I. Latin America in the context of the health crisis:

The global health crisis has made it clear that no country was prepared to efficiently face the consequences of an atypical pandemic such as the Coronavirus. In particular, because its expansion is not necessarily associated with conditions of precariousness or marginality as previous epidemic processes.

However, in Latin America the crisis deepens the conditions of inequity and makes evident the handicap of underdevelopment, compared to more consolidated scenarios. Poverty is eminently urban (according to UN Habitat, more than half of the world’s population now lives in cities and by 2050, two thirds will do so). That is, it is associated with social segmentation, informality (economic and spatial), regulatory gaps and statistical opacity (skills, planning, public finance) and sometimes even with the illegality and illegitimacy of their governments.

The impact of the pandemic on our cities means not only a halt, but a reversal of the progress made in terms of social cohesion and the reduction of poverty in the region. According to ECLAC estimates, Latin America will go from 186 million poor people to 220 million, and from 67.5 million people in extreme poverty to 90.8 million. The setback is therefore significant and imposes a series of challenges, dilemmas and, above all, immense doubts on territorial administrations (at all levels) as to how to face the current crisis -the present, the urgencies- and where to orient public action (and their respective budgets) for the (still diffuse) scenarios after the crisis.

The emergency to face the crisis, in most Latin American countries, has tested the great institutional and organizational deficiencies in terms of (i) the provision of essential services and equipment (health, water, food, education, transport, supply); (ii) the management of social aid (reliable and updated statistics, lack of information, lack of coordination between entities, difficulties in locating and attending to those affected, role of the private sector and community organization); (iii) citizen mobilization and responsibility (e.g., to comply with confinement or clean-up restrictions) and, (iv) serious dysfunctions in cities and the disarticulation of the territory due to the lack of planning and implementation of sustainable and timely policies. In fact, #StayHome is only possible with services and adequate housing (UNHabitat: 2020).

A. References to the current situation:

In Latin America, the role of the cities has historically been marginal in the national context. However, in the post-pandemic period, where health security is becoming more relevant, their position as valid interlocutors must be urgently reconsidered.
It is local governments that are closest to the people and can act most quickly. Recent events have shown us that borders are relative but that coordination between governments is necessary; also that concerted efforts are indispensable to achieve collective benefit, because when particular interests take precedence over intergovernmental relations, they deteriorate.

The demands of citizens and those of private enterprise will put pressure on regional and local administrations, generating greater tensions between the concentration of power and decentralization, perhaps resulting in a new impetus to the recognition of local autonomy and the regional perspective. In this line, a double question arises on how to put in value the proximity (physical and cultural) between the territories, beyond the administrative and/or jurisdictional borders? And if it is possible to recognize the complementarity and interdependence between different political-administrative entities?

If this crisis has taught us anything, it is that globalization dominates the scene and our daily life is no longer autonomous or independent, because the world functions as a multifunctional system: the most valuable goods and services are produced and distributed in a network, and the impact of policies and decisions is distributed over the territory, without restriction of political-administrative boundaries.

Borders are being blurred and the best way to deal with the crisis is through universal policies that promote timely assistance to the most vulnerable in order to move towards a process of regeneration that also allows us to comply with an immense historically accumulated debt. Governance plays a crucial role.

**B. A first step in moving forward**

While each country has a different diagnosis, we must recognize and address the urgency. Perspectives, requirements and needs vary greatly depending on the latitude towards which the message is directed, but there are models and guidelines that will serve as a guide to bridge the gap. Among others, at least four of them could be mentioned:

- Categorize the political, social and economic reality of the different scenarios (national and/or local) to face the crisis.
- Evaluate the terms of governance, since there have been many consequences, errors and bad practices resulting from the restricted interaction of global instances such as the UN, OAS, WHO and similar, with national states and not with the real protagonists of public policies: local governments.
- Recognize that the importance of the city in the world has been underestimated, according to multiple variables such as: concentration of population and employment, or provision of services and equipment...
- Consider the levels of citizenship and the strength of institutions. Citizen awareness of the crisis is directly related to educational levels, while the efficiency of policy implementation, scenario control and information dissemination (good and bad practices) depends on the degree of institutional organization.
- Evaluate immigration as an opportunity or challenge, taking into account the reintegration of displaced persons as a loss or gain of Human Capital.
C. Post-pandemic / post-confinement scenario:

The crisis produced by the Covid pandemic19 reaffirms the need for government actors (municipalities, departments, regions, states, etc.) to continue working in a unified manner to face structural problems in the territory. The circumstances created by this pandemic have opened the way for us to take it as a reference in the face of similar events, and has given us light on what actions and lines of action should be taken in the present to strengthen territorial economies, safeguard life and continue to close gaps in the future; unity of effort, in this order of ideas, will be very important for the medium and long term. The CoCity (coordination of efforts, agreement of interests and conciliation of wills) is imposed as a public policy.

