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CONCEPT PAPER

Tenth Summit of the Americas
Dominican Republic, 2025

“Building a Secure and Sustainable Hemisphere with Shared Prosperity”

(Presented by the Chair of the SIRG)

I. Introduction

In December of this year, the Dominican Republic will host the Tenth Summit of the Americas. This gathering of heads of state and government will provide a forum to discuss issues of the greatest importance for the Hemisphere, its countries, and the region’s citizens, and to jointly agree on commitments and actions that will position the Americas as a secure and sustainable hemisphere with shared prosperity.

The Dominican Republic reiterates its gratitude to all the countries that participate in the Summits Process and that have entrusted us with the organization of this important initiative. We understand that the only way to achieve the success to which we aspire is by ensuring the valuable participation of each and every one of us.

Since it was first held in 1994, the Summit of the Americas has become a major forum for building hemispheric consensus. Until that year, the most far-reaching mechanism for regional dialogue was based at the Organization of American States (OAS) and involved ambassadors and, occasionally, foreign ministers. The pre-1994 Summits were in the distant past: in Panama City, Panama, in 1956, and in Punta del Este, Uruguay, in 1967.

The Summit of the Americas is the most formalized and systematic venue for hemispheric dialogue. To date, eleven summit meetings have been held: nine regular summits and two special ones: Miami, 1994; Santa Cruz de la Sierra, 1996; Santiago, 1998; Quebec City, 2001; Monterrey, 2004; Mar del Plata, 2005; Port of Spain, 2009; Cartagena de Indias, 2012; Panama City, 2015; Lima, 2018; and Los Angeles, 2022.

The Summits of the Americas Process had made significant contributions to the inter-American system, including the Special Rapporteurship for Freedom of Expression of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), which was put forward at the Santiago Summit;

the Inter-American Democratic Charter, at the Quebec City Summit; and the Inter-American Open Data Program to Prevent and Combat Corruption (PIDA), at the Lima Summit.

Recognized as a zone of peace because of the absence of armed conflicts between its countries, the region has a long history of seeking integration, cooperating, and working together to meet common challenges. In today's world, an effective response to the leading challenges facing global society can only come from multilateralism, cooperation, and integration. The far-reaching disruptions that are transforming the world are global in nature, and no single country can address those changes in isolation or separately from the community of nations. Likewise, the close ties between our countries mean that without dialogue and hemispheric cooperation they cannot make steady progress toward shared prosperity and toward offering more opportunities to more people.

The countries of the Hemisphere are aware that this task involves not only governments but also the private sector, civil society, and multilateral development organizations, all of which are key players in consolidating the Americas as a hemisphere where prosperity, human security, and the sustainable management of its abundant environmental resources are possible.

The Tenth Summit of the Americas, which aims at building a secure, sustainable, and prosperous Hemisphere, will acknowledge that development and higher levels of well-being are not possible without basic security guaranteed by public policies that place human beings at the center of public action.

The Dominican Republic is committed to working with a hemispheric vision and in close coordination and collaboration with key actors to identify opportunities for defining and implementing public policies and public and private investment and cooperation programs that can respond to the multiple challenges—both systemic and some others more recent—that the region faces.

The Tenth Summit of the Americas, scheduled to take place at in December 2025, offers us an opportunity to return to the path of consensus, to strengthen hemispheric alliances, and to make progress toward the Hemisphere we want.

II. Current context: a turning point

The Americas, like the rest of the world, are living times of uncertainty and facing geopolitical, socioeconomic, and environmental challenges that demand urgent action to ensure multiple dimensions of human security. Accelerating the region's industrialization, combining local and foreign capital investment as a foundation for bolstering economic growth, generating more opportunities for people, and creating higher quality jobs are urgent tasks.

No one questions the levels of growth achieved by many of our countries. Nevertheless, that growth has not enabled the narrowing of gaps required to overcome the levels of poverty that impact large sectors of our societies. Because of their wide socioeconomic gaps, the nations of Latin America and the Caribbean have levels of poverty and extreme poverty equal to 27.3% and 10.6% of the population, respectively,¹ and the region also has limited social mobility due to constraints on access to education, health, nutrition, and employment. Poverty and insecurity continue to be interrelated, and that reality warrants urgent attention.

1. ECLAC, 2024

In addition to producing economic, social, and environmental imbalances, those conditions also hinder greater cohesion and create environments conducive to the emergence and proliferation of human and citizen insecurity and organized crime. Despite being home to only 8% of the world's population, Latin America and the Caribbean account for 30% of the global violent homicide rate, despite the absence of inter-state conflicts or civil wars.

