



*International Trade*

A NEW WTO FOR  
BETTER TRADE

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*Business & Investment*

SATELLOGIC:  
A HISTORY OF SPACE  
INNOVATION AND AN  
EXCITING YEAR  
AHEAD

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*G-20*

CONNECTIVITY AND  
SOCIAL INCLUSION  
ARE THE FOCUS OF  
THESE DISCUSSIONS

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EMBASSY OF ARGENTINA, WASHINGTON, D.C.

# ARGENTINA IN FOCUS

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MARCH 2021 // NEWSLETTER





Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Director General of the the World Trade Organization.

## A NEW WTO FOR BETTER TRADE

Por Jorge Argüello, Embajador argentino en los Estados Unidos

The appointment of Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, the first African and first woman to head the World Trade Organization (WTO), boosts the role played by the exchange of goods and services in a post-pandemic global recovery, besides revitalizing problems that have gone unresolved for at least two decades, as new technologies and forms of

production have transformed the global economic geography, from agriculture to services.

The Group of 20 (G20), of which Argentina is a member, has tried to reform the WTO since the Buenos Aires Summit held in 2018.



Once again, I share with you the latest edition of our Embassy Newsletter. This edition includes an article about the appointment of Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, the first African woman to head the World Trade Organization and the prospect of a post-pandemic global recovery.

This issue also includes an interview with Luciano Giesso, sales director of Satellogic, a company specialized in collecting high-resolution data from space, which is planning new launches with SpaceX.

Finally, an article on the first G20 Digital Economy Task Force meeting (DETF) under the Italian presidency.

Jorge Argüello  
Ambassador to the United States

## THE WTO CRISIS REVEALED PROBLEMS THAT HAVE GONE UNRESOLVED FOR AT LEAST TWO DECADES AS NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND FORMS OF PRODUCTION HAVE TRANSFORMED THE GLOBAL ECONOMIC GEOGRAPHY.

The appointment of Okonjo-Iweala, this time with the decisive support of the United States under the Biden Administration, may unlock that process under the Group's Italian presidency.

Meanwhile, basic differences persist among the 164 WTO countries on the exact balance between trade rights and obligations, and on what is the appropriate goal when managing barriers that protect national economies without impacting global commerce.

Since its foundation in 1995, the WTO has failed to complete a single round of trade negotiations. The pandemic has exposed the need to put an end to this paralysis, and to the inability of developed and undeveloped countries to find a way out that harnesses the engine of trade, especially in the post-pandemic era.

The economic downturn due to COVID-19 exposed the weakness in international supply chains, including for health supplies, as well as in the entire trading system. In addition, there has been inequality in the access to vaccines, beyond the commitments made by the G20.

A reactivated and renewed WTO can make a decisive contribution to overcoming the current health emergency and, by doing so, can give way to a fresh start for the organization.

The fact that the richest nations have immunized their populations before the rest will end up harming the entire global economy, considering the close interrelation generated by the Global Value Chains (GVCs) between developed and developing countries.

The new Director General of the WTO has a valuable background: last December, Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala completed a five-year term as Board Chair at the Global Alliance for Immunization and Vaccination (GAVI), a public-private entity created in 2000 to improve access to immunization for the world's most vulnerable children and which is currently working on ensuring access to COVID-19 vaccines in developing countries.

Likewise, from her position, Okonjo-Iweala prioritized increasing global vaccine production, a basic issue that involves equal access to health and the long-standing dispute over intellectual property protection.

As an African, Okonjo-Iweala at the WTO can enable the re-start of a fair, effective, and rules-based multilateral trading system that helps overcome the recession caused by the pandemic and leave behind the health and economic crisis.

## SATELLOGIC: A HISTORY OF SPACE INNOVATION AND AN EXCITING YEAR AHEAD

Last year has been truly challenging for all of us around the globe. Despite that, Argentina-founded Satellogic achieved everything they had set out to do in 2020, and more. And they set even more ambitious goals for the coming year, including new launches planned with SpaceX, their newest launch partner.

Satellogic is now the global leader in high-resolution data collection from space, with up to four daily revisits of any point of interest and the capability to collect more than 4 million sq. km per day at sub-meter resolution. The company today has offices in six countries and a distributed team of more than 200 satellite engineers, AI experts, and solution specialists, spread amongst 15+ locations, on a mission to deliver a fundamentally better picture of our planet and the many forces that reshape it every day.

In 2020 alone they launched 13 new satellites, and also put forward their Global Consortium of Geospatial Imagery. Leveraging Satellogic's Earth Observation satellite constellation, their affiliates can now provide end customers with high resolution, high frequency, affordable geospatial data.