It is evident that the retraction of economic activity caused in practically the entire world by the massive confinement of the population, the paralysis of production, the closing of borders and the reordering of public investment, will worsen once the critical stage of health care has been overcome, foreseeing an acute global recession. In this scenario, previously existing conditions in Latin American countries such as low productivity and precarious employment; informality and lack of social protection for a significant part of the population; inefficiency of the state sector; crime and citizen insecurity will also deepen.

In this perspective, unlike what happened during the emergency, in the post-confinement phase it will be the population with the lowest income that will be most affected; an increase in poverty and destitution is expected, as we have already pointed out.

In this scenario, it is important to orient the experience of professionals and technicians towards: the revision of standards, processes and forms of action, the analysis of the territory as an interdependent and complementary system which will lead us to question jurisdictional limits, norms and surely even the convenience of large agglomerations (metropolitan areas). That is to say, the adaptation of the terms of urban planning and territorial ordering to a new functional scheme. And on the other hand, to evaluate the bases of the public policies and possible agreements between States, as well as the necessary strengthening of the autonomy and the consolidation of the local authority before the global crisis.

In this way we can highlight four attention factors:

- Accessibility, which will condition opportunities, so that digital and telecommunications connectivity will be the priority for emergency health care (telemedicine), the sustainability and proper functioning of telework models, virtual educational processes and trade in human capital and economic activities in that line.
- Food security is a priority, and it is essential to share information on possible sustainable agricultural production systems, with marketing strategies and consumption policies, especially for the most vulnerable sectors.
- Strengthening production chains and circuits on the basis of network discussions, maturing the route to employment generation and economic recovery. One of the challenges in terms of transformation, productivity and employment that Latin America already has, including that of generating alternatives to illicit economic activities in several of our territories. Today, the lines of action that are positioned as
necessary for the recovery of the regional economy are added, taking into account the impact on activities left by the crisis such as trade, entrepreneurship and innovation, activities associated with tourism, services, construction, among others. Special attention should be given to actions and measures aimed at the reactivation of the small rural economy.

- Improve the coverage and quality of household services such as water, sewage, sanitation, energy and gas. This is vital for the social development and quality of life of the inhabitants.

D. The challenges are allowing a revaluation of the city

There is a clear awareness in the world of the preponderant role of the State in mitigating the effects of post-pandemics. In some countries, unusual levels of state resources will be transferred to families and businesses and social programs will have to be prioritized and modernized. Part of this investment will also have to go towards strengthening the planning and management function of the State apparatus, in particular sub-national governments.

Although it is not so evident at the moment, sooner or later discussions will begin about the role of cities and territorial articulation in the process of economic recovery and social cohesion, which is indispensable for overcoming the health crisis and the recession that has resulted from it. Interest in urban and territorial planning, management of infrastructure and urban services, land occupation and housing will be intensified.

Cities will suffer the greatest economic impact not only because of their declining federal incomes, but also because of the significant increase in the number of people in poverty and greater social inequality. In the face of a generalized situation, inter-territorial solidarity emerges as an alternative to confront the post-pandemic process. Accessibility in quantity, quality and cost to public services and basic equipment, including housing and transportation, will be a priority for all.

Land use planning schemes and the linking of land use to development intensity and modes of transport (mobility vs. accessibility) take on renewed importance because the world demands a new functional scheme. In this sense, real estate developments must be rethought, because it has become evident that housing is more than just a roof over one's head. And the role of public space as a place of meeting, relations and exchange is questioned, as well as its function of articulating the urban structure: the street is more than a space of transit.

E. Specific cases:

Colombia (RAP Pacific):

The Pacific region has two particular sub-regions: the Andean area and the coastal area. Both. The economic effects of the pandemic in the Andean zone affect the labor market, potential inflation, closed transportation companies, production cost overruns due to exchange rate effects, and hundreds of small and medium enterprises closed, among others.

