



Newsletter on the main activities
of the OECD Chief of Staff
and Sherpa,

GABRIELA RAMOS

Mission to Mexico

On 7-11 January, the OECD Chief of Staff and Sherpa, Ms Gabriela Ramos, was in Mexico City to hold a number of meetings with several Ministers and high-level officials.

On 10 January, Ms Ramos gave a presentation at the launch event of the reports "[The Future of Mexican Higher Education: Promoting Quality and Equity](#)" and "[Higher Education in Mexico: Labour Market Relevance and Outcomes](#)". In her remarks, she highlighted the three key priorities for higher education in Mexico: an adequate and more transparent investment plan for higher education; the need to guarantee the quality of education; and the need to improve the links and communication between higher education and the labour market. She also stressed the need to reduce budgetary disparities between and within educational subsystems and she encouraged Mexico to create a new independent agency that guarantees the quality of education. [Watch it here](#) (minutes: 32 to 45).



Ms Ramos also delivered remarks at the NiñaSTEM Pueden Initiative Meeting with the Mentor Network. In her speech, she underlined the importance of empowering girls through examples of successful women in STEM careers. She also highlighted the progress made in the last two years in the deployment of this initiative: 2,500 girls and 50 female role models have participated.

Mission to Costa Rica

On 14 January, Ms Gabriela Ramos was in San José, Costa Rica, to meet with **President**

Carlos Alvarado, as well as with several Ministers and other high-level officials.

During her meeting with **President Carlos Alvarado**, Ms Ramos welcomed the recent fiscal reform and the President's efforts to expedite Costa Rica's accession to the OECD. To advance with the pending reviews, she highlighted the importance of advancing the adoption of laws within the Legislative Assembly, in particular those related to Competition, Statistics and Anti-Bribery. She also stated that levelling the playing field between state and private banks was key in improving the competitiveness and efficiency of the banking sector.



Ms Ramos also met with **Mr Fernando Volio Jiménez, Minister of Foreign Trade**, and **Mr Rodolfo Piza, Minister of the Presidency**, to discuss the progress of Costa Rica's accession to the OECD. She underlined the importance of implementing the recommendations made by the OECD Corporate Governance Committee, including: strengthening the quality of accounting and auditing for listed companies; providing regulators with information on the ownership of minority shareholders in listed companies and fully applying the OECD Guidelines on Corporate Governance of State-Owned Enterprises.

During her meeting with **Ms Marcia González, Minister of Justice and Peace**, **Ms Emilia Navas, General Prosecutor**, and **Mr Julio Jurado, Attorney General**, Ms Ramos highlighted the importance of aligning Costa Rica's legislation on bribery with the recommendations of in the OECD Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign

Public Officials in International Business Transactions. She emphasised the need to increase foreign bribery penalties against legal entities, as well as to criminalise false accounting.

Keynote speech at Harvard Women France, Paris

On 16 January, Ms Ramos delivered a keynote speech at [Harvard Women France](#). In her speech, she noted that focusing on maximising growth without any reflection on distributional consequences proved disastrous in 2008 and still is today. She added that, in order to achieve inclusive growth, it is key to ensure that women are included in the digital transformation and innovation economy. She also underlined the importance of boosting female entrepreneurship, especially in higher tech fields, as well as promoting female leadership in the private sector. Lastly, Ms Ramos highlighted the need to focus on the stereotypes and ingrained cultural values that inhibit young girls and women from reaching their full potential.

Remarks at the Private Finance for Sustainable Development Week, Paris

On 17 January, Ms Ramos delivered remarks at the [Private Finance for Sustainable Development Week](#) on "[Introducing the Impact Imperative: Call for Action](#)". In her speech, she welcomed the increase in private finance for sustainable development, with over \$81 billion in private finance mobilised in the last four years. However, she also noted that the overall external finance to developing countries dropped 12% between 2013 and 2016. She introduced the four topics that the Call for Action comprises: engaging local investors to build sustainable financing markets; promoting innovation; gathering transparent, standardised and interoperable data, and incentivising and facilitating investment that maximises social, environmental and economic development outcomes.