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“PROSPERITY WITH EQUITY:  
THE CHALLENGE OF COOPERATION IN THE AMERICAS”  
MANDATES FOR ACTION

**REPUBLIC OF PANAMA**

*Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Office of the Minister*

April 16, 2015

His Excellency  
José Miguel Insulza  
Secretary General  
Organization of American States (OAS)  
Washington, D.C.

Excellency:

In his statement to the press upon the conclusion of the Seventh Summit of the Americas, the President of Panama, Juan Carlos Varela, announced, in his capacity as President of the Summit, that, as agreed by the ministers of foreign affairs of the member countries of the Organization of American States immediately prior to the Summit, he would forward to the institutions that make up the Joint Summit Working Group (JSWG) and other international agencies all the Mandates for Action agreed upon in relation to the theme of the Seventh Summit.

In keeping with the announcement of the President of Panama, I have the pleasure of writing to ask you to forward to the senior persons responsible at the agencies that make up the JSWG the document “‘Prosperity with Equity: the Challenge of Cooperation in the Americas,’ Mandates for Action,” so that, as agreed by the aforementioned ministers of foreign affairs, their institutions may, in keeping with their own procedures, adopt the appropriate decisions in support of the management and implementation of those mandates.

In addition to those mandates, I would like to highlight the positive reaction from the Heads of State and Government at the retreat held at the Summit to the President of Colombia’s proposal for the creation of an inter-American education system and also to the proposal put forward by several participants in the retreat for the installation of a center for infrastructure development in the region.

I would also like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for the immense cooperation from the institutions of the JSWG to the process and the success of the Seventh Summit of the Americas.

Accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Isabel de Saint Malo de Alvarado  
Vice President of the Republic and  
Minister of Foreign Affairs

“PROSPERITY WITH EQUITY:  
THE CHALLENGE OF COOPERATION IN THE AMERICAS”  
MANDATES FOR ACTION

EDUCATION

Recognizing that the right to education without discrimination and access to quality education is vital in the effort to eradicate poverty and to achieve integral development and prosperity with equity and social inclusion, we intend to pursue the following measures:

1. To entrust the Ministers of Education of the Americas with defining and identifying the necessary actions to build and implement an Inter-American Education Agenda in coordination with other international, regional, and subregional organizations and mechanisms, in order to strengthen policy dialogue and cooperation that help to ensure access for all to quality, inclusive, and equitable education, the strengthening of the teaching profession, and comprehensive early childhood care.
2. To strengthen specific public policies and programs for young people with a view to striving to halve by 2025 the number of young people neither studying nor working, through ongoing technical and vocational education and training, promotion of scholarships and academic mobility, and by fostering human talent through new pedagogies influenced by the arts, innovation and entrepreneurship to help enable them to successfully transition from school to the work place.
3. To identify, research and analyze new strategies and effective public policies in education, carried out inside and outside the region, as well as innovative experiences incorporating intercultural education and the needs of persons with disabilities intended to improve the quality of educational processes at the pre-school, primary and secondary levels, and to promote access to early education and childhood care. To request the Organization of American States (OAS) to promote discussion and formulation of public policies through the relevant institutions. To request the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), through the creation of an educational research and innovation laboratory for the Americas, to support this initiative, and likewise the World Bank, through the creation of an inter-American education network, to consolidate the various proposals in this area. To that end, to establish a working group comprising the OAS, the IDB, the Development Bank of Latin America (CAF) and the World Bank to, with the active participation of the Hemisphere’s countries, design and integrate these initiatives within an inter-American institutional framework.
4. To support cooperation for the teaching and learning of languages in the Hemisphere.
5. To promote agreements for academic and scientific exchanges and the transfer of knowledge and technologies in order to impact the education sector, with a view to contributing to education and training processes to the fullest possible extent of respective national capacities.
6. We welcome, in the framework of this Summit, the holding of the first meeting of the Forum of University Rectors of the Americas and as an opportunity for strengthening their interaction, dialogue, and sharing and exchanging information and achievements on research initiatives, cooperation, and innovative practices with government—particularly the education authorities—, the business sector, and civil society organizations and social actors. We take note with interest of the results of the Forum.

