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ECUADOR 2020: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The global crisis due to the coronavirus or covid-19 pandemic affects all countries in the world, some to a greater or lesser extent than others.

Ecuador has an economy dependent on its oil exports, and on a handful of products such as shrimp, bananas, fish and flowers. There is also a significant level of income from tourism. Mining is in the process of expansion.

All these sources of income will be seriously affected, with the aggravating circumstance that the currency in Ecuador is the dollar, unlike other countries that have their own currencies with which they can manage their fiscal deficits and make their exports more competitive.

The country is undoubtedly facing a tough challenge, in which all sectors must act in concert and coordination to find a way to keep the economy afloat, and best serve the needs of almost 17 million inhabitants, especially from low-income sectors.

In times of difficulties, state budgets are reduced and public investment is one of the worst affected. Considering this fact, it is positive to be able to mention that Ecuador has been making efforts to attract foreign investment, as a way to continue improving its infrastructure, increase its oil production, expand its power generation capacity and develop certain strategic projects.

Faced with a contraction in its income, the State has the challenge of using scarce resources in an even more efficient way. One way to go towards that objective is to deepen efforts for a structured, systematic and radical fight against corruption, which must be reflected in a set of plans and actions that allow a better functioning of the state apparatus.

The private sector, for its part, will have to make great efforts to assimilate the hard blow left by the pandemic. Many businesses will disappear, and others will have to be reconverted and reinvented. In circumstances like this, some of the services that CONEXIG intends to offer to Ecuadorian entrepreneurs are of vital importance.

Surely, the stream of technological and process automation, and the creation of more virtual and remote services, will be deepened to reduce the mobilization needs of people. Teleworking has come as an alternative in the emergency, but it will remain occupying a growing space in organizations.

Given the positive effects that mobility restrictions have had, with an evident reduction in pollution, the consumption of fossil fuels worldwide will surely start the irreversible downward path that was forecast for a couple of decades later.

In this environment, technological projects will become more relevant. Technology will continue to be the vehicle to facilitate and simplify people's lives.

The environmental aspect will also continue to become increasingly important. Many projects within this sphere will be designed and executed, under the premise that the world cannot continue on the path of disrespect for habitat.

The circular economy will increase its role; the "Three Rs" of waste treatment (reduce, reuse, recycle) will become a daily practice at the municipal and "decentralized autonomous governments" level.

After verifying the high level of impact that a virus like covid-19 can have, biosecurity will become an essential norm for the development of many activities.

In this process of business transformation and reconversion, it will be of vital importance to have compliance programs, which establish the appropriate framework for achieving comprehensively positive results, considering not only business objectives but also the aspirations and wishes of staff, in an environment of commitment and social responsibility.

Companies will no longer have as their sole objective the maximum possible profit for their owners, and must satisfy different demands from the community.

They will be times of profound and unthinkable changes. The adaptability of organizations will be the key factor for their survival and "rearrangement" within the new environment.

Ecuador, as part of a globalized world, will turn many approaches and follow the trends that are generated, to the extent of its possibilities. In Ecuador, a new collective consciousness is taking hold, which will surely bear fruit in many sustainable ecological projects, and initiatives that will capture the attention of the international community. In this context, CONEXIG aspires to be an effective support to make these projects a reality.

These will be times of profound changes, surely including the legislative, regulatory and normative framework. These processes must have the appropriate support, and the consultancies will have a leading role.

There is hardly any area left untouched in this transformation process. Some companies are already on that path, and many more will surely join. A new society will be given birth when this pandemic is finally defeated, and CONEXIG is ready to be a leading part of that new Ecuadorian society.

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