



JOINT SUMMIT WORKING GROUP  
Meeting of High-Level Authorities  
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## FINAL REPORT

### MEETING OF HIGH-LEVEL AUTHORITIES OF THE JOINT SUMMIT WORKING GROUP (JSWG)

#### 1. Welcoming remarks by the Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS), Chair of the Joint Working Group (JSWG)<sup>i</sup>

In his capacity as Chair of the Joint Summit Working Group (JSWG), the Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS), Mr. Luis Almagro, welcomed the High-Level Authorities to the Meeting of JSWG. He said this forum would give an overview from the perspective of the Summits Process Chair, regarding the progress made in preparing for the Ninth Summit of the Americas and to exchange ideas on the role of the JSWG member organizations in implementing the regional hemispheric agenda during the “pandemic recovery” phase.

The Secretary General cited the efforts made since the OAS and the JSWG institutions signed the Memorandum of Understanding in September 2018 for the JSWG entities to harmonize and coordinate efforts in order to facilitate technical and financial assistance for states in their quest to implement the Summits mandates. This endeavor resulted in a wide-ranging agenda aimed at promoting the implementation of the Lima Commitment, which in turn included developing and implementing a Plan of Action to promote and deliver technical assistance to states of the Americas while fostering cooperation to share best practices in preventing and combating corruption.

As well, the Secretary General spoke about the JSWG organizations' contribution during the consultations to decide on the theme for the IX Summit “Building a Sustainable, Resilient, and Equitable Future” and the five draft political commitments that were being negotiated by the states, reflecting strategic areas of work for the region: Regional Program for Digital Transformation; Action Plan on Health and Resilience in the Americas; Accelerating the Clean, Sustainable, Renewable, and Just Energy Transition; Our Sustainable Green Future; and Inter-American Action Plan on Democratic Governance.

The Secretary General called on the entities to strengthen the regional coordination process through the JSWG, thereby enhancing the work of the 13 entities in the region's social and economic recovery phase.

**2. Remarks by the Chair of the Summits of the Americas Process, Government of the United States, Ambassador Brian Nichols, Assistant Secretary for Western Hemisphere Affairs, U.S. State Department**

Ambassador Brian Nichols, thanking the OAS Secretary General for convening the meeting, lauded the Summits Secretariat's and the JSWG's role in developing the Summit agenda.

In his remarks, he also stressed that the Summit theme, "*Building a Sustainable, Resilient and Equitable Future*," addressed the most pressing problems facing the Hemisphere, among them the HIV/AIDS pandemic and its impact on the health, economic, educational, and social systems. Ambassador Nichols went on to note that the Ninth Summit of the Americas offered an opportunity to address the threats to democracy, the climate crisis, and the lack of equitable access to economic, social, and political opportunities, all of which hit the most vulnerable and historically marginalized people the hardest.

He further stressed how substantive input from the various actors in the process helped ensure that the Summit priorities reflect the needs of the citizens of the Americas. Mr. Nichols observed that the JSWG experience would help ensure that the commitments of the leaders would lead to innovative actions that would have an impact on the Americas.

Also, recalling the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Inter-American Democratic Charter in 2021, he reaffirmed his government's commitment to bringing the region's democratic leaders together to honor that anniversary and to move forward with an action plan to advance democracy in the Americas. In response to rollbacks in democracy plus human rights abuses in the region, he said citizens in our countries were calling for transparent, inclusive, and resilient democracies and said that we would strive to demonstrate how responsive democratic processes and institutions were in terms of the needs of citizens, especially the most vulnerable.

Ambassador Nichols underscored the U.S. government's decision to focus on tackling the climate crisis through investment in and developing sustainable and affordable infrastructure, driving the transition to clean energy, and creating new economic opportunities by harnessing the potential of clean energy as an engine for economic development. This would include measures to address deforestation, ecosystem conversion, and plastic pollution in the oceans. He said that multilateral development banks and private sector partners, by adopting and sharing best practices, were enhancing the ability to accelerate the development of sustainable clean energy infrastructure.

Likewise, he said the Ninth Summit would be an opportunity to have an initial regional agenda for digital transformation, which would increase access to digital technologies and ensure that growth would be inclusive and equitable. Asserting that our future is digital, he remarked that our Hemisphere's ability to compete depends largely on defining a shared vision as to how to promote digital ecosystems that connect people and improve their lives.

Concluding his remarks, Ambassador Nichols reaffirmed the vision of the United States for leaders of the democracies of the Americas to work as "true partners for prosperity."