The impact of poverty and violence affects regional stability by limiting the ability of governments to respond effectively—and, if possible, jointly—to the threats of organized crime. According to data from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), violence costs Latin America about 3.44% of the regional gross domestic product,² an amount similar to our total spending on infrastructure.

Tackling and reducing migration, citizen insecurity, violence, and the actions of transnational crime involves returning to the path of sustainable development and accelerating actions to ensure that the population perceives the benefits of economic growth, the rule of law, and democracy.

Extreme weather events have a direct impact on people's lives, as they have direct and interconnected repercussions for human and citizen security, health, and water, food, and energy security. Increased rainfall and warmer temperatures create conditions that encourage the proliferation of disease vectors, expanding the range of sicknesses such as dengue fever, malaria, and Zika virus disease.

These meteorological events alter water availability patterns through droughts and the resulting decline in freshwater reserves, which in turn impacts agriculture and food, water, and energy security. Natural disasters such as floods, hurricanes, typhoons, tornadoes, thunderstorms, erosion, and forest fires—which are also related to rising temperatures—threaten production, particularly farm output, limiting economic possibilities and impacting the environment and human health and mobility.

In addition to the traditional causes of migration, which has historically been related to social, economic, or political crises, significant displacement flows are now arising as the result of extreme weather events and the destruction of forests, lands used for agriculture and livestock, and fishing grounds. At the same time, human displacements are influenced by the availability of food and water. Increasing drought and soil erosion not only reduces food production capacity and increases water stress: it also impacts energy generation from such renewable sources as hydroelectric power. These conditions generate existential threats to human lives and also to the stability and legitimacy of governments, which must address these challenges at a time of scarce resources.

The region's weaknesses are many, but so are its strengths. The Americas cover more than 42 million square kilometers and, because of its vast geographic and ecosystemic diversity, the Hemisphere has enormous natural resources. Taken as a whole, the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean have shown themselves to be relatively resilient to the growing uncertainty affecting the global economy; the global economic leadership of the United States and its dominance of the technologies of the fourth industrial revolution is also recognized, as is the natural wealth and extensive development of Canada.

2. Available at: <https://www.iadb.org/en/news/high-crime-costs-burden-latin-america-and-caribbean>.

In recent decades, increased private investment in areas vital to the region's development—including trade, infrastructure, and connectivity—and the development of small and medium-sized industries have had a significant impact on the Hemisphere's economies, the creation of jobs and opportunities, and poverty reduction. The efforts made toward the consolidation of democracy and governance, against corruption, and to uphold respect for the rule of law have been widely recognized.

The region is continuing its efforts to achieve greater regional integration in order to grow its economies sustainably, exchange knowledge and encourage innovation, increase social cohesion, and meet its common challenges, including those that involve citizen security, the effects of climate change, food insecurity, and health emergencies. A coordinated effort will enable nations to adopt more effective and sustainable solutions and ensure long-term resilience.

III. Strengthening Security in the Americas

*“Without security there can be no development”
Luis Abinader, President of the Dominican Republic, 2023*

Human security as a starting point

In a world marked by turbulence and uncertainty, the Tenth Summit of the Americas can make a significant contribution by arguing a strong case for building security. Security is a fundamental pillar of sustainable development and provides the necessary environment for people to live with dignity, freedom, and opportunities for growth. In its broadest sense, this means security as a fundamental element for achieving people-centered development and human well-being, equity, rights, inclusion, and respect for nature, and where scientific and technological developments contribute to attaining sustainable development and shared prosperity.

Citizen security is a central dimension of human security and is essential for coexistence, because it emphasizes people as the object of public policies that address security issues. Beyond conventional visions of national security, which aim at preserving the state, its territory, its competencies, and its institutions, the central concern of public policies in citizen security is the social and regulatory conditions that guarantee the social relations of individuals and communities, their preservation, and their well-being.

An environment of security is essential in attracting investment, facilitating trade, and promoting job creation. Citizen security reduces violence and crime, allowing to live without fear and to participate actively in society. To summarize, security in all its dimensions is a vital component of sustainable development. Without it, equitable and lasting progress that benefits society as a whole cannot be achieved.