However, although it is difficult to calculate the economic impact of the virus on the Pacific Coast, it will probably pass through most of its municipalities which will be left without
Supplies, a worrying situation in a territory with connectivity problems, high levels of poverty, large unsatisfied basic needs; in general, a subsistence economy where the challenge is therefore even greater.

Peru:

Globally, this crisis has affected an unusual proportion of the high- and middle-income population groups that are usually protected in this type of emergency: to date, in the twelve poorest regions of Peru, where 25% of the population lives, barely 5% of the infections and deaths from coronaviruses have occurred.

In the city of Lima, two thirds of the infections have occurred in the twelve richest districts, which occupy 15% of the urban area and 30% of the capital’s population.

In Peru, government-to-government agreements have been implemented for the execution of infrastructure and buildings, through which the responsibility for formulating, tendering, contracting and supervising projects and works is transferred to government entities of another country, under the rules of that country. This mechanism offers a potential to be explored.

Venezuela:

The country presents an exceptional situation, since the political diatribe, the institutional vacuum and the total and complete destruction of its capacities, services and productive structures, places it in an emergency situation, much worse than that of any other country in Latin America. Venezuela’s political situation requires extraordinary measures since anarchy occupies the institutional void. The mass exodus is a major concern for our neighboring countries and has left us without the human capital required to move forward with new paradigms. There is an urgent need to train the new generation and recover the institutional capacity.

The disadvantages of the State-Municipality duality and the non-recognition of the potential of local government are evident and worrying. There is no feasible subsidy program, no possible government aid, no credit for businesses and no exemption from tax payments because the State is bankrupt. The country was already paralyzed before the pandemic. With 87% of its population at the poverty line (ENCOVI 2017).

Covid19 adds to the existing crisis as another variable, and our image-goal is to recover democracy, freedom and human rights, and then to think about a process of national reconstruction.
II. The potential of INTA's services for Latin American cities during and after the pandemic

The extension of the deficiencies that we have mentioned, has generated, at least temporarily, a great citizen concern—in all social sectors—and the interest of the authorities to look for alternatives to solve them. Society and the State seem to be aware of the need to be innovative and efficient in this process.

International cooperation will be reduced, in particular because developed countries will have to allocate greater resources to addressing social vulnerability in their own territories, and it will therefore probably be redirected towards capacity-building and institutional development in developing countries.

The need to prepare cities to generate economic value and employment will soon be recognized and innovative solutions will be required to achieve this. These concerns are at the core of INTA’s activities. In Latin America, with nuances, state organization will require much technical assistance for a virtual reinvention of its management. It will be more willing to invest more in obtaining it. On the other hand, international cooperation will demand more services to provide this technical assistance.

INTA has a great opportunity here, given the recognition it enjoys, as an innovative and experienced think-thank. It is necessary to make it plausible, before the different interest groups. It is governments and multilateral organizations that should support these efforts. They have the money and the greatest need. So they should be the natural sponsors of both the studies and the events and assistance programs that INTA is able to develop.

The participation of organizations such as INTA has a fundamental role in the "rehabilitation" of cities, not only from the urban point of view but also from the economic, environmental and fiscal points of view since it provides solutions based on successful experiences in other countries, but with the ingredient of deliberation, as well as decision and local participation. In this sense, INTA must rethink how to present itself and offer not only knowledge and innovation, but also accompaniment in the processes of implementation of the results of its intervention, but it must also offer that network of solidarity support among Latin American cities, not only in times of post-pandemic but in future challenges due to climate change, accelerated pollution, economic debacle, etc.

Networks of professionals such as INTA have a double virtue: on the one hand, they concentrate experience and specialized know-how in different areas of urban and territorial development, which will be the focus of attention once the health crisis passes to another stage; the creation of resilient cities and territories will be the general motto, currently many professionals of Hispanic-American urbanism are asking themselves how to build cities better than before the pandemic? On the other hand, INTA has the capacity to promote, collectively, ad-hoc solutions in a very short time with the consequent saving of resources.