### **3. Statements by Joint Summit Working Group institutions**

#### **3.1. Remarks by Mr. Carlos Felipe Jaramillo, World Bank Vice President for Latin America and the Caribbean**

World Bank Vice President for Latin America and the Caribbean Carlos Felipe Jaramillo expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to participate in the preparatory meeting for the Ninth Summit and reiterated the World Bank's commitment to the actions of the JSWG. Mr. Jaramillo stated that the Bank shared the objective of revitalizing multilateralism and regional instruments. It endorsed the five thematic areas of the Summit's agenda, which are priority areas of work for the World Bank.

Firstly, he mentioned the area of health and resilience, noting that the pandemic had brought to the fore the need to strengthen health systems and develop new tools to better respond to future crises. As a function of this priority, the World Bank has mobilized some \$160 billion globally to help countries deal with the crisis brought about by the pandemic; and another \$20 billion to purchase and distribute vaccines, benefiting approximately a dozen countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Secondly, he underscored the Green Future as a priority area for the Bank as it was evident that Latin American economies could grow by devoting more attention to protecting the environment while building a greener, more prosperous, resilient, and inclusive future in the region. In that regard, the World Bank supports the implementation of greener policies, the control of deforestation, and better management of biodiversity, while bearing in mind that the Americas account for 22% of the world's forested areas, making it a major global carbon sink.

Thirdly, Mr. Jaramillo emphasized that as regards the transition to clean energy, the World Bank was financing renewable energy, clean transportation, and efficient urban design projects in several Latin American countries and had been supporting the efforts by governments to ensure that their economies were not dependent on fossil fuels and to diversify their energy matrix to provide alternatives to hydroelectric power, which suffers greatly in times of drought.

Regarding digital transformation, he said that the crisis stemming from the pandemic had accelerated the digitalization process, which holds enormous transformative power and generates quality jobs in e-commerce, digital platforms, and financial services, among others.

He concluded noting that in terms of democratic governance, the World Bank had an interest in continuing to promote reforms in public procurement and public financial management, as well as in government mechanisms for accountability and transparency.

#### **3.2. Remarks by Dr. Carissa F. Etienne, Director of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)**

PAHO Director Dr. Carissa Etienne, expressing her gratitude for the invitation to the meeting, emphasized that this forum was a key mechanism for maintaining a dialogue that would allow for collective translation of the five political commitments and the two plans of action of the Ninth Summit into viable actions.

She underscored the important role of the JSWG in ensuring a post-pandemic recovery that is sustainable, transformative, and conducive to gains in equality and development, and further pointed to the need for coordinated efforts to tackle shared problems and avoid duplication at all costs and with a greater focus on resilience, and to address the health, economic, social, and environmental dimensions collectively. Dr. Etienne further emphasized that recovery efforts faced an unprecedented fiscal and monetary challenge that impacts the health and social sectors and the sustainability of social protection policies that were so vital to mitigating inequities and protecting the vulnerable. Even greater inequalities could arise from the post-pandemic world unless the social determinants of health, other persistent barriers to accessing health and healthcare services, and the underlying causes of health problems are strategically addressed.

She explained that PAHO was therefore working closely and effectively with the Summits Secretariat, the host country, and the co-chairs of the Working Groups on Political Commitment and the Plan of Action on Health and Resilience. She stated that PAHO already had specific mandates and a proposed work program to provide member states with resources to support them within the scope of the proposed political commitment.

Furthermore, she said, PAHO has engaged in outreach in the member states regarding the Political Commitment and the Plan of Action for Health and Resilience to make the most of this unprecedented political opportunity provided by the Summit of the Americas, involving the ministries of health, foreign affairs, finance, and science and technology.

Regarding the development of the Plan of Action on Health and Resilience included in the Commitment document being negotiated by the states, Dr. Etienne stressed the need for the ministries of health and finance to coordinate efforts with government departments responsible for technology, social protection, and education so that their plans could mutually reinforce each other and respond to the multiple needs of our population.

Dr. Etienne concluded her remarks calling for a JSWG joint declaration to be prepared in support of a shared vision to implement the five Political Commitments of the Summit.

### **3.3. Remarks by Mr. Manuel Otero, Director General, Inter-American Institute for Agriculture (IICA)**

Mr. Manuel Otero, Director General of IICA, reaffirmed the Institute's commitment to the preparations for the Ninth Summit, underscoring the importance of food security policies in the Americas, the world's leading food exporting region.

He also pointed to the need to link food security, agriculture, and rural development with the stability of democratic systems in the region, since they have proven to be instruments for peace. IICA therefore joined in emphasizing the importance of food security and environmental sustainability.