A strong hemispheric partnership geared toward action and tangible results

Aware of the security challenges facing the region, and building on the opportunities and strengths found in the countries of the Americas as a whole, the Dominican Republic, as the host country of the Tenth Summit, has identified the urgent need to open up new debates and redirect some of those already under way on issues related to human security and its various dimensions. Those dimensions are addressed below.

1. Citizen security

Citizen and community insecurity is undoubtedly the most pressing of those dimensions. Present in practically every country in the region, citizen and community insecurity is one of the most widespread problems in the Americas, affecting millions of people in their day-to-day lives. Organized crime—including drug trafficking, human trafficking, and arms trafficking—plays a significant role in the region’s citizen and community insecurity. Criminal organizations operating on a large scale and at the international level undermine state security and the rule of law. They operate in contexts of institutional weaknesses and vulnerabilities within the police, military, and justice systems.

Insecurity has a significant economic and social impact on the region. Theft, vandalism, and extortion can lead to a drop in investment and negatively affect the business climate. The constant fear of falling victim to crime has a corrosive effect on the social fabric and on the mental health of citizens. Mistrust of others and the authorities, post-traumatic stress, and other mental health problems are commonly found in communities affected by high levels of insecurity. The costs associated with medical care for victims of violence and with strengthened security measures represent a considerable burden for local and national economies.

The Hemisphere has deployed enormous efforts to address those challenges. Within the Summits of the Americas Process and since its inception, major reflections have been devoted to the issue of security, as seen in a range of the mandates adopted.³ Similarly, the OAS member states, meeting in Antigua, Guatemala, at the forty-third regular session of the General Assembly in 2013, adopted the Declaration of Antigua Guatemala, “For a Comprehensive Policy against the World Drug Problem in the Americas.”⁴ The thirtieth special session of the United Nations General Assembly adopted a joint resolution set out in the document “Our joint commitment to effectively addressing and countering the world drug problem.”⁵

Social gaps in the Hemisphere—the lack of opportunities in particular—are one of the main factors contributing to citizen insecurity in the Americas. Combined with extreme poverty, the absence of employment and education opportunities encourages crime and emigration. Many young people are pushed into activities, primarily illicit, or are forced to leave their countries and communities of origin in order to survive.

Irregular migratory flows in the Americas are primarily due to economic, environmental, and political factors. However, the current consensus on the topic has identified several challenges, including the border control capacities of governments.

There is an urgent need to identify alternative models to improve citizen security. The transnational nature of organized crime requires close cooperation among the countries of the Americas. Exchanging information, coordinating efforts, and supporting joint actions to reduce crime is vital. The creation of neighborhood watch networks, mentoring programs for at-risk youth, and activities that build social cohesion can contribute to a safer environment.

3. Summit of the Americas mandates on security issues available at: <https://www.summit-americas.org/sisca/sec.html>.

4. Available at: https://www.oas.org/en/media_center/press_release.asp?sCodigo=S-010.

5. Available at: https://www.unodc.org/documents/colombia/2016/abril/UNGASS_DOCUMENTO_FINAL_2016.pdf.

The multilateral development financing agencies in the region, through multiple programs aimed at strengthening citizen and community safety to reduce crime, have proposed actions to generate safe spaces that are free from fear. They include pursuing crime and violence prevention policies to reduce crime rates, promoting the use of data and information in decision-making, and a range of other measures. The initiatives implemented in different countries of the region —through the use of financial credit instruments, non-reimbursable cooperation, technical assistance, and South-South cooperation, and with the support of governments, private sector companies, and community organizations—are modeling solutions that have produced changes and created learnings that could help the region identify effective new models for strengthening security in its territories and most vulnerable communities.

The Summit of the Americas could be the occasion for the creation of a *Hemispheric Platform of Action for Citizen and Community Security*. Such a platform would seek to build a shared agenda and coordinate actions among the Hemisphere’s governments, multilateral organizations, private sector actors, and civil society to provide a programmatic and investment response on a larger scale, one that could bring about positive and tangible changes for the countries and their citizens. This would be an initiative involving funding and capacities commensurate with the dimensions of the citizen and community security challenges faced by the Hemisphere’s countries.

2. Food security

A close relationship exists between food insecurity, lack of opportunities, and crime: all three drive migration dramatically. Devising measures to improve the availability and quality of food is therefore an urgent task, given that hunger poses a major obstacle to creating the opportunities that allow social mobility and reduce the incidence of crime.

In the current regional context, the fact that 74% of Latin American and Caribbean countries are highly vulnerable to extreme weather events that impact their food security is a cause for concern.⁶ Accordingly, there is an urgent need to strengthen food production and distribution mechanisms to prevent the spread of hunger in the region.