Argentina in Focus interviewed their Sales Director, Luciano Giesso, to know more about the state of things at Satellogic and their collaboration with SpaceX:

### **Argentina in Focus: Can you tell us about this new partnership with SpaceX?**

**Luciano Giesso:** We entered a Multiple Launch Services Agreement (MLA) with them. This MLA puts us in a unique position to capitalize on SpaceX's

Luciano Giesso, Satellogic Sales Director



THE COMPANY TODAY HAS  
OFFICES IN SIX COUNTRIES  
AND A DISTRIBUTED TEAM OF  
MORE THAN 200 SATELLITE  
ENGINEERS, AI EXPERTS, AND  
SOLUTION SPECIALISTS,  
SPREAD AMONGST 15+  
LOCATIONS.

competitive rideshare program and frequent launch schedule. By securing SpaceX as our preferred partner for rideshare missions, we will be able to accelerate the time between satellite development and deployment. This accelerated timeline will allow us to continue to rapidly expand our in-orbit capacity, while also increasing revisit capabilities to monitor the planet on a high frequency basis, serving customers at the right price.

**Argentina in Focus: What's the benefit you obtain from this agreement serving your clients?**

**Luciano Giesso:** Ultimately the MLA with SpaceX implies that Satellogic's end customers will get the latest satellite technology as soon as it's ready to launch. The first launch, scheduled for June this year, will deliver our satellites to Low Earth Orbit on a Falcon 9 rocket, further increasing our capacity in terms of frequent revisits of points of interest, and high-resolution data collection. With Satellogic's superior collection capacity and unparalleled unit economics, we are poised to democratize Earth Observation (EO) imagery by massively expanding their capacity to serve large verticals including agriculture, energy, forestry, insurance, telecommunications and financial services, among others.

We provide a disruptive and compelling economic use case to current users of EO imagery, as well the ability to simplify the image collection process, eventually replacing considerably less efficient technologies and solutions such as drones, helicopters, planes, and boots-on-the-ground manpower.

**Argentina in Focus: What are the mission and goals of Satellogic, and what plans do you have in place for the U.S. market?**

**Luciano Giesso:** Our mission is to build an accurate and up-to-date picture of our world and the many forces that reshape it every day, and help solve the most pressing problems. Today's organizations compete in an interconnected, global market, but the data they use to make decisions hasn't evolved to reflect this new business reality. We help our customers stay competitive and lead at the pace of change. Our goal is to democratize access to geospatial data and provide world-class imaging and data science services for decision makers and innovators of governmental and private sectors, across many agencies and industries. Our U.S. offices and locations are growing, we have recently announced the addition of Thomas VanMatre and Matthew Tirman joining Satellogic to accelerate global business development and U.S. expansion. Their industry experience signals a new and exciting phase in Satellogic's growing relationship with the U.S. government, international governments and commercial partners.

**Argentina in Focus: Satellogic aspires to operate one of the largest satellite constellations in the world with over 300 in orbit. How many have you managed to launch to date and what is the future timeline?**



