitical impact of large technology companies and contributing to global digital governance, Brazil sees it as an instrument of economic foreign policy aimed at strengthening its national science, technology and innovation ecosystem.

The Brazilian model of technology diplomacy serves as a particularly relevant benchmark for countries in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), as it addresses the challenges and opportunities specific to emerging economies. In technological terms, Brazil accounts for the region's highest level of scientific output, boasts a well-established system of universities and research centres of globally recognised prestige, and has promoted national policies to strengthen innovation, digital transformation and artificial intelligence (OECD, 2026). These actions have led organisations such as the OECD to emphasise that the strengthening of productivity, innovation and integration into global value chains, as developed by Brazil, will be crucial to consolidating its international competitiveness. These capabilities place Brazil in a privileged position to lead initiatives in technology governance, technology diplomacy and international cooperation in the transition towards a new global technological order. Experiences that can serve as a reference for countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.

As part of its approach to technology diplomacy, Brazil's Innovation Diplomacy is the foreign policy instrument through which it uses its embassies and specialist offices to connect Brazilian start-ups, universities, research centres and technology companies, and to attract foreign investment. Its primary mission is to position Brazil as a global producer of knowledge and innovation.

In the field of investment promotion, it prioritises investment in the technology sector, seeking not only to attract foreign capital to invest in the country, but also to

establish scientific cooperation that enables its research centres to promote technology transfer. In this area, Brazil considers it essential to strengthen the Brazilian technology sector in order to prevent development gaps and technological inequality from arising.

The Innovation Diplomacy Programme was conceived as a strategy to seek to change the international perception of Brazil as a country that exclusively exports raw materials; its aim is to promote Brazil globally as a technology market, a regional centre of innovation, a scientific powerhouse, and a global player in the fields of the digital economy and disruptive technologies, such as artificial intelligence.

The experiences of Denmark and Brazil offer two models which, whilst differing in approach, may be complementary and can therefore serve as a reference for countries in Latin America and the Caribbean to strengthen their foreign policy, security, defence and development strategies in the context of the digital transition and the emerging global technological order. Although both countries face different economic and geopolitical realities, their experiences demonstrate that technology is no longer an exclusively economic sphere but has become a central pillar of foreign policy, international competitiveness and national security.

The Danish model offers valuable lessons on the institutionalisation of Tech Diplomacy, the development of specialised diplomatic capabilities and the establishment of permanent mechanisms for dialogue with Big Tech Companies. Its experience highlights the importance of incorporating technology as a cross-cutting component of foreign policy, thereby strengthening states' capacity to participate actively in the global governance of artificial intelligence, the digital economy and emerging technologies.

For its part, the Brazilian model is particularly relevant to Latin America and the Caribbean due to its greater institutional proximity and level of development. Innovation Diplomacy, spearheaded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Itamaraty), integrates foreign policy with science, technology, innovation, the internationalisation of businesses, scientific cooperation and the attraction of foreign investment. This approach provides a roadmap for strengthening national innovation ecosystems, promoting the integration of regional businesses into global value chains in the technology sector, and consolidating international partnerships aimed at capacity building.

Combining these two models would enable LAC countries to devise their own technology diplomacy strategy, capable of linking technology governance with economic development. This would help attract investment from leading global technology companies, boost knowledge transfer, develop specialised talent and encourage the creation of regional innovation and research centres. It would also

strengthen the region's negotiating position in key international forums and facilitate more active participation in setting global standards on artificial intelligence, digital infrastructure and the data economy. Taken together, these capabilities would enable Latin America and the Caribbean to evolve from a position of predominantly receiving technologies to a more active role as a strategic partner, a producer of innovation and a key player in international technology governance.

Since Denmark institutionalised the role of the world's first Tech Ambassador in 2017, more than twenty countries have progressively incorporated tech diplomacy into their foreign policy structures through tech ambassadors, special envoys, digital representatives and other specialised bodies. This expansion reflects the consolidation of Tech Diplomacy as a new foreign policy instrument for addressing the governance of artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, emerging technologies, data flows and technological sovereignty (Tech Diplomacy Global Institute [TDGI], 2025). At the same time, it reflects the growing recognition that artificial intelligence, data, cybersecurity and digital infrastructure have become strategic issues in foreign policy, security and international cooperation (Moore Aoki, 2026).

Table 1. Institutional models of Tech Diplomacy, Digital Diplomacy, Cyberdiplomacy and Science and Technology Diplomacy