These two conditions allow us to act quickly (tactically) without losing sight of the time horizon of the action and its multiple repercussions and dimensions (strategically). One track to explore in this perspective is to show our low working method as a factor of
innovation acceleration (LAB format) highlighting the pluridisciplinarity and the diversity of techniques used to tackle problems from a new perspective, and to co-produce innovative solutions reducing the learning curve and identifying the rapid “return” of the investment for cities and administrations.

Networks of professionals such as INTA are called upon, according to their experience and know-how - in different areas of development, taking this as an integral concept - to advise the different levels of government and accompany these processes, harbouring the virtue in its very structure of consolidating in a single network of experts, different perspectives on how effective decisions have been made elsewhere, shortening the learning curve in critical situations such as the one we are currently experiencing.

In the case of Latin America, the role that INTA could play becomes even more relevant in order to face the post-pandemic crisis, taking into account that many of its experts have had the opportunity to participate in decision-making scenarios in countries with much smaller poverty and development gaps.

A. Positioning strategy and immediate communication

A first way to put INTA in the sight of these stakeholders is to quickly carry out a reflection (practical, functional and integral) on the challenges (political and economic) of the post-pandemic from the perspective of the city and the territory. This vision can be fed by the systematic collection of information on what is happening in the world in terms of urban-territorial matters (a survey among its members in different countries would be very useful), proposing a strategy and a methodology -differentiated according to the level of development of each country- to address it. Then disseminate the results of the research and its proposal through virtual events, which, in the case of INTA, can be very successful if its national members are involved in the dissemination.

The extension and quality potential of the network to collect and disseminate information, to generate relevant knowledge, and to transform it into concrete proposals is a strength that INTA can and should take advantage of in these circumstances. Given the urgency of finding solutions, the Delphi method and surveys will be the most used tools.

It is essential to identify a list of national or multilateral public entities that must be addressed and to define which members of the association can help the Board of Directors to achieve a rapprochement with these entities.

In the target countries, INTA members can contribute to bringing together public bodies in charge of urban and territorial affairs. Contact with the national apparatus would be facilitated if it is a bidding country or a multilateral organization that supports and finances (at least partially, because co-financing will always be possible) the INTA proposal.

All this approach should count on an intense dissemination work in Spanish, French and English in the information networks that can be accessed by the members of the organization in each country. It is important that, with the help of our members, INTA can make its image more visible and its method more readable in local administrations in Latin America.
According to a global map of networks of professionals dedicated to urban development, drawn up by the Paris-Region Institute in 2019, INTA is part of the Top25 of such networks. This type of positioning is necessary to be highlighted, either by participating in forums and debate spaces promoted by other networks and groups, or by the specialized dissemination of what our members are doing in various cities and territories around the world.

**B. Form of prospective action to concretize INTA’s interventions in the region in the short and medium term**

INTA is a network that works with a great diversity of actors at all territorial scales and in both the public and private sectors. We help territorial authorities to: identify regulatory gaps and institutional weaknesses, add value to local/regional processes by contributing with practical, feasible and real solutions, and facilitate the internationalization of processes (“outward” communication).

At the international level, it is strategic to join efforts with other organizations, city networks and research spaces (City-to-City cooperation) that have focused on analyzing the impact of the health crisis on cities in Latin America.

At the level of local administrations (cities) and public institutions of a local, regional and inter-regional nature, it is important to show oneself as a potential ally in order to revalue the role of these actors and to demonstrate to them the potential added value offered by working in the INTA network and the possibility of joining the network and promoting joint activities (at first virtually), both in terms of reflection and in terms of mobilizing resources (attracting talent, research, relocating productive activities, investments, political positioning at a global level, etc.).

To adapt INTA’s lines of work to coincide with the interests of local actors, following as a model the work developed by the international secretariat prior to the Habitat Summit III.

In that sense we could define the following selection of discussion topics:

- The suitability of traditional development models (density and intensity of development vs. health of society).
- Convenience of the compact city vs. the expanded city.
- The vulnerability of large concentrations (metropolises) and the reality of informal sectors. Basic services and the right to the city.
- Recognition of interdependencies and complementarity / promotion of territorial alliances and horizontal solidarity
- Linking food production and distribution to urban services.
- Review of standards of informality and the degree of overcrowding in informal areas in the face of adaptation of territories.
- Assume the development of the resilience of cities and the strengthening of their institutions as a priority.
- Promote competitiveness and processes that favour innovation in its multiple dimensions.