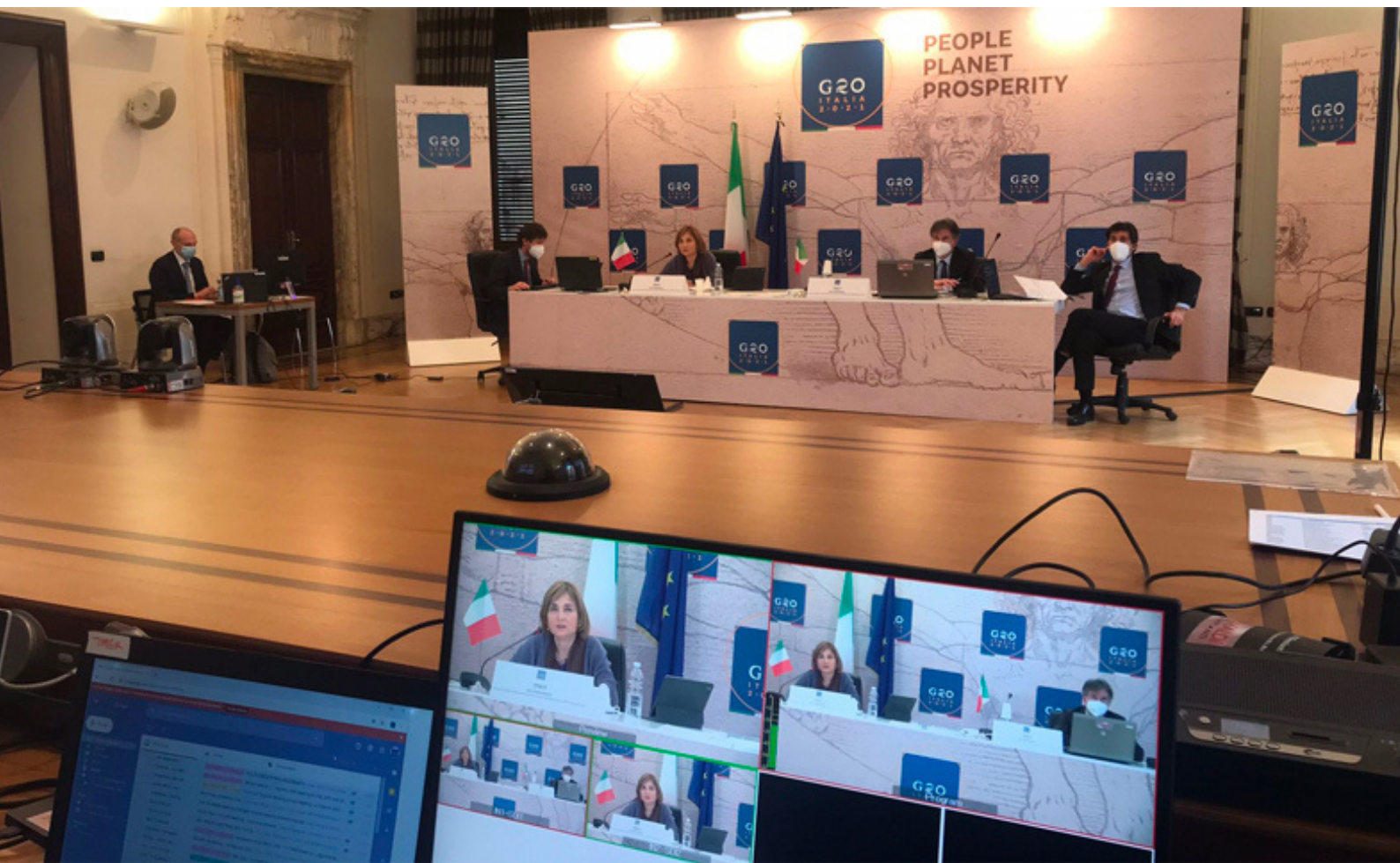
**Luciano Giesso:** We launched 21 satellites thus far. The first three were early prototypes and all subsequent ones were incremental versions of our current satellite design (NewSats). Every generation of NewSats has been equipped with new technologies in service of our research and development of Earth Observation technologies, and all have multispectral and hyperspectral imaging capabilities. Indeed we plan to eventually build up to a constellation of 300+ satellites, which will allow us to complete daily remaps of the entire planet at sub-metric resolution, and deliver best-industry frequency insights with a fully-automated platform, at the right cost. That's a longer term goal aligned with the direction we expect the broader market to go: create the kind of continuous, high resolution imaging of Earth that will be required to address some of our greatest challenges today.

**Argentina in Focus: Can you tell us a bit about your Dedicated Satellite Constellation Program?**

**Luciano Giesso:** Today, less than a third of the countries in the world have their own satellites orbiting the Earth, limiting their ability to capture data about their policy implementation and infrastructure, and widening the gap between countries that have access to quality and timely information and countries that do not. Our satellite-as-a-service unique model offers the opportunity to develop a national geospatial imaging program at unmatched frequency, resolution and cost, giving access to geospatial analytics and insights that contribute to strategic national interests, with no capital outlay and no technical or operational risks. The program is aimed at municipal, state and national governments eager to gain exclusive control of a fleet of satellites over an area of interest; it is provided as a paid subscription service eliminating the need for upfront capital costs,

minimizing technical risk and providing considerable benefits from integration with the Satellogic constellation.

This Dedicated Satellite Constellation program was also nominated for Via Satellite's 2019 Satellite Technology of the Year Award, based on innovation, benefit to the industry, and overall disruption to the satellite landscape. ■



G20 Italy 2021-Official site.

## CONNECTIVITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION ARE THE FOCUS OF THESE DISCUSSIONS

The Secretariat for Public Innovation of the Office of the Cabinet of Ministers, represented by Undersecretary César Gazzo Huck, participated in the first G20 Digital Economy Task Force meeting (DETF) under the Italian presidency.

This year, Italy placed digitization at the center of the discussions of the international forum, diversified the topics and generated synergies with other engagement groups such as, for example, Education and Labor.

The objective of this first meeting was to reflect on the main topics in their agenda, such as how to measure digital economy, use of blockchain for the traceability of products and services, digital

transformation in production for a sustainable growth and use of digital tools for the continuity of public services in times of crisis, among others.

