ICDE Book Launch Session

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Ladies and gentlemen,

Welcome to the launch of the Commonwealth of Learning publication "Designing and Implementing Micro-Credentials: A Guide for Practitioners" written by none other than ICDE President Dr. Belinda Tynan and her colleague Darien Rossiter from RMIT University. You may also know that Belinda represents Australia on COL's international Board of Governors.

As you know, COL is the only intergovernmental organization in the world mandated to promote the use of open distance and technology-mediated learning to expand access to quality education and training in the Commonwealth. We promote learning for sustainable development—which means learning must not only lead to economic growth but must also result in social inclusion and environmental conservation. This aligns our work closely with Sustainable Development Goal 4, which aims to ensure equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all by 2030. At a time when technology is rapidly changing the way we teach and learn it becomes important to respond quickly to the needs of our stakeholders. One way of doing this is to develop knowledge resources which are relevant and practical.

Over the years, COL has developed a large number of resources in open, distance and online learning, open educational resources, women's leadership, to name a few. In fact, when we search for recent publications in these areas, the search engines refer us back to our own repository. Many of these publications are in partnership with UNESCO and have been translated into other languages such as Chinese, French, Spanish and Arabic. Since there is a large open education community here, let me also invite you to look at the recent UNESCO-COL publication on 'Guidelines on the Development of OER Policies', which is a step-by-step guide to developing policies and measuring impact.

This publication prepared by Belinda and Darien is part of our knowledge series, which is a start-up guide on topics of contemporary interest. The series is meant for policy makers and practitioners who would like to make sense of new developments without having to read in-depth monographs or research papers. The start up guides are a direct route to understanding key issues and challenges and provide a practical approach for implementation.

A recent report on Online Learning 2019 prepared by the Canadian Digital Learning Research Team found that in the last one year alone there has been a 10% growth in online learning in Canada. The report also refers to the growing use of new forms of credentials –micro-credentials

and badges and highlights the significant variations in how these credentials are defined and tracked. Which shows that this publication is most timely and I hope you will find it useful in your own contexts.

Let me thank Belinda and Darien once more for their valuable contribution and commend this little treasure to you.