

Statement – WSIS Leaders Talk X

Alexandre Freire, Brazil

Thank you very much.

In Brazil, we are working hard to make internet access more equal and affordable for everyone –

especially for those in remote or vulnerable situations.

Today, over 75% of our municipalities are connected by fiber optic networks, reaching nearly 95% of our population.

We also have 4G coverage in all municipalities and in 70% of rural villages that are not even official city centers. (pausa)

That said ...

we know these numbers don't tell the whole story.

Many people remain excluded from digital life – not only because of infrastructure, but because of deeper inequalities.

That's why Anatel – Brazil's National Telecommunications Agency – is taking action to change this reality.

We are expanding telecom networks to rural and remote areas, and at the same time, promoting digital skills training

so people can use the internet safely and meaningfully.

In 2023, a national survey showed that the main reason why many Brazilians still don't use the internet is the lack of digital skills.

So we're offering programs that teach safe internet use, digital citizenship, and how to protect oneself online.

One of our most important tools is how we design spectrum auctions. In our 5G auction, 90% of the revenue was transformed into investment commitments.

A key initiative from that is the Sustainable Integrated Amazon Program – or simply, PAIS.

This program is building over 12,000 kilometers of high-capacity, low-latency fiber optic networks – many of them under rivers – linking towns across the Amazon and connecting public institutions.

We are also studying how to expand these networks through neighboring Amazonian countries, creating a route from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

Another important approach we use is called Obligations to Do – a regulatory tool that replaces financial fines with concrete action.

In 2024 alone, more than 7 million dollars were invested in connecting remote areas –

including Indigenous lands, quilombola communities, and schools –
with 4G or fiber optic infrastructure.

One project also provided training in digital rights, citizenship, and human rights to women in vulnerable situations and to refugees –
helping them enter the job market with confidence.

Because when we connect these communities,
we're not just building infrastructure.

We are building... something deeper.

We are building belonging –
for Black quilombola communities,
for Indigenous peoples,
for abandoned children,
for women survivors of violence,
and for those who fled their homes in search of safety.

We are restoring dignity –
to those who have long been left at the margins.

And above all...
we are affirming the right to the future –
the right to learn,
to speak,

to dream,
and to thrive.

And in that moment...

I understood:

Connectivity is not only about cables and signals.

It is about opening doors –

and saying:

You matter.

You belong.

You have a future.

That is what drives our work.

And finally –

I want to say clearly:

No country can do this alone.

We need collaboration between governments, companies, and research institutions.

Together, we can build policies that support innovation

and bring us closer to a world where digital inclusion is a right,

not a privilege.

Thank you for your attention.

I look forward to continuing this conversation –

and to building solutions together.