



SUMMIT IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW GROUP (SIRG)
First Meeting at the Ministerial Level of 2023
June 23, 2023
Washington, D.C.

OEA/Ser.E
GRIC/M.1/doc.65/23
25 July 2023
Original: Spanish

FINAL REPORT

The First Meeting of the SIRG at the Ministerial Level of 2023 was held on June 23 at the headquarters of the Organization of American States (OAS) in Washington, D.C., during the fifty-third regular session of the OAS General Assembly. The meeting was chaired by the Secretary of State of the United States of America, His Excellency Mr. Antony Blinken, and was attended by 31 delegations. The list of participants was published as document [GRIC/M.1/doc.64/23 rev. 1](#). The meeting considered and adopted the Action Plan on Health and Resilience in the Americas, and the Chair presented a report on the implementation of the commitments of the Ninth Summit of the Americas and the results of the First Cities Summit of the Americas.

Remarks by the Secretary of State of the United States of America, H.E. Antony Blinken

Mr. Antony Blinken, the Secretary of State, welcomed the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the countries participating in the Summit Process and greeted and thanked Mr. Luis Almagro, Secretary General of the OAS, and the representatives of the Joint Summit Working Group (JSWG). He highlighted the efforts made over the past year to transform the mandates of the Los Angeles Summit into concrete actions: first, by defining the working procedures at the Second Meeting of SIRG at the Ministerial Level in 2022 and the subsequent 11 meetings of the Ad Hoc Technical Groups convened to hear from national experts, JSWG experts, and representatives of the Hemisphere's private sector, civil society, and youth; and second, by organizing the Cities Summit.

He said that the Draft Action Plan on Health and Resilience in the Americas, which emerged as a result of a mandate from the Ninth Summit and was to be adopted at the meeting, was intended to encourage investments in health systems, the promotion of access, support for mental health, emergency preparedness, and the prevention of noncommunicable diseases. He also stressed its focus on new technologies. Similarly, he said that later, at the OAS General Assembly, they would have the opportunity to make progress with another Summit commitment, that of democratic governance, by allowing full use of the Inter-American Democratic Charter and expanding tools to strengthen democracy, such as training young leaders and ensuring that OAS electoral observers can operate free of threats and pressure.

He then spoke of a series of initiatives that the United States had carried out in pursuit of the Ninth Summit's mandates, such as the Americas Health Corps—a program to train health workers—and the Cities Forward initiative, intended to assist cities in the region in building sustainability and equity. He also highlighted its efforts toward the energy transition, such as providing support for Jamaica in bidding processes, and promoting democratic governance through the Second Summit for Democracy, held in conjunction with Costa Rica. He announced that work on mandate implementation was to continue over the coming months, paying particular attention to those related to the digital

transformation, and he said his country hoped to continue cooperating with the preparations for the Tenth Summit of the Americas, to be held in the Dominican Republic.

Finally, he thanked Mr. Kevin O'Reilly, the National Summit Coordinator of the United States, whose term of office was coming to an end, for his valuable contributions to the success of the Summit Process. His remarks were published as document [GRIC/M.1/INF.22/23](#).

Remarks by Mr. Luis Almagro, Secretary General of the OAS

The Secretary General of the OAS, Mr. Luis Almagro, thanked the Government of the United States for its leadership in the Ninth Summit Process and for the initiative of convening the Cities Summit, and he noted that the inclusion of stakeholders from all levels of government was a clear legacy of the Ninth Summit. He also said that the meeting represented an opportunity to take stock of the work carried out in the follow-up and implementation phase of the Ninth Summit, and he reiterated the commitment of the OAS, as the technical secretariat and institutional memory of the Summit Process, toward accompanying this phase and toward the Dominican Republic as host country of the Tenth Summit.

He then called on the JSWG entities to agree on an offer of technical support, in light of the need to renew international cooperation for post-pandemic development in a way that would address development needs beyond the criterion of income alone. He also highlighted the role of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) in providing technical assistance to strengthen regional capacities for health emergency preparedness.

He then said that in Los Angeles, the region's leaders had renewed one of the aspirations of the First Summit of the Americas regarding the strengthening of the rule of law and the protection of human rights, and he promised that the OAS and other mechanisms of the inter-American system would continue to work for political dialogue in defense of democratic institutions. In that regard, he announced that the software of the Lima Commitment Platform for the Follow-up and Implementation Mechanism was being transferred to ensure its continuity. His remarks were published as document [GRIC/M.1/INF.26/23](#).

1. Consideration and adoption of the Draft Action Plan on Health and Resilience in the Americas

In his presentation of the Draft Action Plan on Health, Mr. Antony Blinken noted that the COVID-19 pandemic crisis had highlighted underlying weaknesses in the region's capacity for dealing with crisis situations. He acknowledged the work of the SIRG and the JSWG in developing the document at the meetings of the Ad Hoc Technical Group on Health and Resilience chaired by the United States Department of Health and Human Services. He also stressed the involvement of youth representatives, the private sector, and civil society in the negotiation process. Following this introduction, Mr. Antony Blinken submitted the document for consideration and declared it adopted by consensus. The Action Plan on Health and Resilience in the Americas was published as document [GRIC/M.1/doc.63/23 rev. 1](#).