### **3.4. Remarks by Ms. Linda Maguire, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Deputy Director for the Region**

Ms. Maguire began by accentuating how the agenda of the Ninth Summit and UNDP's working agenda converged. She explained that the UNDP Strategic Plan 2022-2025 outlined three directions for change: structural transformation, leaving no one behind; building resilience; and the UNDP

Regional Programme 2022-2025 for Latin America and the Caribbean, which establishes four outcomes in relation to the issues of effective governance, inclusive and sustainable growth, equity and inclusion, sustainable and resilient development, and green recovery.

In her remarks, Ms. Maguire said she agreed that governance should be one of the key Summit topics – good governance being critical to surmounting structural barriers to development in the region and to addressing the recent effects of the pandemic, in which connection Ms. Maguire recalled the main message from the [Regional Human Development Report \(2021\)](#), which argues that the region of Latin America and the Caribbean is caught in a double development trap characterized by high inequality and volatile growth, despite decades of progress. The report proposes a conversation in order to understand the factors that perpetuate this vicious cycle, and recommends that in order to break free from this cycle the region must address three structural problems of governance: firstly, heavily concentrated power, used to promote the interests of a few, which translates into increased frustration among the population; secondly, the high levels of violence stemming from the lack of mechanisms to peacefully resolve tensions resulting from perceptions of injustice in the region; and thirdly, fragile social protection systems, evident in the pandemic response.

Absent a well-functioning social protection system, it is unlikely that a strong social contract will be achieved. Between 35% and 82% of the working population is excluded from social protection systems, according to figures from the UNDP, which argues that good governance is essential to managing this uncertainty and to resolving tensions that arise, calls for a rethinking of social contracts, and a re-assessment of the values and policies whereby risk can be managed collectively.

In closing, Ms. Maguire reiterated UNDP's commitment to remaining involved and to collaborating on preparations for the Ninth Summit and in post-Summit work.

### **3.5. Remarks by Dante Mossi, Executive President, Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI)**

Mr. Mossi reaffirmed CABEI's commitment to the pursuit of a sustainable agenda to help curb illegal immigration from Central America to the United States. He described the Summit as a turning point to put environmental sustainability policies into action in the region, for the Central American region to become a sustainable zone – both for very poor individual consumers and for peasants, providing them with everything from solar energy to motorcycles or electric vehicles so they can get around from home to market.

He said CABEI was willing to collaborate with the OAS to ensure a successful Summit of the Americas, including by organizing a meeting with the private sector, which, in his opinion, would allow for the sustainability of the initiatives.

### **3.6. Remarks by Mr. Andreas Schaal, Director for Global Relations, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)**

Mr. Andreas Schaal, OECD Director for Global Relations and Co-operation, expressed his appreciation for the invitation and conveyed greetings on behalf of the OECD Secretary-General, Mr. Matthias Cormann, who was unable to attend. Mr. Schaal reiterated the OECD's commitment to supporting implementation of the five commitment documents arising from the Ninth Summit.

In his comments, he outlined the areas of collaboration through which the OECD could support the development and implementation of the policy commitments. Firstly, the OECD could support implementation of the Inter-American Action Plan on Democratic Governance, especially the issues included in the document [“Integrity for Good Governance in Latin America and the Caribbean: An Action Plan.”](#) which was prepared pursuant to the Lima Commitment that was adopted.

Likewise, mention was made of the interest in supporting implementation of the Action Plan on Health and Resilience through work carried out to identify best practices in responding to pandemic-related challenges faced by the health sector. Regarding digital transformation, the OECD has made the [OECD Artificial Intelligence Principles](#) available to the states. The document puts forward a set of recommendations on the development of artificial intelligence. Regarding Green Future and Clean Energy policy commitments, the OECD could contribute by mobilizing funding for energy projects.

In closing, Mr. Schaal reiterated the OECD's commitment to supporting the JSWG's efforts.

### **3.7. Remarks by Mr. Fabrizio Operti, Integration and Trade Sector Manager, Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)**

Mr. Fabrizio Operti conveyed the greetings from IDB President Mauricio-Claver Carone, and applauded the organizers for convening the Ninth Summit. He said the IDB viewed the political commitments of the Ninth Summit as being aligned with the IDB's vision for the region, articulated in the document *“Vision 2025: Reinvest in the Americas: a Decade of Opportunities.”* and in particular aligned with the issues of regional integration, digital economy, support for small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as with the issues of gender and diversity and support for climate change.