Latin America and the Caribbean exports a quarter of all its agricultural output and, by 2028, it is estimated that the region will account for around 25% of the world’s agricultural and fisheries exports.⁷ That makes us as an export powerhouse in those areas, with the world’s food security to a large extent resting on our shoulders. Likewise, according to data from the World Economic Forum, our region has the greatest agricultural potential and per capita water availability on the planet: with only 15% of the planet’s surface area, it receives 29% of all rainfall and accounts for 40% of the world’s fresh water.⁸

Major efforts are being made in the region to ensure the population’s timely access to nutritious food in sufficient amounts. Nevertheless, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), 37.5% of the region’s population faces moderate or severe food insecurity. In

6. Available at: <https://www.paho.org/en/news/27-1-2025-new-report-74-percent-latin-american-and-caribbean-countries-are-highly-exposed>.

7. Available at: <https://www.fao.org/americas/news/news-detail/FAO-OECD-Latin-America-and-the-Caribbean-will-account-for-25-of-global-agricultural-and-fisheries-exports-by-2028/en>.

8. Available at: <https://www.weforum.org/stories/2024/01/latin-america-solution-food-insecurity/>.

a region that is a net food exporter, 43 million Latin American and Caribbean people face hunger. Food insecurity in the region is almost 8 percentage points above the global average.

The shortages affect different groups unequally, with women and residents of rural areas, where most of the food is produced, being the most vulnerable. Difficulties in accessing food are the result of economic inequalities and, most particularly, of the high levels of poverty and extreme poverty found in the region.

In addition to food insecurity and malnutrition, the region's rising levels of overweight and obesity, their consequences on public health, and lost and wasted food continue to pose challenges.

Agriculture must bolster its role in addressing key challenges, such as combating poverty, eradicating hunger and improving nutrition, while at the same time coping with extreme weather events, biodiversity loss, pollution, and desertification. While no single solution exists to the challenges faced by agriculture and food systems, countries must be supported in improving their capacities for producing and marketing food.

In view of the dynamic interactions between agriculture and the global trade in foodstuffs, we recognize the interdependence of countries in attaining food security, nutrition, food safety, and sustainability through open trade policies that are consistent with established international rules. While we recognize the importance of domestic production, the diversification of international, regional, and local supplies is also an important way to strengthen the resilience of global food supply chains to external shocks.

The world produces enough food to eradicate hunger and malnutrition. Collectively, the Hemisphere has the knowledge, technology, and resources to defeat hunger and poverty. What we need is greater political will to create the conditions for expanding access to timely, healthy, and sufficient food by the Hemisphere's entire population. These unprecedented challenges require a larger and more effective commitment, financing, and action at all levels, together with sound policies to build food systems that are more inclusive, healthy, and sustainable.

One laudable example on which we can build is the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty,⁹ launched at the G20 summit in Rio de Janeiro in 2024. As a response intended to accelerate efforts to eradicate hunger and poverty, reduce inequalities, and contribute to the revitalization of global partnerships in pursuit of sustainable development, it has the support of more than 80 countries—including a significant number of countries in the Americas—and multilateral development organizations.

3. *Energy security*

Faced with extreme weather events as we are, energy security demands the capacity to guarantee a constant, reliable, and sustainable supply of energy that meets society's needs while mitigating the risks associated with geopolitical crises, market fluctuations, and extreme weather events.

9. Available at: https://www.gov.br/planalto/en/latest-news/2024/07/world-leadership-endorse-global-alliance-against-hunger-and-poverty?set_language=en.

In the Americas, energy security is of strategic importance because of the wealth of natural resources, such as oil, natural gas, and renewable energies, that position the region as a key global player. In addition, our region has two thirds of the world's lithium reserves and 40% of its copper, both of which are essential inputs for the expanding battery manufacturing industry.

This abundance coexists alongside significant challenges, including the tasks of diversifying energy sources and ensuring equitable access to basic services. This demands a coordinated approach that includes energy policies, climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies, the resilience of clean energy supply chains, and measures to reduce domestic inequalities in energy access.

Regional energy integration is essential to the Hemisphere's energy security. In Latin America and the Caribbean, initiatives such as the Central American Electricity Interconnection System (SIEPAC)¹⁰ have demonstrated the potential of cooperation to strengthen the electricity supply and improve its efficiency.