Country/ organisation	Official institutional representative	Strategic approach	Official source
Denmark	**Tech Ambassador**	Tech Diplomacy, direct engagement with Big Tech, governance of AI and quantum technologies, cybersecurity, and cooperation within the EU, NATO and the UN. Denmark was a pioneer in institutionalising *TechPlomacy* (Tech Ambassador Denmark).	Office of Denmark's Tech Ambassador
France	**Ambassadeur pour le numérique / Ambassador for Digital Affairs**	Digital diplomacy, international cyberspace security, internet governance, digital rights and the international profile of the French technology ecosystem (diplomatie.gouv.fr).	France Diplomatie – Ambassadeur pour le numérique
Australia	**Ambassador for Cyber Affairs and Critical Technology**	Cybersecurity, critical technologies, digital resilience and international cooperation, particularly in the Indo-Pacific (dfat.gov.au).	Australian DFAT – Ambassador for Cyber Affairs and Critical Technology
Kenya	**Special Envoy on Technology**	Tech Diplomacy, global AI governance, digital infrastructure, cybersecurity, emerging technologies and Africa's	Office of the Special Envoy on

		role in international technology governance (techenvoy.go.ke).	Technology – Kenya
Sweden	**Special Envoy for International Cyber Issues**	Foreign and security policy in the cyber domain; representation to the EU, NATO and the UN; international standards, democracy, rights and cybersecurity (Regeringskansliet).	Government of Sweden – Special Envoy for International Cyber Issues
Estonia	**Ambassador-at-Large for Digital and Cyber Affairs**	Digital diplomacy, international cybersecurity, emerging technologies, regional cooperation and the development of standards for cyberspace (Ministry of Foreign Affairs).	Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Digital and Cyber Affairs
Japan	**Science and Technology Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs**	Science and technology diplomacy, strategic advice to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, bilateral and multilateral scientific cooperation, and emerging technologies (mofa.go.jp).	MOFA Japan – Science and Technology Diplomacy
Austria	**OPEN AUSTRIA / Consul & Co-Director of OPEN AUSTRIA**	Innovation diplomacy and tech diplomacy; links with Silicon Valley, start-ups, investment, science, technology and innovation ecosystems. This is not a "Tech Ambassador" role (Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs).	Austrian Foreign Ministry – OPEN AUSTRIA Silicon Valley
The Nederlands	**Innovation Attaché Network**	Network of innovation attachés in embassies and consulates to connect businesses, research centres and international technology ecosystems (government.nl).	Government of the Netherlands – Innovation Attaché Network
The United Arab Emirates	**Minister of State for Artificial Intelligence, Digital Economy and Remote Work Applications**	Governance and national strategy for AI, the digital economy and the UAE's international positioning as a technology hub. This is a strategic government role, not a diplomatic one in the strict sense (UAE).	Official UAE Government – Minister of State for Artificial Intelligence
Brazil	**Extraordinary Ambassador for Technology and Innovation (Tech Ambassador) / Department of Science, Technology, Innovation and Intellectual Property – Ministry of Foreign Affairs**	Tech Diplomacy, innovation diplomacy, international AI governance, emerging technologies, scientific and technological cooperation, digital sovereignty and the participation of the Global South in technology governance (aplicacao.itamaraty.gov.br).	Itamaraty – official structure of the Department
The United Kingdom	**Technology Envoy to the United States — background 2020–2024**	Technology diplomacy, investment and links with Silicon Valley (GOV.UK).	GOV.UK – Technology

			Envoy to the US
United Nations	**Under-Secretary-General and Special Envoy for Digital and Emerging Technologies**	Global digital governance, emerging technologies, implementation of the Global Digital Compact and the international architecture for AI governance. Since 2025, it has been operating within the UN Office for Digital and Emerging Technologies (ODET) (un.org).	UN Office for Digital and Emerging Technologies

Source: Compiled by the author based on official information from Ministries of Foreign Affairs, national governments and the United Nations. Updated: August 2026.

In this context, LAC must promote regional capacity-building policies and specialised training programmes that strengthen the institutional capabilities required to design and implement new international cooperation frameworks in line with changes in the technological and geopolitical landscape. In this new phase of international relations, it is a priority to consolidate a regional Tech Diplomacy agenda that promotes strategic partnerships among states, regional integration mechanisms, international organisations, academia, the private sector and Big Tech Companies. These partnerships will be fundamental in strengthening digital sovereignty, attracting technological investment, driving innovation, developing specialised talent and ensuring the region's more active participation in the global governance of emerging technologies.

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) maintains that the region faces three major structural traps simultaneously: low economic growth, high inequality and limited institutional capacity. In this context, digitalisation and artificial intelligence represent an opportunity to increase productivity, diversify the productive structure and strengthen the State's capacities, provided they are accompanied by investment in digital infrastructure, innovation, talent and governance (ECLAC, 2025).

According to data from ECLAC, over the last decade, Latin America and the Caribbean have made significant progress in the area of digitalisation. The expansion of mobile internet, the growth of e-commerce, the consolidation of the fintech ecosystem and the development of digital government have accelerated the uptake of digital technologies in both the public and private sectors.

According to the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), approximately 70% of the Latin American population uses the Internet, a percentage higher than the global average for middle-income countries, although significant differences persist between countries and, in particular, between urban and rural areas. Furthermore, millions of people still lack access to high-quality connectivity or do not possess sufficient digital skills to benefit fully from the digital economy (ITU, 2024).

ECLAC warns that a significant digital divide persists between urban and rural areas in Latin America. In 2023, 59.6% of people living in rural areas did not have Internet access at home, a disparity that limits opportunities for social, educational and productive inclusion and poses a key challenge to an inclusive digital transformation (ECLAC, 2023).