Alongside the comments from IDB technicians regarding the draft policy commitment documents, Mr. Operti mentioned that the IDB played a role as facilitator of the Americas Business Dialogue (ABD), a platform that brings together 450 multinational companies and chambers of commerce and industry in the Americas, to develop public policy recommendations for the countries of the region.

Mr. Operti underscored the need for the public and private sectors to work together for post-pandemic economic recovery and to promote economic and trade integration in the region, thereby helping to make value chains more resilient and efficient, as well as fostering job creation and economic growth.

### **3.8. Remarks by Luis Yañez, Secretary General of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)**

Mr. Luis Yañez considered the Summit of the Americas an opportunity to strengthen multilateralism and to move forward with an agenda to build a resilient, inclusive, and equitable future that is essential in these times of crisis.

He added that ECLAC had already made progress in the five areas established for the Summit mandates. He reiterated ECLAC's readiness to assist with preparation of the action plans and with implementing them, under the arrangements determined by the leadership of the OAS and the U.S. government.

### **3.9. Remarks by Mr. Andrés Rugeles, Chief of Staff, Development Bank of Latin America (CAF)**

Mr. Andrés Rugeles, saying he was grateful for the invitation, brought the attendees greetings from Mr. Sergio Diaz-Granados, CAF's Executive President. He said that for CAF, the Summit of the Americas was coming at an important time for consensus building in view of the challenges faced by the countries of the Hemisphere with key issues such as health, green growth, energy transition, digital transformation, and democratic governance.

He underscored CAF's commitment to contributing to the Summits Process, noting the coordinating role played by the Summits Secretariat in supporting the JSWG efforts, further explaining that CAF was undergoing a process of internal strengthening, which included a capital increase, the largest in its history, amounting to US\$7 billion. This would allow it to help member countries achieve their sustainable development and integration goals through a renewed agenda. CAF has thus proposed four key areas of work that are consistent with the themes proposed for the Ninth Summit. Firstly, CAF will become a Green Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean to help shareholder countries make the transition to low-carbon and resilient economies, economic recovery and resilience, and positive biodiversity. Secondly, CAF will help subnational governments pursue environmentally-sustainable development with a new urban agenda to strengthen local finance and territorial management. Thirdly, CAF will focus on continuing to foster regional integration through the development of physical, functional, digital, and resilient infrastructure to drive transformation in the countries. A fourth area he mentioned was strategic prioritization focused on a green agenda, economic recovery, equity, and inclusion through increased resource mobilization.

In closing, Mr. Rugeles urged the participants not to lose sight of how important it was to honor the commitments undertaken by member states. He spoke about the role of the JSWG during this phase and singled out three elements that should characterize the process of preparing for the Summit: leadership, multilateralism, and foresight.

### **3.10. Remarks by Ms. Maaret Cañedo, Regional Strategic Partnerships Officer, International Labour Organization (ILO)**

Conveying her appreciation for the invitation, Ms. Cañedo brought greetings from Regional Director for the Americas Mr. Vinicius Pinheiro. Ms. Cañedo touched on how the ILO mandates aligned with Summits priorities, pointing to the importance of enhancing tripartite social dialogue as the main support for building public policies with full respect for human rights.

She explained that the ILO viewed with concern the situation of vulnerability experienced by women, young people, indigenous peoples and people of African descent, persons with disabilities, and other groups that were being prevented from fully returning to productive life. That was why the ILO had expressed an interest in remaining involved in efforts to move hemispheric labor toward a formal economy characterized by a decent work approach.

She further noted that economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic must be people-centered and focused on the need to strengthen multilateralism at the global, regional, and national levels, with a view to creating or strengthening policies to give priority to creating and strengthening decent, inclusive labor policies with special emphasis on the inclusion of gender, as well as of vulnerable people.

She said the ILO had sought to carry on its work with the OAS under the terms of the Centennial Declaration to step up its collaboration with small and medium-sized enterprises, along the lines of productivity and innovation and resulting in digital and green transformation.

She cited, too, other areas of the ILO's work such as projects it undertakes to help receiving countries and regions integrate migrants and refugees into society and into the economy, as well as job training for young people, eradication of child labor, and vocational training policies for employment.

To conclude, she reiterated the ILO's willingness to support Summit preparations for employment-focused economic recovery.

#### **4. Closing remarks**

After thanking the JSWG entities for their participation OAS Secretary General, Mr. Luis Almagro, adjourned the meeting at 4:00 p.m.

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<sup>i</sup> The Joint Working Group (JSWG) comprises: the Organization of American States (OAS), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), World Bank, Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), Latin American Development Bank (CAF), Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), the Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI), International Organization for Migration (IOM), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).