## HEALTH

Recognizing that health is a fundamental right of the entire population, an essential condition for the integral and sustainable development of peoples, and a necessity for economic growth with equity, inclusion, and social cohesion, we intend to pursue the following measures:

1. To continue moving toward the attainment of universal access to health and universal, quality, comprehensive, timely health coverage without discrimination, taking into consideration gender differences in health and including the availability of safe, affordable, effective, quality essential medications, as essential elements in achieving equity and social inclusion. To that end, we reaffirm our support for the Strategy for Universal Access to Health and Universal Health Coverage adopted by the member states of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) in 2014, and we request the collaboration of PAHO and other institutions engaged in this area to support national efforts for its implementation, consistent with international obligations, and its ongoing monitoring over time.
2. To continue working towards comprehensive health coverage being available to everyone at every stage of life, while ensuring that the use of health services does not expose people to financial hardship, particularly groups in a vulnerable situation.
3. To strengthen the ability of national health systems to prevent, detect, and respond to outbreaks of emerging infectious diseases and other public health emergencies, particularly those with the potential for cross-border effects and impacts in realms beyond health, including social, economic, security, and political risks.
4. We encourage efforts to strengthen preparedness and response capacities to handle outbreaks of emerging epidemic diseases, in particular through the International Health Regulations, and note the work done by PAHO to develop a regional mechanism to support those efforts.
5. To recall the Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain of the Fifth Summit of the Americas, held in 2009, and the Regional Plan of Action on Non Communicable Diseases (NCDs), adopted by the member states of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) in 2013, which highlighted the need for the prevention and control of NCDs; also bearing in mind the global and regional target to achieve a 25 percent relative reduction in premature mortality from NCDs by 2025, and underscoring the need to intensify the multisectoral responses to the growing health, social, economic, and adverse development impacts of NCDs, through public policies and cost-effective measures within and outside the health sector. We call for the establishment of an Inter-American Task Force on NCDs, led by PAHO, that complements the United Nations Interagency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of NCDs.
6. To work to ensure secure and sustainable access to potable water and sanitation services for the population as a whole. We recognize that basic sanitation and hygiene are essential for health, integral and sustainable development, and environmental management and constitute a fundamental condition for the well-being and decent life of the population.
7. To encourage the joint efforts of the public and private sectors, civil society, and other social stakeholders to strengthen strategies for food and nutrition, specifically child nutrition, as an integral element of health in fighting poverty, hunger, and inequality.

8. To accelerate efforts to improve maternal and child health, in particular reducing maternal and child mortality, including neonatal mortality, and continue working to ensure effective access by all women to comprehensive healthcare, in particular during pregnancy, partum and post-partum periods. To request the collaboration of PAHO in continuing to support the countries in this endeavor. We commit to supporting the renewal of the United Nations Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health.

## ENERGY

Recognizing that energy is a fundamental resource, pillar, and cornerstone for the sustainable development of peoples and that access to diverse forms of reliable, safe, and affordable energy contributes to ending poverty and to economic growth with equity and social inclusion, and reaffirming the sovereign right of each country to the conservation, development, and sustainable use of its own energy resources, we intend to pursue the following measures:

1. To promote, taking into account national needs and priorities, ways to optimize and facilitate the implementation of funding mechanisms for projects in the energy sector, in line with national energy development policies or regional projects, as applicable, including those involving the private sector, as appropriate, especially those that target energy security, the implementation of different types of energy, including, clean, safe, and sustainable alternative energies, and the adjustment and application of policies that, among other goals, promote these types of energy sources. To that end, we request the collaboration of the international financial institutions, in particular to address existing barriers to energy project financing, where appropriate, particularly recognizing the peculiar needs of the small states of the Hemisphere.