For CAF, digital transformation in Latin America and the Caribbean faces structural challenges linked to gaps in connectivity, digital capabilities, interoperability and data governance, as well as institutional and regulatory constraints. These gaps hinder the effective adoption of digital technologies and artificial intelligence in strategic sectors; the region therefore requires comprehensive policies that bring together technological investment, human capital development, digital inclusion and institutional and regulatory strengthening (Allub et al., 2025).

At the same time, the region has shown remarkable dynamism in the digital economy. The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) highlights that the region is home to one of the world's fastest-growing fintech ecosystems, with more than 3,000 financial technology companies operating in the region, driving financial inclusion and innovation in digital services (IDB, 2024). However, this growth contrasts with the region's limited capacity to develop its own technologies.

According to UNESCO, countries in the LAC region account for less than 4% of global expenditure on research and development (R&D) and continue to have one of the lowest levels of investment in innovation amongst emerging economies. Average regional investment in R&D stands at around 0.6% of GDP (ECLAC, 2024), well below the OECD average (2.7%) and that of leading innovation economies such as South Korea or Israel, where it exceeds 5% of GDP (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2024); OECD Main Science and Technology Indicators, 2026).

Latin America and the Caribbean are at a historic turning point within the new international technological geopolitics. For decades, the region has primarily been a consumer and user of technologies developed in the main centres of innovation in the Global North. However, the current technological transformation presents a strategic opportunity to redefine its role in the international system and move towards greater autonomy, negotiating power and influence.

The emergence of artificial intelligence, the data economy, advanced computing, semiconductors, global connectivity and critical digital infrastructure is shaping a new global technological order, understood as the set of power relations, rules, standards, infrastructure and alliances that will determine who develops, controls and governs the strategic technologies of the 21st century.

In this new global technological order, Latin America and the Caribbean must not confine itself to being merely a market for solutions designed by other international players. The region possesses strategic assets that can make it a key player: natural resources critical to the technological transition, renewable energy capabilities, human talent, strategic biodiversity, emerging digital markets and a privileged geopolitical position between North America, Europe and Asia.

The key challenge lies in transforming these assets into technological, diplomatic and institutional capacity, through a regional strategy based on technology diplomacy, capable of linking economic development, foreign policy, technological innovation and global governance.

3. Latin America and the Caribbean: technological dependence and strategic opportunity

Latin America and the Caribbean currently occupy an ambivalent position within the global technological ecosystem. On the one hand, the region remains heavily dependent on technologies, platforms and infrastructure developed outside the region. On the other hand, it possesses strategic assets that could make it an increasingly significant player within the new global technological order. This duality represents both one of the main challenges and one of the greatest opportunities for regional development

In this regard, LAC relies heavily on technologies developed outside its borders. Critical digital infrastructure, cloud computing services, advanced artificial intelligence models and numerous digital platforms are mainly controlled by US and Chinese technology companies. The concentration of technological power gives rise to a new form of dependency: digital dependency, characterised not only by the import of technological products, but also by reliance on externally defined infrastructure, algorithms, platforms, data and standards.

The global capacity to train advanced artificial intelligence models is highly concentrated amongst a small group of global technology companies that control essential elements such as:

- advanced computing infrastructure;
- specialised chips;
- cloud services;
- foundational artificial intelligence models;
- data ecosystems.

Latin America and the Caribbean continue to account for a small proportion of global investment in artificial intelligence, advanced research and technological development, despite having a population of over 650 million and a growing digital market. This situation should not be interpreted solely as a weakness. The region possesses strategic competitive advantages that can be turned into tools for international negotiation.

The region's ability to reduce its technological dependence will depend, to a large extent, on its capacity to transform its comparative advantages into capabilities in innovation, production and international cooperation. In this context, LAC possesses a range of strategic assets that can strengthen its position in the global technology economy.

3.1. Strategic assets in the region

Latin America and the Caribbean possess some of the natural resources that are essential to the new technology-driven economy. The manufacture of advanced technologies requires critical minerals used in:

- electric vehicle batteries;
- energy storage;
- data centres;
- renewable energy;
- semiconductors;
- advanced digital technologies.

The region holds significant reserves of:

- lithium;
- copper;
- nickel;
- graphite;
- strategic minerals;
- rare earths.

These resources give Latin America and the Caribbean growing geopolitical significance within the new global technology value chains. However, the strategic advantage lies not only in possessing natural resources, but also in the capacity to develop:

- industrial processing;
- applied research;
- technology transfer;
- advanced manufacturing;
- specialised training.

The strategic challenge for Latin America and the Caribbean is to move beyond historical patterns of international integration based primarily on the export of raw materials and to progress towards a higher value-added role within the global technology-driven economy. Digital transformation and the technological revolution offer an opportunity for the region to strengthen its productive capacities, drive innovation and participate more actively in new global value chains.

Table 2. LAC's strategic assets for the global technology economy

Asset	Strategic importance
Lithium	Batteries and artificial intelligence
Copper	Electrification and semiconductors
Nickel	Energy storage
Rare earths	Advanced electronics
Renewable energy	Sustainable data centres
Human talent	Knowledge economy
Regional market	Technological scalability

Source: Compiled by the authors.

The aim should not be limited solely to devising strategies for international integration, but rather to creating the necessary conditions for the countries in the region to become key players on the global stage, with the capacity to exert economic, technological and regulatory influence. Otherwise, there is a risk that they will remain mere consumers of technology, recipients of rules defined by other actors, and passive observers of the transformations that will shape the future of the international system.

