

Speech – ALABC Lunch 19 November 2020, Vanessa Torres

Good afternoon,

Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land, the Wadjuk people of the Noongar nation, and leaders past, present and emerging.

Thank you for this award, I feel honoured and humbled with this recognition.

Growing up in Brazil, and being a daughter and granddaughter of engineers, I was fascinated by engineering and technology – and their value in turning ideas into projects and these into large scale operations. My grandfather, who was an engineering professor, inspired me to become an engineer. My father, who was a metallurgical engineer, gave me my first opportunity to work in the mining industry by helping him in his small business.

One of the reasons I have chosen a career in the resources industry was because of its global nature, and the positive contribution that we can make to the communities where we operate, and our contribution to society in general. Getting to know the World, and getting to know the people in different communities around the World was one of my dreams as I grew up between Ipatinga, Sao Paulo and Belo Horizonte. So, when I graduated as a chemical engineer I was ready to start my journey which has taken me across the globe all the way to here, next to the Swan River...

Over my career I had the privilege to lead projects and operations in remote locations in the Americas and Australia - such as Canaã dos Carajas in Brazil; Piura, in Peru; and Port Hedland, in Australia. I have also studied and worked in large centres such as Belo Horizonte, Sao Paulo, Vancouver, Toronto, Perth and Melbourne. As a result, the footprint of my career is similar to the footprint of the mining industry.

When I think about the best part of this experience, it is not about the technical aspects of the projects I have led, or about the performance of the operations I ran. The best part is to have met such a diverse range of people across these places – in the workplace and in the community. The best part has been engaging with different cultures and enjoying life with them. The experience of joining the Amazonian dance of Carimbó, or tasting some of the 55 corn varieties that you can find in the Peruvian food, watching the sunset from the top of the mountain at Whistler, or joining friends for a wine festival in Margaret River. From today, I will add this event to these experiences, as it is such a pleasure to enjoy peruvian cuisine amongst Latin American and Australian friends in this beautiful city I have chosen to call home.

Institutions such as the Australian-Latin America Business Council play a vital part in connecting people from different cultures through the work they do and the contributions they can make. Today's World, even with the temporary travel restrictions due to Covid-19 is as connected as ever through technology and trade.

Global companies such as South32 reflect that connectivity and the importance of people who speak different languages but connect through common values. At South32, our values

of Care, Trust, Togetherness and Excellence have underpinned our purpose, our strategy, and, importantly, the way we are keeping our people safe and well, running sustainable operations and engaging our communities - as we navigate through the uncertainties brought by Covid-19. I am truly grateful to be part of South32 and contribute to such a great business.

I am thankful to so many people who have been part of my journey, starting with my parents and grandparents who taught me the values that guided me through my life, and in particular my mother, who taught me that “I could be whatever I chose as long as I put sufficient effort into it”.

I would like also to thank and acknowledge my sister Juliana, who is with us here today. Juliana inspires me with her own journey as an Architect, having originally established her practice in Brazil, then joining Australia’s largest architecture company twelve years ago, and, recently establishing her own business here in Perth earlier this year – Shift Architecture ... whilst at the same time raising her two beautiful children. Juliana, I am very proud to be your sister.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the awesome people I have worked with in different countries and companies throughout my career. We are as good as our teams, so in this way this award is to recognise their work and their contributions as well.

Thank you for your attention and again, thanks to the Australia Latin-America Business Council for the great work connecting people from the countries I love.