The agenda is a sign that emerging technologies and the fourth industrial revolution or Industry 4.0 are not concepts for the future; they are part of our present and are here to stay. The use of these technologies was enhanced by the pandemic, and it changed our way of working, educating, researching and many other activities.

COVID-19 posed a challenge to all countries and highlighted the importance of the development of information and communication technologies. The lead time of technological innovation

## EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES AND THE FOURTH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION, OR INDUSTRY 4.0 ARE NOT CONCEPTS FOR THE FUTURE - THEY ARE PART OF OUR PRESENT AND ARE HERE TO STAY.

accelerated exponentially, and governments had to adapt and implement initiatives to ensure the universalization of access to connectivity, the expansion of geographic coverage and the continuity of public services.

In this context, in 2020 the Secretariat for Public Innovation promoted the implementation of diverse initiatives to strengthen social inclusion policies, which include the following, among others:

- Activation of “zero rating” practices; i.e., no charge for mobile data to access and use specific educational platforms.
- Agreement to suspend Internet and mobile phone service cuts due to non-payment by vulnerable populations and small shops.
- Free delivery of prepaid cards for mobile services to residents of low-income neighborhoods.
- Plan to deploy satellite connections to connect more than 300 primary health care centers in the Northwest, Cuyo and Patagonia.
- Definition of telecommunications as competing public services.
- Agreement with Chile to develop the trans-Pacific submarine cable “Digital Asia-South

America Gateway”, to improve interconnection between both countries, as well as connectivity at border crossings and digital integration with Brazil, Uruguay, Paraguay, and Bolivia.

Likewise, in September 2020, Micaela Sánchez Malcolm, Secretary for Public Innovation, along with President Alberto Fernández and the Head of the Cabinet of Ministers Santiago Cafiero, presented the National Connectivity Plan “Conectar”, with a significant investment by the State until 2023. It consists of four main areas:

- Federal Fiber Optic Network (REFEFO): is the largest fiber optic data network in Latin America, with the addition of 4,408 kilometers of illuminated fiber optics to the Conectar Plan. Also, the electronic equipment of the network will be renewed to expand its capacity. By 2023, the fiber optic backbone network will have 38,808 illuminated kilometers and 22 million people will be connected to REFEFO.
- Satellite Industry. The Argentine company ARSAT has two geostationary telecommunications satellites (ARSAT 1 and 2), both manufactured and integrated using Argentine components.

The manufacture of satellites in Argentina generated a technological leap in the country by integrating production chains, new local suppliers, and the participation of universities in these projects. The satellites offer continental coverage and provide commercial services in different neighboring bordering countries.

The Plan will modernize the fleet with the ARSAT SG1 satellite, which will also be built in Argentina. Its data traffic capacity will exceed 50 Gbps and will operate in Ka Band to provide high quality



broadband to more than 200,000 rural households.

- Data center. ARSAT has a data center where stores the information and processes public administration applications. Within this framework, the creation of the State's public cloud and the strengthening of the National Data Center by updating the backup systems and generator sets are planned.
- Open Digital Television (TDA). The Plan provides for the enhancement of Open Digital Television (TDA) with the recovery of 100 digital television broadcasting stations, which will cover over 80% of the Argentine territory. The upgrade of the platform equipment will improve the image quality and we will reach about 10 million homes in the country.

On the other hand, the Undersecretariat for Open Government and Digital Country Plan under the Secretariat for Public Innovation promotes the Digital Points Program, which has been working continuously for 10 years and has more than 580 public spaces throughout the national territory which provide training, access to online government procedures, participation in recreational activities and maintains educational continuity.

The pandemic highlighted the importance of connectivity, and that is why the role played by Digital Points is remarkable, as they provide Internet access.

And our greatest challenge is to continue narrowing the digital divide to build a fairer, more equitable and more federal country. From January 2020 until now, 14 new Digital Points were opened, and 45 spaces that were in disuse and lacked equipment were restored.

Another of the projects supported by the Undersecretariat to promote distance training is the Virtual Learning Platform (PAV), with courses on technological innovation, cybersecurity, education, gender, digital marketing, big data, sustainable consumption, micro-enterprises, among others.

This year the "Learning Tours" were added, which are free courses to deepen a specific area of knowledge to provide a rapid job placement. Furthermore, in the context of mandatory and preventive isolation, the collaborative platform "Entre Todos" was created, which includes recommendations for tools, solutions, resources, and initiatives to continue working, studying, and interacting.

The health emergency situation promoted the development of digital technologies to strengthen teleworking, distance education, the operation of digital services by the public administration, electronic commerce, and personal communications. We celebrate the initiative of the Italian Presidency to place digital transformation at the center of discussion at the G20 and we will support the debates that will take place at the DETF to generate a greater international digital cooperation.



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