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UPDATES ON THE CITIES SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS

(Presentation delivered by Mr. Kevin O'Reilly,
National Summit Coordinator of the United States)

We will now provide an update to the SIRG on the Cities Summit, to be held this month in Denver.

The April 27-28 Cities Summit complements our engagements on Summit implementation. It will focus on how we take the commitments made in Los Angeles and advance them at the local level, where many of the decisions affecting their implementation are made and where our commitments may have the greatest impact. More than 3,100 mayors, Indigenous leaders, civil society, youth, and private sector representatives have registered to attend the Cities Summit, including mayors of Belmopan, Mexico City, Bogota, Santo Domingo, Guatemala City, Kingston, and others.

The Western Hemisphere is the world's most urbanized region, and cities are de facto innovation labs for addressing shared challenges ranging from bridging the digital divide to addressing the climate and pollution crises. The Cities Summit will help create new social and economic partnerships at the local level to address the global challenges we all face. It serves to strengthen collective efforts at all levels of government. The Cities Summit gives us an opportunity to build closer partnerships between cities throughout the hemisphere and to facilitate innovative engagement on the issues our leaders identified as priorities at the Ninth Summit.

The Summit will include plenary sessions, stakeholder roundtables, expert panels, networking sessions, and commercial engagements, as well as events oriented around public diplomacy and outreach. Each component will address a range of priorities for local communities in the Americas, such as sustainable development, democratic governance, health, climate change, energy security, digital transformation, attracting investment, women's empowerment, and public safety.

We also want to use this opportunity to show the best that the private sector has to offer to the region by organizing the "Innovation Plaza," a commercial expo showcasing companies with tangible solutions to urban challenges. We see the Cities Summit's plenary and Innovation Plaza Commercial Expo as an extension of the Ninth Summit in Los Angeles.

By building stronger partnerships with local leaders, we are laying the groundwork to build stronger relationships with the region's next generation of national leaders. Every day, local leaders make critical decisions that shape the future. Our national governments and multilateral organizations can and should do much more to support local governments, offering transparent and democratic solutions to their most pressing challenges.

Denver's Mayor Michael Hancock extended an invitation to this group of National Summit Coordinators in January to attend and observe the Cities Summit. National governments, including my own, can learn a lot by listening to local leaders, so I hope you will join us.

With that, I will open the floor to any questions or comments from delegations.