Extreme weather events are one of the main threats to energy security in the Hemisphere, with impacts on both infrastructure and service provision. Hurricanes, droughts, and floods are all capable of disrupting electric services, from generation to distribution. In Latin America, prolonged droughts have reduced the capacity for hydroelectric generation, which is a major source of energy in countries such as Brazil, Ecuador, and Paraguay. At the same time, high temperatures affect power grids and increase energy demand in critical sectors such as refrigeration and agriculture.

The vulnerability of energy infrastructure to these events underscores the need for investments in climate resilience. This includes strengthening electricity grids, diversifying generation sources, and promoting decentralized systems that reduce dependence on vulnerable, centralized infrastructures. Projects such as microgrid systems, already in place in some parts of the Caribbean, are an example of how technology can mitigate those risks and guarantee a stable supply during climate crises.

Gaps in energy access are a persistent challenge in Latin America and the Caribbean. According to recent data, more than 20 million people in the region do not have access to electricity, and that situation disproportionately affects rural and marginalized communities. Not only does this contribute to perpetuating cycles of poverty, but it also constrains the affected countries' economic and social development.

4. *Water security*

Water security involves the ability to access water in adequate quantities and with adequate quality for human sustenance, health, and socioeconomic development, in consideration of different ecosystem conditions and resilience to threats such as drought, floods, and pollution.

Water security is a relatively new concern that has acquired great relevance on account of the combined effects of two factors: poor management of the available water supply, and extremely unequal access to the resource.

With 45% of the world's water resources, the Hemisphere's development has been inadvertently driven by water. Taken as a whole, Latin America and the Caribbean region is the world's

10. Available at: https://cric.org.gt/wp/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/resumen_del_diseno_general_del_mer_rii_v3.pdf.

richest region in terms of water resources and, because of its unequal distribution in different ecosystems, the resource's sustainable use must be assured in order to preserve its existence. Ensuring water security means expanding and strengthening initiatives that protect watersheds by promoting the development of sustainable infrastructure.

The Tenth Summit of the Americas can play an important role in advancing and agreeing on joint actions to expand and strengthen initiatives such as the Water Funds that work to protect watersheds by promoting the development of sustainable infrastructure. These are defined as financial and governance mechanisms specifically designed to conserve and restore ecosystems critical to the water supply.

As stated by the World Bank in its latest report on the importance of water management,¹¹ understanding water as a strategic and finite resource and the need for management supported by good infrastructure and awareness of the environment will help governments define better policies and work with different sectors, thereby raising awareness of the need for sustainable practices.

Likewise, water security cannot be conceived of or guaranteed without considering proposals for rescuing watersheds, especially those that often serve to supply several countries; therefore, thought is required about a regulatory framework to regulate the sustainable shared use of water.

Rivers often serve as national borders, so their protection and the regulation of their shared use is not only vital to ensure the availability of the resource, but also to avoid the sovereignty disputes or national security issues to which the demarcation of borders often lends itself.

Moving forward with different types of security

Living in safe environments and enjoying access to healthy food, water, and energy are critical to our economies' development. Similarly, taking advantage of opportunities requires access to quality education and health services, adequate housing, and healthy natural environments. Public policies must be able to contribute to these goals by facilitating private investment and productive transformation and by boosting public investment in economic infrastructure and basic social services.

This era, dominated by a strong tendency toward change not based on widespread consensus, is characterized by uncertainties that unquestionably disrupt our aspirations for secure lives. The results of this Summit, overlooking the points that separate us, can offer an example of how cooperation is an effective tool for forging closer ties, building trust, and lowering tensions.

The Americas are committed to achieving profound and tangible changes, with a sense of urgency, in order to effectively attain prosperity and sustainable development against a backdrop of security. Strengthening robust mechanisms for cooperation and for following up on the implementation of the agreements adopted by all participating stakeholders is another vital task.

Cooperation, coordination, and joint work between multilateral development agencies and governments are fundamental in seeking to scale up the initiatives under way in the region, to enable them to grow, and to invest them with greater sustainability over time. Strengthening and expanding

11. Available at:
<https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099450103222231166/pdf/P1668950059b6e0af0bc670ffe759af1487.pdf>.

public-private initiatives and partnerships at scale, with the inclusion of civil society and communities, will be some of the objectives through which we will be able to address, on a commensurate scale, the challenges facing the region.

The Tenth Summit of the Americas is an invaluable opportunity to strengthen hemispheric cooperation, guarantee peace, and take steps toward the regional integration for which we have worked so hard.