2. To give greater impetus to expanding subregional and regional energy integration and interconnection in a framework of fair and efficient exchange and in accordance with national energy development policies, in order to achieve energy security and independence in the region, broader coverage, and access to investment .

3. To promote energy cooperation strategies based on solidarity and complementarity, including fostering the sharing of information and experiences on measures adopted to enhance efficiency, coverage, access, and quality of energy services, as well as the development of diverse energy sources, using technologies and management instruments ensuring economic development, social inclusion and that preserve the environment, with special emphasis on less scientifically and technologically developed countries, through, *inter alia*, the transfer of technology, without conditionality. Additionally, to promote the use of indicators to provide reliable information for measuring progress made with these goals, and to request the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the CAF, the IDB, and the Latin American Energy Organization (OLADE) to continue supporting the efforts of countries to that end.

4. To acknowledge the Sustainable Energy for All (SE4ALL) initiative of the United Nations which sets the goals of achieving universal access to modern energy services, doubling the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency, and doubling the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix by 2030. With regard to access to energy services, we propose to achieve the goal of universalization in our countries by 2022.

5. To promote patterns of energy production and consumption that make it possible to achieve higher levels of energy efficiency, especially in the industrial, residential, and transport sectors, with due consideration for the environment and the specific needs and circumstances of each country. Accordingly, to implement education and awareness programs on the importance of promoting these patterns.

## ENVIRONMENT

Acknowledging the challenges and serious consequences of climate change for our countries, particularly in the poorest and most vulnerable sectors, and that the protection, preservation, and restoration of the environment and its proper stewardship are indispensable for progress toward integral development, we intend to pursue the following measures:

1. To continue and strengthen hemispheric efforts geared toward making progress in the areas of sustainable development and climate change in order to counteract the impacts of climate change, increase the capacity for adaptation of communities and ecosystems vulnerable to climate change, and step up efforts to mitigate greenhouse-gas emissions, in accordance with the principles, objectives, and provisions of the international conventions and instruments, signed by each of our countries, especially under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the United Nations process.

2. To welcome the results of the Twentieth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 20) and of the Tenth Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (COP 20 / CMP 10) held in Lima, Peru, which secured important outcomes for global action against climate change, including the adoption of the “Lima Call for Climate Action,” which represents a major step forward in the negotiation process for COP 21, which is to be held in December 2015 and will be a strategic moment for the establishment of a new global commitment.

3. To encourage sustainable and productive agriculture, optimizing the use of natural resources, particularly water and soil, in order to achieve prosperity with equity in rural areas.

4. To promote the implementation of public policies, practices, and technologies to strengthen national capacities for proper integrated management of water resources. Thus, we reaffirm our commitment to the declaration “Water to Feed the Land,” adopted by the Ministers of Agriculture of the Americas in 2013.

5. To seek to ensure that land planning and zoning processes carried out at the national and subnational levels take into account plans for environmental risk and natural disaster prevention, mitigation, adaptation, and resilience. In addition, through investments and policies, to promote urban development based on sustainable cities. In this regard, we underscore the importance of the Third UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (HABITAT III), which is to be held in Quito, Ecuador, in 2016.

6. To acknowledge the importance, *inter alia*, of the Minamata Convention on Mercury and of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), and we encourage the OAS Meeting of Ministers and High Authorities on Sustainable Development to

identify areas of commonality and specific cooperation actions for the implementation of those instruments.

7. To promote the exchange of information and data in the climate field, and capacity building for data collection and analysis to favor resilient development and adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change.

8. To invite the multilateral development banks, which play an important role in development financing, to examine ways to integrate, as appropriate and of a supplementary nature, sustainable development indicators that are multidimensional in nature in their decision-making processes.