Comparative experience shows that international leadership does not depend solely on the availability of natural, human or financial resources. There are countries that have attained positions of regional and global influence without necessarily possessing the material advantages enjoyed by many Latin American and Caribbean economies. The fundamental difference lies in the ability to formulate a strategic government vision, set national priorities and develop coherent public policies for the short, medium and long term, all of which must be designed from a global perspective.

In this regard, Latin America and the Caribbean need to create development agendas tailored to the new global reality, incorporating geopolitical shifts, technological competition, artificial intelligence and the reorganisation of global value chains. The ability to anticipate these changes, invest in knowledge and strengthen international cooperation will be crucial if the region wants to move beyond a peripheral role and position itself as a strategic partner in the new global technological order.

3.2. Human capital and innovation ecosystems

The region boasts a growing scientific community, internationally recognised universities, highly skilled professionals and emerging tech start-up ecosystems. This human capital constitutes a strategic asset for:

- research into artificial intelligence;
- software development;
- business innovation;
- digital services;
- creative industries.

However, transforming talent into technological capability requires public policies aimed at:

- advanced education (revising curricula at all levels of education);
- research and development;
- scientific mobility;
- international cooperation;
- university-business-government partnerships.

The availability of specialised talent is the key strategic asset enabling Latin America and the Caribbean to play an active role in the knowledge economy. In the new global technological order, human capital will be just as decisive a factor as the availability of natural resources or digital infrastructure.

4. Strategic positioning in relation to the main technology hubs

The international positioning of Latin America and the Caribbean within the new global technological order will depend, to a large extent, on their ability to forge strategic relationships with the main hubs of innovation and technological development. The United States, China and the European Union are the region's main trading partners and investors; they also currently account for a significant proportion of the scientific, industrial, financial and regulatory capacities that shape the digital economy and international technological governance. However, if we compare the region with the two main global technology hubs, we see that whilst China accounts for 24 and the United States for 22 of the world's top 100 innovation clusters, the region, by contrast, has only two: Sao Paulo and Mexico City (World Intellectual Property Organization, 2025).

For the region, the strategic challenge lies not in aligning itself exclusively with a single technological model, but in developing a policy of technological diversification and open strategic autonomy, capable of capitalising on the opportunities arising from various international ecosystems, whilst at the same time strengthening its national and regional capabilities.

4.1 United States of America: technological leadership and digital nearshoring

The United States maintains a dominant position within the global technology ecosystem due to the concentration of strategic capabilities linked to areas such as:

- business leadership in artificial intelligence;
- venture capital and funding for innovation;
- universities and cutting-edge research centres;
- intellectual property and technology patents;
- advanced digital infrastructure;
- the ability of technology companies to scale up globally.

The leading US technology companies — including Microsoft, Google, Amazon, NVIDIA, Apple, Meta, Oracle and OpenAI — play a central role in shaping the current global technological order, largely defining trends in artificial intelligence, cloud computing, semiconductors, digital platforms and data-driven services.

For Latin America and the Caribbean, the relationship with the United States represents a strategic opportunity to:

- attract foreign direct investment in technology sectors;
- develop regional data centres and advanced computing facilities;
- integrate into global digital supply chains;
- take advantage of nearshoring and friendshoring in the technology sector;
- strengthen national innovation ecosystems.

Table 3. Strategic cooperation between Latin America and the Caribbean and the United States

Area	Opportunities
Artificial Intelligence	Research and applications
Semiconductors	Manufacturing and supply chains
Data centres	Investment
Nearshoring	Reindustrialisation
Talent	Specialised training

Source: Compiled by the authors.

Mexico is a particularly significant case due to its productive integration with North America through the T-MEC (USMCA) framework and its growing involvement in technology sectors such as advanced manufacturing, electronics, semiconductors and digital services.

However, this relationship also poses challenges relating to:

- data sovereignty and governance;
- dependence on foreign technology platforms;
- concentration of the economic value generated by regional data;
- limited technology transfer to local ecosystems.

For this reason, technological cooperation with US companies must evolve from a model based exclusively on consumption and investment towards strategic partnerships that incorporate:

- knowledge transfer;
- development of local talent;
- joint research;

- building national capacity;
- participation of regional companies in global technology chains.

In this regard, Mexico could serve as another regional benchmark in the digital transition for all LAC countries. Its participation in the T-MEC/USMCA and its broad industrial base make the country a potential regional hub for attracting investment in technology, advanced manufacturing and the development of digital services.

Mexico's experience demonstrates that integration with the world's leading technology hub—the United States—can generate significant opportunities for Latin American and Caribbean countries, particularly in sectors such as:

- semiconductors and advanced electronics;
- smart manufacturing;
- data centres;
- digital services and information technology;
- applied artificial intelligence;
- technology supply chains.

Against the backdrop of the restructuring of global value chains and the rise of nearshoring and friendshoring, Mexico enjoys competitive advantages stemming from its strategic location, industrial infrastructure, trade agreements, availability of technical talent and proximity to major consumer markets. These conditions have encouraged the inflow of international investment linked to advanced technologies and high value-added manufacturing.

