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## PLENARY SESSION OF THE NINTH SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS

### REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF PERU, PEDRO CASTILLO

Distinguished Heads of State and Government:

I would like to convey the fraternal greetings of the people of Peru to the high representatives of the nations of the Americas, recognizing the need to build our future—as stated in this Summit’s motto—on the basis of the values of sustainability, resilience, and equity, particularly after the difficult test that the COVID-19 pandemic posed and continues to pose.

Indeed, the search for equity and social inclusion is one of the highest priorities we have assumed.

We believe that gaps in access to quality basic services, such as education and health, and persistent inequalities in the enjoyment of fundamental rights are in themselves barriers to development.

No mirage of recovery can be sustainable if we do not correct the structural problems that have made Latin America one of the world’s most unequal regions. Extreme inequality is endemic to our Hemisphere and it has undermined our ability to deal with emergencies and adequately protect our people. At the same time, it has prevented us from inserting ourselves more advantageously into the global economy, from harnessing our citizens’ creative potential and extraordinary industriousness, and from generating greater well-being for our countries through more equitable access to, for example, the digital transformation and energy efficiency. For these reasons, I applaud the inclusion of the search for equity as one of the central themes of this Summit, because this means that we are in tune with our peoples’ demands.

At the same time, we must address, in a coordinated manner, the current difficulties with agricultural production due to the shortage of fertilizers and with the population’s access to food, which hits the most vulnerable households the hardest. In that context, the task of multilateralism and of forums such as the Summit of the Americas is to identify effective cooperation mechanisms to support national efforts.

With this conviction, Peru placed its grave concerns about the fertilizer shortage before the Organization of American States, which led to the adoption by consensus of a Permanent Council resolution that provides for monitoring the situation in partnership with the Hemisphere’s relevant institutions. Thus, our country proposes establishing, in conjunction with the Inter-American

Development Bank, a regional credit program to finance subsidies for fertilizers such as urea and other phosphates, as well as for the foodstuffs that are indispensable for our population.

Similarly, in connection with the announcement made by President Biden for an “Americas Partnership for Economic Prosperity,” Peru will always support the strengthening of economic cooperation mechanisms in the Hemisphere. Additionally, it agrees with several of the issues and pillars included therein, such as the focus on justice with social inclusion. We look forward to working with the United States and the countries of the Hemisphere in defining this initiative’s objectives and areas of work, which should emphasize the importance of guaranteeing food security for our peoples.

Behind these food risks are not only economic factors, but also the effects of climate change and the need to prioritize a green future, which is perhaps the most acute global challenge. It poses a direct threat to our sustainable development and demands urgent and coordinated international action, keeping future generations in mind.

I would now like to address another challenge of major regional interest: migration. More than three million Peruvians, about 10% of our population, live beyond our borders. Moreover, in recent years, Peru has also received more than a million migrants. In a very short time, from being a country of origin for emigrants, we have also become a destination and transit country.

These two realities of migrants coincide, however, in a common objective: achieving a better standard of living for them and their families. As a government, with a genuine spirit of welcoming, we have had to incorporate the migrants we receive into public service coverage; despite limited resources and during the particularly critical juncture of the pandemic, we share what we have. We therefore insist on the need to embrace a human rights approach and a broad and comprehensive cooperation model for migration issues, which will allow us to promote safe, orderly, and regular migration, benefiting both those who have decided to migrate and the societies and countries that generously welcome them. Accordingly, Peru will support the Los Angeles Declaration on Migration and Corruption.

Ladies and gentlemen:

I preside over a democratic government, which emerged from the ballot box through the majority will of the Peruvian people. I am a rural school teacher who has been assigned the loftiest task a citizen can receive. Without democracy, it would not have been possible for a representative of Peru’s teachers and workers to reach the presidency of the republic.

Mine is also a government that fully respects citizens’ freedoms, institutions, and the rule of law. We have demonstrated this in full during the months that we have been in power in the country. For that reason, I would like to call attention to the urgency of protecting our democracies from the threats posed by authoritarian impulses, institutionalized corruption, the actions of destabilizing and anti-democratic groups, and the impact of organized crime in the Hemisphere. As established in the Inter-American Democratic Charter, “the peoples of the Americas have the right to democracy and their governments have the obligation to promote and defend it.” In Peru, we recovered our democracy more than 20 years ago, and we are determined to continue working to consolidate it and to generate ever greater well-being for our people.

All these concerns, and many others, are reflected in the agenda of this Summit and will also be discussed by our countries at the next General Assembly of the Organization of American States, which Peru will have the honor of hosting in October.

Thank you very much.