## MIGRATION

Recognizing the historic importance of migration in the development of nations, the economic, social, political, and cultural contributions of migrants to their communities of origin, transit, and destination, and the close ties that exist between migration, development, respect for and protection of human rights, and social inclusion, and recognizing, furthermore, the need for cooperation among states in this area, we intend to pursue the following measures:

1. To design and implement or strengthen public policies to improve economic and social conditions to generate more and better opportunities for advancement of our populations, particularly young people, through the development of human talent, the creation of more and better jobs, the stimulation of the productive sector, access to credit, and improved citizen security, among other factors, so that the decision to migrate can be taken freely and voluntarily.

2. To strengthen dialogue processes at the national, subregional, and hemispheric levels to discuss comprehensive migration policies. In that framework, to recognize the pivotal role of work, decent employment, and fair remuneration, as well as the importance of adopting measures, policies, and programs to facilitate orderly and regular labor migration flows and the regularization of migrants, and to promote labor mobility programs, in accordance with each country's laws and in a framework of unfettered respect for the human rights of migrant workers and their families, especially underscoring the importance of family reunification and promoting conditions for decent and dignified work.

3. To strengthen programs to prevent and fight illicit smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons, particularly of women, children and adolescents, as well as to generate, review and amend laws, where appropriate, against these crimes so that, in their enforcement, they will render assistance and protection to victims of trafficking and to promote cooperation among states to that end, in accordance with the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its protocols on trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants.

4. To support diaspora associations in their desire to structure and improve the effectiveness of their contribution to the social and economic development of their communities of origin, as well as to strengthen their interaction with their host communities.

## SECURITY

Recognizing that peace and social inclusion help to create better security conditions and that these, in turn, encourage greater prosperity, stability, and quality of life for people, noting that cooperation among our countries in this area should proceed in accordance with the principles enshrined in international law, considering in particular the principle of sovereignty and nonintervention in the internal affairs of states and the respective constitutional and legal systems of countries, we intend to pursue the following measures:

1. To support the initiative of the Inter-American Violence and Crime Prevention Network, agreed to at the OAS, with a view to strengthening hemispheric cooperation on security, within the framework of the domestic legislation of each state.
2. To work on obtaining better data and strengthening evaluations and diagnostic assessments with a view to formulating effective public policies for the prevention of violence and crime that better address this phenomenon in the region in a comprehensive manner. In this regard, to foster the observatories on crime and violence, in accordance with the respective national legislations.
3. To strengthen efforts and prioritize actions to effectively address violence against women and girls, particularly through the promotion of initiatives to empower women, and the implementation of effective public policies focused on achieving this goal, including measures to prevent, investigate, punish, and eradicate such violence; training for public officials at national and local levels; implementation of programs to educate, sensitize, and raise awareness about this phenomenon; and the collection of data and statistics within, as applicable, the framework of the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women (Convention of Belém do Pará) and its follow-up mechanism.
4. To take note of the report “The Drug Problem in the Americas” of the OAS Secretary General and to recognize the progress and reaffirm the commitments made at the forty-third regular session of the OAS General Assembly “For a Comprehensive Policy against the World Drug Problem in the Americas”, and the forty-sixth special session of the OAS General Assembly “Reflections and Guidelines to Formulate and Follow up on Comprehensive Policies to Address the World Drug Problem in the Americas”. To that end, we decide to continue with the dialogue in preparation for the special session of the United Nations General Assembly on the global drug problem to be held in 2016.
5. To continue efforts to prevent and combat illicit trafficking of firearms, ammunitions, explosives and other related materials with the aim of reducing high crime rates and violence in the region using, among others, the existing mechanisms in the OAS and the United Nations.
6. To take note that Trinidad and Tobago hosted the first preparatory meeting towards the First Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty and that it is interested in hosting the Secretariat of the Arms Trade Treaty; to note, also, the commitment of the Government of Mexico to hosting the First Conference of States Parties to the Treaty in 2015.
7. To strengthen holistic efforts with special attention to socio-economic factors to prevent juvenile delinquency through actions and mechanisms that foster livelihood, sociability, self-esteem, and well-being among young people.



## CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Recognizing the importance of promoting the active participation of all persons without discrimination, we intend to pursue the following measures:

1. To continue promoting and supporting participation by civil society and social actors in dialogue with the states as an ongoing mechanism for participation and consultation in order to contribute to the formulation and implementation of public policies and programs aimed at achieving prosperity with equity and social inclusion.
2. To facilitate equitable, pluralistic, broad, secure, and reliable access to new information and communication technologies in order to promote and build new forms of citizen participation, with full respect for all human rights, including the right to privacy, as set out in article 12 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and article 17 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.
3. To promote and strengthen economic, political, social and cultural empowerment for women, ensure the protection and guarantee of all their rights, and redouble our collective efforts to end discrimination, child, early and forced marriage, recognizing that gender equity and equality is necessary and legitimate for the sustainable and democratic advancement of our societies.
4. To strengthen cultural ties in the Americas and promote cooperation for the conservation and protection of the region's tangible and intangible cultural heritage, while acknowledging the importance of culture and creative and cultural industries in socio-economic development, social inclusion, the diversification of economies, and job creation.

## DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

Recognizing that democracy is essential for the social, political, and economic development of the peoples of the Americas and that inequity and poverty are obstacles to development, we intend to pursue the following measures:

1. To strengthen democracy and the rule of law, the separation and independence of branches of government, respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms, consistent with all relevant inter-American instruments, transparency, integrity and efficiency in public administrations, and the creation of conditions that enable the involvement of citizens in the entire public policy cycle.
2. To support institution building and modernization of independent electoral organs, in order to strengthen their capacity to guarantee the integrity of electoral processes, and the holding of free, fair and periodic elections, in accordance with each country's legal system, including, as appropriate, the regulation of financing of political activity. We ask the OAS and other organizations of the Hemisphere to provide advisory services and assistance for these purposes, when appropriate.
3. To promote universality of civil registration and the rights related to identity, developing and strengthening programs that make it possible to reduce the levels of under-registration, so that more persons can partake of the benefits of state recognition. We request support from the OAS and the IDB in this effort.

4. To promote open government and access to information as key tools for achieving greater transparency, better public administration, citizen participation and social inclusion, and to support initiatives currently under way in this regard.
5. To strengthen regional and international mechanisms for combating corruption, recognizing the value and importance of national mechanisms and a multilateral approach based on reciprocal evaluations on equal terms. To request the OAS to continue supporting the countries in following up on the provisions of the Inter-American Convention against Corruption.

#### HEMISPHERIC PARTNERSHIP FOR DEVELOPMENT

Recognizing the fundamental importance of international development cooperation in all of its modalities and dimensions, guided by solidarity, flexibility, complementarity, alignment with national priorities and voluntary participation, with particular attention to strengthening institutional capacity and the development of human capital to attain inclusive and sustainable development as the basis of prosperity with equity, and further recognizing the importance of public and private investment in research and development and science and technology infrastructure to encourage inclusive innovation, we intend to work to ensure that our countries, within our national development plans are able to implement the aforementioned Mandates for Action, in particular, to have significantly increased by 2025:

- a) Access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation;
- b) Broadband access to overcome the digital gap;
- c) The number of youth enrolled in secondary or technical education;
- d) Investment in infrastructure and its effectiveness;
- e) Access to credit geared toward human development.

We entrust the inter-American organizations and institutions to cooperate and coordinate as extensively as they can in implementing the mandates contained in this document. We call on the institutions of the Joint Summits Working Group, other international agencies, as well as civil society organizations and other social actors, including the private sector, to support the implementation of the aforementioned actions.

We pledge our commitment to periodically follow up on and seek cooperative action on these mandates, through the Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG) and the Summit of the Americas Follow-up System (SISCA).

*Done at Panama City, Panama, on the eleventh day of April of the year two thousand and fifteen.*