The aim of attracting foreign direct investment or encouraging large technology companies to set up operations or invest in LAC countries cannot, in itself, be the primary objective; it must form part of a comprehensive development strategy. To that end, it is essential to devise a regional Tech Diplomacy strategy that enables negotiation of better terms of cooperation with large technology companies, as countries will not have as much bargaining power when negotiating bilaterally. Furthermore, this strategy must promote partnerships based on knowledge transfer, talent development, joint research, the development of national innovation ecosystems, and the growing participation of Latin American and Caribbean companies within global technology value chains.

In this regard, Mexico represents both an opportunity and a regional benchmark: it demonstrates how proximity to a major technology hub can accelerate digital transformation, but it also highlights the need for countries in Latin America and the Caribbean to develop their own capabilities in order to become active players — and not merely consumers — within the global technology economy.

4.2. China: digital infrastructure and South-South technological cooperation

China is another key global player within the new global technological order. Its international technology strategy combines industrial capabilities, public investment, scientific development and international cooperation, and is implemented through initiatives such as the Digital Silk Road.

The Chinese model is characterised by:

- the development of digital infrastructure;
- the expansion of 5G networks and telecommunications;
- investment in artificial intelligence;
- technological cooperation with emerging countries;
- the creation of alternative digital ecosystems.

For ALC, China has become a key partner in strategic areas such as:

- telecommunications;
- digital infrastructure;
- smart energy;
- e-commerce;
- artificial intelligence;
- smart cities;
- green technologies.

Technological cooperation with China offers opportunities to accelerate regional digital transformation, particularly in countries that need to expand their technological infrastructure and develop digital capabilities. However, it also gives rise to debates concerning:

- technological dependence;
- cybersecurity;
- data protection and localisation;
- transparency of technological standards;
- geopolitical balance.

The region must therefore adopt a pragmatic strategy based on diversifying its partnerships, whilst taking care not to replace one form of technological dependence with another. Cooperation with China can contribute to regional digital development

provided it is accompanied by mechanisms that ensure technology transfer, institutional strengthening and the development of local capacities.

Table 3. Technological cooperation with China

Area	Opportunity	Challenge
5G	Infrastructure	Security
AI	Cooperation	Governance
Smart Cities	Innovation	Data
Energy	Transition	Dependency

Source: Compiled by the authors.

4.3. The European Union: regulation, cooperation and collaborative digital sovereignty

The European Union represents a third way within the global technological order, differing both from the US model, based primarily on business and market leadership, and from the Chinese model, characterised by strong state coordination. The European approach is based primarily on:

- technology regulation;
- the protection of fundamental rights;
- digital trust;
- sustainability;
- responsible governance of artificial intelligence;
- international cooperation based on standards.

The technological relationship between the European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean is primarily structured through the EU-LAC Digital Alliance (European External Action Service, 2023; European Commission, 2023a) and the Global Gateway strategy (European Commission, 2023b), which aims to mobilise investment to strengthen connectivity, sustainable infrastructure and digital transformation.

The Global Gateway initiative sets out an investment programme of approximately 45,000 million euros for Latin America and the Caribbean, aimed at promoting projects

in areas such as digital connectivity, energy transition, sustainable infrastructure and innovation.

EU-LAC digital cooperation is structured around four main dimensions:

I. Political dialogue and regulatory convergence

This includes cooperation in areas such as:

- artificial intelligence;
- data governance;
- cybersecurity; protection of digital rights;
- international technological standards.

II. Inclusive digital connectivity

Through the development of strategic infrastructure such as:

- the BELLA submarine cable;
- regional connectivity networks;
- satellite infrastructure;
- expansion of digital access.

III. Innovation and strengthening of the private sector

Through initiatives aimed at connecting:

- start-ups;
- technology companies; universities;
- research centres;
- regional innovation ecosystems.

IV. Spatial data and advanced technologies

Including cooperation through European programmes such as Copernicus, with applications in:

- climate change;
- natural hazard management;

- smart agriculture;
- spatial planning;
- environmental monitoring.

Table 4. Differential contribution to the EU

Area	Value for LAC
AI	Risk-based regulation
Data	Protection
Global Gateway	Infrastructure
BELLA	Connectivity
Copernicus	Satellite data

Source: Compiled by the authors.

Simultaneous engagement with the United States, China and the European Union represents an unprecedented historic opportunity for Latin America and the Caribbean to redefine its role within the new architecture of global technology governance. This situation can be interpreted, on the one hand, as a manifestation of the region's structural limitations in terms of technological capabilities, political coordination and regulatory influence; but, at the same time, it constitutes a strategic opportunity to transform these limitations into a regional agenda aimed at strengthening its autonomy, competitiveness and capacity for global leadership.