2. Ninth Summit of the Americas follow-up and implementation phase: report by the Chair of the SIRG on the implementation of the Ninth Summit commitments and the outcomes of the First Cities Summit of the Americas

Mr. Antony Blinken reported that since the establishment of the working procedures for the Ninth Summit, 11 meetings of the Ad Hoc Technical Group had been convened, using both on-site and virtual formats: two each on our green future and democratic governance, six on health and resilience, and one on clean energy. He said that on those occasions, experts from across the region had come together to address the protection of environmental defenders, green shipping, the creation of favorable environments for investment in clean energy, and the promotion of human rights and democracy.

Regarding the Cities Summit of the Americas, he said that it had brought together 250 municipal leaders to discuss ways to implement the Ninth Summit's mandates alongside stakeholders from civil society, the private sector, and youth. The event had served as a platform for underrepresented voices to discuss issues such as climate adaptation and migration alongside regional authorities. Finally, he expressed his hope that those summits would continue to be held in the future.

3. Open dialogue among the Ministers of Foreign Affairs

Mr. Julio César Arriola, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Paraguay, said that the Action Plan on Health was a tool for promoting coordination and cooperation in health matters. He stated that the coronavirus pandemic had highlighted the need to improve response capacity and emphasized the key role played by prevention. He also warned of the persistence of a series of shortcomings that had to be remedied by placing people at the center of policies, with international cooperation and solidarity as tools for building healthy and resilient societies. He also highlighted the role played by PAHO and the World Health Organization as multilateral organizations in addressing the health crisis.

Ms. Ana Gervasi Díaz, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Peru, said that the document under consideration was of special importance for her country, since Peru had co-chaired the Health Working Group where the mandate for its negotiation had originated. Regarding the Inter-American Action Plan on Democratic Governance, she highlighted her country's participation in the workshops on regional challenges in such key issues as disinformation. She said the plan included actions to strengthen the preventive mandates of the Inter-American Democratic Charter and it recognized tools such as electoral observation missions. She also spoke of the Lima Commitment on Democratic Governance against Corruption, adopted at the Eighth Summit, and its virtual follow-up platform, which, she said, would become part of the shared heritage of the Americas. She reiterated her commitment to listen to the different participants in the Summit Process, and she emphasized the increase in their voluntary contributions to Process activities. Finally, she offered to continue working in partnership with the Dominican Republic in the organization of the Tenth Summit. Her remarks were published as document [GRIC/M.1/INF.24/23](#).

Dr. Arnoldo André Tinoco, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Worship of Costa Rica, congratulated the United States as Chair of the Summit Process and the Summits Secretariat for the efforts it had made and, at the same time, acknowledged all the actors involved. He said that in recent months, a range of issues of importance to the Hemisphere had been collectively discussed from national, local, and regional perspectives, emphasizing the Action Plan on Health and its component parts. He also supported the holding of the Cities Summit, with its implications for regional dialogue

and cooperation mechanisms. He also highlighted the Americas Competitiveness Exchange (ACE) held in Seattle, and he thanked the United States for its collaboration in that process.

Mr. Roberto Álvarez, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Dominican Republic, noted that the coronavirus pandemic had exacerbated the vulnerability of the Hemisphere's health systems, and he identified various national initiatives undertaken to build a quality health system. Regarding the adopted document, he thanked the Chair and the Summits Secretariat for the work carried out in the Ad Hoc Technical Group, PAHO for its technical advice, and civil society for the recommendations it had put forward. He announced that his country would be submitting a footnote, placing some reservations on various issues addressed in the document but reiterating its commitment to the protection of human rights, human dignity, multilateralism, and the implementation of Summit commitments in a manner consistent with both national legislation and international treaties.

He also reiterated the commitment of the Dominican Republic, as the Tenth Summit's host country, to promote greater regional cooperation and to strengthen ties among the participating countries. In that regard, he undertook to follow up on the action plans adopted in Los Angeles, and he said that consultations would be held to select the topics for the Tenth Summit. Finally, he said that his country would continue with the official forums established at the Summits, and that every effort would be made to include the Cities Summit.

Ambassador Agustín Vásquez Gómez, Permanent Representative of El Salvador to the OAS, thanked the Chair and the Summits Secretariat for following up on the commitments. He stressed the need for the Action Plan on Health to promote greater investments in order to facilitate equitable access and emergency preparedness. Likewise, he called for a focus on effective actions above and beyond rhetoric that could satisfy people's demands, and he highlighted his country's efforts in the fight against corruption and crime. He also said that many of the challenges raised at the First Summit remained valid, and he reiterated El Salvador's willingness to continue contributing to mandate implementation.

