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REMARKS BY THE SECRETARY FOR HEMISPHERIC AFFAIRS OF
THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES (OAS)

(Ambassador James Lambert)

- Vice Minister Rubén Silié, National Summits Coordinator of the Dominican Republic, and Chair of the Summit Implementation Review Group
- National Summits Coordinators
- Permanent Representatives to the OAS
- Representatives of the institutions of the Joint Summit Working Group

I am pleased to address you at this first regular meeting of the Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG) under the chairmanship of the Government of the Dominican Republic.

The commitment of Dominican diplomacy to multilateralism is well known, not only in the OAS but also in multiple multilateral forums where its hard work and collaboration have been remarkable. In recent years, meetings such as the OAS General Assembly and more recently, the Ibero-American Summit have been held in its territory. Its skillful management in these cases has ensured measurable and credible results. We have no doubt that this will be the case in March when the Dominican Republic convenes important meetings of the IDB and ECPA. In that sense, it is a propitious moment for the Dominican Republic to take the lead in the Summits Process the same year the Process celebrates the 30th anniversary since its inception in Miami in 1994.

For our part, it has been a point of satisfaction during the Administration of Secretary General Luis Almagro, and with the commitment of previous hosts, to recover the concept of the Summits, ensuring real outcomes and mandates agreed upon for the first time in 13 years, with the Lima Commitment on Corruption and Democratic Governance and, more recently, in Los Angeles, with the commitments among the Leaders to five areas of action. Today, at this meeting, we will address actions for implementing these commitments.

I am proud to emphasize that this Chairmanship is receiving a Summits Process that is stronger and with more actors committed to it.

I thank Ambassador Mora and highlight the leadership of the U.S. government throughout the Ninth Summit Process that began in July 2020, a process we in the Summits of the Americas Secretariat have been working on ever since. We highlight this host's priority of designing the most

inclusive Summit to date. This has been achieved through strengthened dialogue with the social actors of the Summits Process, contributing to the successful preparation, implementation, and follow-up of the five political commitments that arose from the highest decision-making level. Likewise, the active participation by governmental experts, organizations of the Joint Summit Working Group, civil society organizations, and social actors in the follow-up and implementation phase within the Ninth Summit SIRG framework has been very important.

A strengthened and synchronized inter-American system is what we need to face the challenges of the region. This year's celebration of three decades of the Summit of the Americas offers us the opportunity to reflect specifically on the question of whether this is another area where we should target our activities and collaborations. From the OAS, we are honored to chair the JSWG, an example of Hemispheric Alliance, whose relevance is increasingly evident both in defining the agenda in preparation for the Summits, as well as its active role providing technical and financial assistance in the implementation of mandates in support of State efforts.

We often speak in general terms of the inter-American system, but the JSWG offers one of the few examples of a forum where all relevant institutions are convened in support of governments to examine and address the common challenges we face. The value of this group was even more relevant in the pandemic period when Luis Almagro and Carissa Etienne convened the high authorities of the JSWG institutions for key exchanges to address the critical situation in the Hemisphere.

I would also like to thank the JSWG institutions that have sent their follow-up reports on the mandates of the Ninth Summit and urge those that have yet to report on their work implementing the mandates and initiatives derived from the Summits to do so in a timely manner.

One example of the collaborative work of the JSWG is the technical support received from the Pan American Health Organization during the negotiation of the Action Plan on Health and Resilience, approved last year during the Ministerial SIRG. As a follow-up, the Summits Secretariat in collaboration with PAHO will soon convene a Policy Dialogue to address cross-cutting issues that are critical to the post-pandemic recovery and reconstruction process, which includes resilient health systems, regional manufacturing capacities, and *One Health*.

Another coordination mechanism for the Summits Process are the inter-American ministerial meetings we conduct through the OAS and other regional organizations. I stress the importance of continuing to strengthen the linkages between the two processes, so that the priorities of the Summits are better integrated with the ministerial processes, and to improve coordination in implementing and strengthening the architecture of the Summits Process.

This linkage enriched the Ninth Summit, strengthening deliberations and negotiations, and the language adopted in matters of health, energy, digital, among others; mechanisms we will continue to engage in the run-up to the Tenth Summit of the Americas, chaired by the Dominican Republic.

The Sixth Ministerial Meeting of the Energy and Climate Partnership of the Americas (ECPA) in the Dominican Republic on March 14-15 is another example of follow-up and implementation of Summit mandates, in this case the approval of the document "Accelerating the Just Transition to Clean, Sustainable, and Renewable Energy" in Los Angeles. As an outcome of this

Ministerial, the Summits Secretariat will convene a dialogue to advance just and inclusive energy policies to address best practices for energy policy and strategies, with an emphasis on social, economic, and environmental justice considerations.

Mr. Chairman, I conclude by reiterating the permanent commitment of the OAS General Secretariat, through its Summits Secretariat in its capacity as Technical Secretariat of the Summits Process, to continue providing the substantive support required by the Government of the Dominican Republic and the States during the current preparatory phase of the Tenth Summit, as well as to continue strengthening the participation and coordination of the JSWG entities, civil society organizations and social actors, and the inter-American ministerial processes, to improve coordination for implementing and strengthening the architecture of the Summits Process.

Thank you very much.