Taking advantage of this window of opportunity requires moving beyond a vision based solely on the adoption or consumption of technologies developed by other actors and progressing towards a regional strategy underpinned by the building of our own capacities, the generation of knowledge, the development of innovation ecosystems, and participation in new global technological value chains. Furthermore, this situation presents an opportunity to deepen regional integration processes, promoting greater coordination amongst the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean in strategic areas such as artificial intelligence, digital infrastructure, data governance, cybersecurity, the training of specialised talent, and scientific cooperation. Strengthening regional integration is what will enable LAC countries to gain greater bargaining power in negotiations, whether with other countries, regional and international organisations, or with Big Tech Companies. A regional technology agenda can serve as a unifying force to strengthen political and economic cooperation,

overcome fragmented approaches and build a shared vision in the face of the challenges arising from the new global technological landscape.

In this context, the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA) can play a strategic role as a regional hub for coordination and interregional cooperation, facilitating dialogue among governments, international organisations, academic institutions, research centres and the private sector. Its experience as a regional platform for economic and political cooperation places it in a unique position to promote a common agenda for Latin American and Caribbean technology diplomacy, linking the region's development needs with the opportunities generated by the world's leading technology hubs.

This role can be built on previous experiences of international cooperation and capacity-building, such as the training programmes developed jointly by SELA and the European Institute of International Studies (EIIS) over the last six years. These initiatives have addressed strategic areas directly linked to the challenges of the new global technological order: Tech Diplomacy, Cyberdiplomacy, AI and Diplomacy, Ethical Governance of Artificial Intelligence, the European Union–Latin America and the Caribbean in the digital age, Global Technology Governance, Big Tech Companies & Artificial Intelligence, Digital Currency Diplomacy, Digital Sovereignty and AI Governance, Algorithmic Auditing and Institutional Transparency.

The establishment of a permanent regional initiative for training and cooperation in the field of technology diplomacy would help strengthen the capabilities of civil servants, diplomats, researchers and key stakeholders in the region, thereby contributing to the development of a Latin American and Caribbean community specialising in global technological challenges.

To that end, Latin America and the Caribbean must develop a regional Tech Diplomacy strategy that enables them to:

- negotiate more favourable terms with the main global technology players; attract high value-added foreign direct investment in strategic sectors;
- strengthen national and regional innovation ecosystems;
- develop specialised talent in emerging technologies;
- participate in the definition of international standards and regulations on artificial intelligence, data and digital technologies;
- promote public-private partnerships focused on research, innovation and technology transfer.

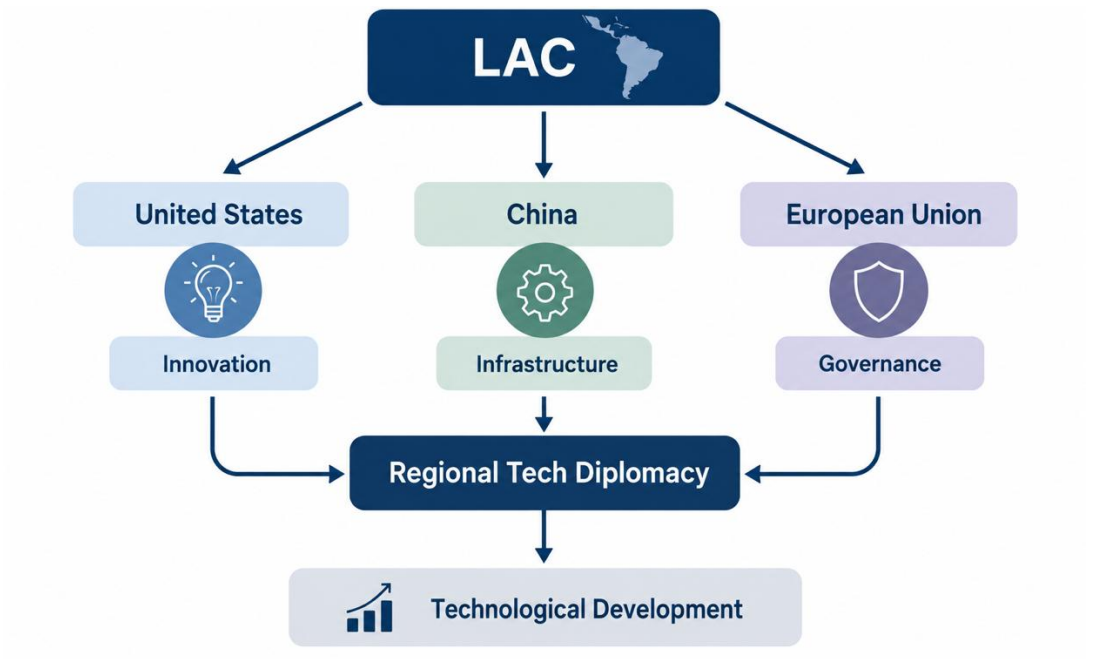
In the new global technological order, international competitiveness and the capacity for global leadership will depend not only on access to advanced technologies,

but also on the ability of states and regions to forge strategic partnerships, develop institutional capacities, generate their own knowledge and play an active role in shaping the rules that will govern the global digital economy.

The challenge for Latin America and the Caribbean, therefore, lies not merely in adapting to technological transformation, but in developing a collective strategy that will enable the region to become an influential player in global technology governance. In this process, regional institutions such as SELA, through strategic partnerships with specialist academic centres such as the EIIS, can help transform technology into a tool for regional integration, sustainable development and global leadership.