Ms. Daniela Benjamin of the delegation of Brazil stressed the importance of achieving greater synergies between the Summit Process and the OAS agenda. While acknowledging the differences between the two, she said that they were complementary processes that both aimed at promoting greater coordination in the region. In particular, she said that the OAS could benefit from the Summit commitments, especially those related to development. Likewise, she welcomed the adoption of the Action Plan on Health and Resilience and said that its implementation would require the participation of broad sectors of society, the private sector, and international financial institutions. She also stressed that development had to be at the center of inter-American efforts, and she wished the Dominican Republic every success in organizing the next Summit.

Ms. Kamina Johnson Smith, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Jamaica, praised the progress made in implementing the mandates and highlighted the appointment of technical experts from her country to the ad hoc groups that had been set up. She also thanked the Chair for presenting the report, and the Summits Secretariat, the JSWG institutions, and the OAS for their work. She identified a number of national health initiatives, particularly those focused on mental health and noncommunicable diseases. She also noted that her country hoped to address the program for digital transformation adopted in Los Angeles by focusing on development with cybersecurity and ensuring data protection. Regarding the energy transition document, she underscored national efforts to foster investments. Before concluding, she stressed the importance of involving the subnational levels of government on account of their role

in service provision, and she congratulated the Dominican people as the hosts of the next Summit. Her comments were published as document [GRIC/M.1/INF.25/23](#).

Mr. Mario Búcaro Flores, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Guatemala, said that the Action Plan was in part the result of the support of PAHO, which will play an essential role in its implementation. He said that Guatemala believed it was essential to strengthen quality, equitable, comprehensive care services. His country, he said, protects life from conception and promotes the health of everyone, particularly women and families, by placing the person at the center of all policies. His remarks were published as document [GRIC/M.1/INF.23/23](#).

Mr. Michael Grant, Assistant Deputy Minister for the Americas at Global Affairs Canada, said that holding the Cities Summit helped pursue the Ninth Summit's mandates. He also welcomed the fact that the SIRG had enabled participation by civil society, and he announced that his delegation would continue to promote the involvement of women and Indigenous Peoples. He went on to say that democratic principles were a key element for his delegation, which was the reason for its leadership on the topic, both in the preparation and in the follow-up and implementation phase of the Inter-American Action Plan on Democratic Governance. Regarding the health document, he highlighted the work carried out with various regional stakeholders to ensure that it included sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights. Before concluding, he acknowledged the leadership of Mr. Kevin O'Reilly as the Summit Coordinator for the United States. Mr. Brian Nichols, Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs, then thanked the representative of Canada, who was also leaving office soon.

Ambassador Gustavo Martínez Pandiani, the National Summit Coordinator of Argentina, thanked the Chair for the efforts made in following up on the commitments, and he acknowledged work of the Summits Secretariat in its capacity as the technical secretariat. With regard to the implementation of the mandates adopted, he requested that duplications of efforts be avoided and said that his country had been working with other states in the coordination of actions to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. He underscored the importance of continuing to bolster national and international financing mechanisms in order to strengthen health systems and reduce inequalities in access. Similarly, he said that his delegation would continue to call for the adoption of an inclusive approach in the implementation of Summit mandates, taking into account vulnerable groups and gender equality. Regarding the democracy document, he reiterated the commitment to work for the promotion of human rights and institutional strengthening, with democracy understood in a broad sense that incorporated human and social values. Finally, before expressing his support for the Dominican Republic's decision to host the next Summit, he stressed that differences between the cultures and identities of the Hemisphere should serve as tools to further the region's integration.

Ambassador Jan Marten Willem Schalkwijk, the Permanent Representative of Suriname to the OAS, endorsed the adoption of the Action Plan on Health and explored the issue of how to retain health personnel. He noted that, as Chair of the humanitarian aid group for Haiti, his country had been warned about the negative impact that U.S. and Canadian humanitarian visa policies could have on other countries' ability to retain health personnel.

Ambassador Francisco Bustillo Bonasso, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Uruguay, noted that together with Peru, his delegation had chaired the Working Group for negotiating the terms of reference from which the Action Plan on Health had emerged. He also said that he hoped it would facilitate a united and coordinated approach for dealing with future threats on the scale of COVID-19.

Mr. Brian Nichols, the Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs, thanked the delegations for their support throughout the Summit Process. Before giving the floor to Mr. Kevin O'Reilly, he again stressed the need to continue building greater coordination among the countries in the Summit Process, under the leadership of the Government of the Dominican Republic as the incoming chair.

4. Closing comments and conclusion of the meeting

Mr. Kevin O'Reilly said that he was honored to have coordinated the Summit Process since August 2020. He also thanked the United States Government team from both the Department of State and the Department of Health and Human Services. He announced that Ambassador Francisco Mora was to be appointed as the new National Summit Coordinator for the United States. He wished the delegation of the Dominican Republic, once it had taken the lead in the Process, the same support that he had received as Chairman. The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m. on June 23, 2023.