High-Level Bilateral Meetings, Ottawa, Canada
On 2 February, the OECD Chief of Staff and Sherpa, Gabriela Ramos, travelled to Ottawa in Canada to meet Mr Peter Boehm, the Deputy Minister for the G7 Summit and Personal Representative of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. Their discussions focused upon the support that the OECD could provide to the 2018 Canadian G7 Presidency. Ms Ramos also had a bilateral meeting with the G7 and G20 Finance Deputy of the Ministry of Finance, Mr Rob Stewart, to discuss the areas that the OECD could focus upon regarding the G7 Finance Track.

Global Development Forum at McGill University, Montreal
On 3 February, Ms Ramos delivered a keynote address at the Global Development Forum on “The Challenges of Migration”, at McGill University, in Montréal. In her speech ‘Migration: Myth v Reality’, Ms Ramos focused on the perceptions of migration and presented OECD data showing the reality of migrant flows – which are significantly lower than public perception or their portrayal in the media. In addition, she highlighted the positive contributions that immigrants make to our societies – they contribute more in taxes and social contributions than they receive in benefits – and she underlined the importance of integrating migrants rapidly and effectively. Lastly, she highlighted the need to restore trust in migration policies and institutions by better enforcing existing laws and by tackling the challenges of irregular migration and the illegal employment of migrants. She also stressed the importance of education in encouraging intercultural sensitivity and respect.

6th OECD Parliamentary Days, Paris
On 8 February, Ms Ramos delivered remarks at the 6th OECD Parliamentary Days which took place at the OECD. Her speech focused on how the G20 is working towards building a more inclusive world economy. In particular, Ms Ramos noted that the G20 agenda has evolved over the last ten years; it has deepened with the development of an ambitious structural reform agenda as well as a more inclusive agenda; and it has also broadened with the introduction of more “forward-looking” issues and themes such as, inclusive growth, technological change, the future of work and climate change. However, she also stressed that the G20 could focus more on issues related to inclusiveness, inequalities, as well as engineering a fairer and more inclusive type of globalisation and ensuring economic stability. Lastly, Ms Ramos highlighted that, in response to the request of support from successive G20 presidencies, the OECD has provided substantive input to the G20 agenda across the board, and is presently focusing on injecting new ideas and approaches into this agenda.

36th Round Table on Sustainable Development: Integrating Climate Change-related Factors in Institutional Investment, Paris
On 8 February, Ms Ramos delivered welcoming remarks at the 36th Round Table on Sustainable Development “Integrating Climate Change-related Factors in Institutional Investment” at the OECD. Ms Ramos noted that today we are facing a paradox: while investors, corporations and policymakers increasingly recognise the impacts of climate risks on portfolio performance and business activities, the degree and scope of integration of climate-related risks by institutional investors remains limited. While recognising the importance of industry-led initiatives to encourage institutional investors to factor climate change in their investment decisions, Ms Ramos stressed that governments should also be taking more action. She underlined the OECD’s commitment to these issues, including its support to the G20 Sustainable Finance Study Group and the launch of the OECD report on “Investment governance and the Integration of environmental, social and governance factors”.

Women Entrepreneurs: Seizing the benefits of digitalisation and globalisation, Mexico City
On 21 February, in the context of the OECD SMEs Ministerial in Mexico, Ms Ramos set the scene of the event “Women Entrepreneurs: Seizing the Benefits of Digitalisation and Globalisation” organised by the OECD and the National Institute of Entrepreneurs of Mexico (INADEM). During her remarks, Ms Ramos highlighted that a greater number of women entrepreneurs contributes to economic growth, innovation, job creation, income equality and social inclusion; however she also stressed that there continues to be a large gender gap in entrepreneurship, owed to cultural barriers and to the fact that women face greater challenges in starting and growing a business. She also noted that while OECD countries have responded with a range of initiatives to support women entrepreneurs, more needs to be done to address the issue of culture and gender stereotypes. In this respect, it is important to promote successful women entrepreneurs as role models. Ms Ramos also highlighted the NiñaSTEM PUEDEN initiative, which was launched in 2017 by the OECD and the Mexican Ministry of Education. Lastly, she underlined the OECD’s important contribution to the G20 and the G7 in helping them address women’s participation in SMEs and entrepreneurship.

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