The coexistence of three major technology hubs offers Latin America and the Caribbean an exceptional opportunity to develop a foreign policy based on the diversification of alliances. Rather than viewing these relationships as mutually exclusive options, the region can build a strategy of complementary cooperation that combines the United States' capacity for innovation, China's technological infrastructure and the European Union's regulatory expertise. A Tech Diplomacy strategy will enable this diversity of opportunities to be transformed into greater strategic autonomy, strengthening the region's international position within the new global technological order.

Chart 1. International relations strategy for LAC



Source: Compiled by the authors.

5. Conclusions and recommendations: LAC Tech Diplomacy Regional Agenda 2030

The consolidation of the new global technological order is redefining the foundations of power, competitiveness and international cooperation. Growing competition for leadership in artificial intelligence, digital infrastructure, data, semiconductors and other strategic technologies has altered the way in which states, technology companies and international organisations interact within the international system. In this context, the ability to develop, attract, regulate and govern disruptive technologies is a central element of foreign policy and economic development.

For Latin America and the Caribbean, this new situation represents both a challenge and a historic opportunity. The region cannot continue to play merely a reactive role as a consumer of externally developed technologies or as a supplier of strategic raw materials without generating sufficient value added.

Today, more than ever, it is essential to drive the development of our region with clear guiding principles such as economic justice, healthcare equity and the reduction of gender inequalities, as well as the digital divide. We must continue to drive improvements in cybersecurity and the protection of industrial and personal data, in order to safeguard lives and foster livelihoods by reducing social inequality and ensuring economic stability (Herrera, 2024).

LAC possesses assets that are fundamental to the technology-driven economy of the future: critical minerals, renewable energy potential, strategic biodiversity, emerging digital markets and a growing pool of talent. However, transforming these resources into competitive advantages requires overcoming regional fragmentation, building institutional capacity and developing a shared strategic vision. Digital sovereignty in the age of disruptive technologies does not imply technological isolation, but rather the ability of states to understand, negotiate, regulate and actively participate in global technological ecosystems.

In this context, Tech Diplomacy is a strategic tool enabling Latin America and the Caribbean to move from a predominantly passive role to a more active one within the new international technological order. Regional technology diplomacy will help strengthen the region's negotiating capacity with the main global technology hubs — the United States, China and the European Union — attract high value-added technology investment, promote knowledge transfer and participate in setting international standards on artificial intelligence, data and emerging technologies.

The region has a unique opportunity to become a strategic bridge within the global technological order, bringing together technological cooperation, investment, innovation and international governance. However, this opportunity can only be seized through a collective strategy that deepens regional integration processes and enables the building of shared capacities. The central issue for the coming decade will not merely be who develops or owns the technology, but who has the capacity to negotiate it, govern it and define its rules. LAC must therefore not limit itself to adapting to global technological change but must aspire to play an active role in shaping it.

5.1. LAC Tech Diplomacy Regional Agenda 2030

The Regional Agenda is structured around seven strategic lines of action aimed at strengthening the institutional, technological and diplomatic capacities of Latin America and the Caribbean in the face of the new global technological order.

Pillar 1. Strengthening regional digital sovereignty and infrastructure (LAC Tech Diplomacy Regional Roadmap 2030)

Latin America and the Caribbean must develop a regional strategy that integrates foreign policy, defence, security, digital transformation, innovation, economic development and technology governance. This roadmap should include:

a) Strengthening regional sovereignty and digital infrastructure.
b) Promoting regional capabilities in strategic technology sectors through:

- the development of critical digital infrastructure;
- regional data centres;
- indigenous artificial intelligence capabilities;
- advanced computing and research networks;
- secure and sustainable digital connectivity.

Digital sovereignty should be understood as the ability to participate in global technological ecosystems from a more balanced position, thereby reducing strategic vulnerabilities.

Pillar 2. Deepening regional technological integration

Digital transformation must become a new pillar of regional cooperation and integration. It is recommended that progress be made towards:

- interoperability of digital systems;

- regional cooperation on data;
- exchange of scientific and technological capabilities;
- joint research projects;
- regional innovation networks;
- common standards for emerging technologies.

Greater integration would enable the region to increase its economic and political clout in the face of major international technology players.

Pillar 3. Actively participating in global technology governance

LAC must increase its coordinated presence in the main international forums where the rules for the digital future are being defined:

- United Nations;
- G20;
- UNESCO;
- OECD;
- International Telecommunication Union (ITU);
- Global Digital Compact;
- World Artificial Intelligence Cooperation Organisation (WAICO);
- other multilateral mechanisms related to AI and digital transformation.

Regional coordination will enable LAC to exert greater influence on the development of international norms, standards and principles.

Pillar 4. Strategically engaging with Big Tech Companies

The relationship with major global technology companies must evolve from a model based primarily on consumption and investment towards a framework of long-term strategic cooperation. Governments in the region should promote agreements that incorporate:

- sustainable technological investment;
- the establishment of data centres;
- joint research;
- training of specialised talent; technology transfer;
- development of local suppliers;
- participation of regional companies in global value chains.

Attracting foreign investment in technology must be linked to national and regional development objectives.

Pillar 5. Driving innovation and technological development

Latin America and the Caribbean must move away from economic models based primarily on primary exports towards models capable of generating greater technological value added. To that end, the following are priorities:

- strengthening universities and research centres;
- fostering ecosystems of technology start-ups;
- linking strategic resources with industrial development;
- promoting industries based on artificial intelligence, data and advanced technologies;
- developing capabilities in semiconductors, clean energy and digital technologies.

Critical minerals, such as lithium, copper and rare earths, must become instruments of technological development and not merely primary export commodities.

Pillar 6. Promoting an ethical governance of artificial intelligence

The region must develop regulatory capabilities that strike a balance between technological innovation and the protection of the public interest. Priorities include:

- risk-based regulatory frameworks;
- algorithmic transparency;
- auditing of artificial intelligence systems;
- personal data protection;
- digital security;
- reduction of technological bias;
- protection of fundamental rights.

The ethical governance of AI must become a strategic advantage for LAC.

Pillar 7. Creating a permanent regional training initiative in Tech Diplomacy

As a key operational element of this strategy, it is recommended that a permanent regional training initiative in Tech Diplomacy be established for Latin America and the Caribbean. This initiative would be spearheaded by the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA) and the European Institute of International Studies (EIIS).

The aim of this initiative would be to strengthen the region's institutional capacities through programmes targeting:

- civil servants;
- diplomats;
- digital policymakers;
- regulatory bodies;
- academics;
- researchers;
- stakeholders in the technology ecosystem.

Source: Compiled by the authors

The experience gained by SELA and EIIS in strategic areas such as Tech Diplomacy, global technology governance, digital sovereignty, diplomacy and artificial intelligence provides a solid foundation for moving towards the creation of a permanent regional platform for training, cooperation and dialogue in Latin America and the Caribbean. This platform would strengthen the institutional capacities of Member States, promote the exchange of best practices, and contribute to greater regional coordination in addressing the geopolitical, regulatory and technological challenges of the digital transformation.

States' ability to understand, negotiate and govern technology will determine their position within the international system in this century of disruptive technologies. Technological infrastructure will be essential, but the key strategic resource will be human capital capable of transforming technology into development, autonomy and the capacity for global influence.

For Latin America and the Caribbean, strengthening institutional capacities through active Tech Diplomacy, greater regional integration and responsible governance of emerging technologies will be essential to move from being consumers of technology developed by other actors to becoming active participants in shaping the new global technological order.

5.2. Implementation and monitoring framework

The implementation of this Agenda, which is aimed at moving towards a regional strategy, requires a regional coordination mechanism that enables strategic recommendations to be translated into concrete actions, priorities to be set, responsibilities to be defined, and regular monitoring to be carried out using verifiable indicators. Tech Diplomacy should be understood not as an end in itself, but as a foreign policy, defence and security instrument aimed at strengthening development, innovation, regional integration and LAC's capacity for international influence.

To translate the agenda into results, a regional monitoring mechanism is proposed, with clearly defined responsibilities, deliverables and verifiable indicators:

Axis	Output 2027–2030	Coordinating body	Suggested indicator
Regional coordination	LAC Roadmap 2030 and ministerial mechanism	SELA and EIIS	Participating countries and aligned national plans
Infrastructure and data	Regional portfolio of fundable projects	IDB, CAF, national banks, extra-regional development banks and cooperation agencies	Investment mobilised and installed capacity
Talent	Permanent regional training programme	SELA, EIIS, development banks and Big Tech Companies	Staff trained and projects implemented
AI governance	Common principles, procurement and audit guidelines	SELA, EIIS, regulatory authorities for digital affairs, development banks and Big Tech Companies	Frameworks adopted and evaluations carried out
Tech Diplomacy	Mechanism for dialogue with Big Tech Companies and extra-regional partners	Ministries of Foreign Affairs and integration bodies	Agreements involving knowledge transfer and talent

Source: Compiled by the authors.

In the digital age, the international standing of states will increasingly depend on their ability to understand, develop and regulate emerging and disruptive technologies. For Latin America and the Caribbean, developing a regional strategy for Tech Diplomacy represents an opportunity to strengthen their strategic autonomy, promote sustainable development and consolidate a more active role in shaping the new global technological order.

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ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

Technological transformation is redefining the dynamics of international power, economic competitiveness, and traditional mechanisms of cooperation. In this context, ***Tech Diplomacy*** is gaining increasing relevance as a strategic dimension of international relations, bringing together states, international organisations, and technology actors in new forums for dialogue, cooperation, regulation, and governance.

This ***Global Policy Perspective Report*** analyses the position of Latin America and the Caribbean in the face of transformations in the global technological landscape and puts forward a strategic vision aimed at strengthening digital sovereignty, expanding cooperation with ***Big Tech Companies***, and promoting a more active and coordinated participation by the region in international technology governance processes.

As its main contribution, the publication presents the ***LAC Tech Diplomacy Regional Agenda 2030*** and a ***Strategic Model for Tech Diplomacy*** in Latin America and the Caribbean, designed as tools to guide regional action, strengthen institutional capacities, and advance towards a long-term regional strategy on technology diplomacy.

ISBN 978-980-6458-52-9

LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN ECONOMIC SYSTEM

EIIS EUROPEAN INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES