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**STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT OF THE PLURINATIONAL STATE OF BOLIVIA,
EVO MORALES AYMA
EIGHTH SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS**

Lima, April 14, 2018

Thank you very much brother Martín Viscarra, President of the Republic of Peru.

Brother and sister presidents, vice-presidents, delegations of the States of our America.
Greetings to the international organizations present at this Summit.

On behalf of Bolivia, I would like to first express our solidarity to the people of Ecuador and the families of the victims, the journalists murdered in Ecuador.

I would also like to express our recognition of President Juan Manuel Santos, whose effort and commitment have brought about peace in Colombia. We offer our full support and solidarity to the President and his team.

Brothers and sisters,

Our duty is to discuss issues that are fundamental to the lives of our peoples. Of course, the fight against corruption is one of those issues. However, it would be facile and an undue use of the public resources that we spend to meet, were we simply to repeat phrases like: “we must improve some laws” or “better coordinate our efforts.”

We must discuss the structures of corruption, what fuels it, who tolerates and promotes it, which mechanisms—including legal and institutional ones—that are the root or den of corrupt money. As long as we fail to take concrete measures to do away with the so-called tax havens; as long as there are no effective and transparent international controls over transnational companies that in many cases promote and foster corruption and the violation of human rights; as long as there is no genuine transformation of the financial system that furthers speculation and nourishes the immoral concentration of wealth in the hands of a small group of individuals; as long as we fail to get rid of banking secrecy that criminals take advantage of to launder money; as long as we fail to democratize institutions like the International Monetary Fund and make them serve the common good instead of serving as instruments of subjugation, nothing we say at this Summit will be satisfactory.

Brothers and sisters of the Summit,

The true challenge lies in dismantling the very system in which corruption prospers: the capitalist system.

I want to be very sincere and direct. We are speaking of that capitalism fed by a voracious financial system furthered by unlimited and destructive military power, by free trade agreements in effect whose sole objective is the material accumulation and concentration of wealth in order to exercise power over others.

Capitalism is the worst enemy of humanity and the planet. Its crises are not cyclical; they are inherent to its model of production and consumption.

Brothers and sisters,

We sound the alarm—just as in the past they used the pretext of the fight against communism, drug trafficking, or terrorism, today they seek to use the false struggle against corruption to overthrow legitimate, democratic governments and to criminalize political projects for change.

My homage and respect to Brother Lula. May the world know that the conscience of a people cannot be imprisoned.

Hear me brothers so the world may hear:

Prosecutor Deltan Dallagnol, who presided over the commission in the proceedings against Lula, literally said: *“there is no evidence against Lula, but there are strong suspicions.”*

Brothers and sisters,

It is our absolute duty to speak about the threats that our hemisphere and the entire world face. It must be stated loud and clear. The main threat to democracy, peace and freedom, mother earth and multilateralism is the government of the United States. I am not afraid to say it head-on and publicly.

The world is increasingly affected by global warming and the United States, the greatest polluter in history, turns its back on the Paris Agreement. It is intolerable!

The world is suffering a series of wars and a terrible humanitarian crisis brought about by the United States' interventionism.

As a result of poverty, inequality, and climate change, we are suffering a migratory crisis and the United States is building walls to separate us and send troops to invade us. My solidarity with the Mexican people and my call to its authorities to look toward the south, to its Latin American home. From Mexico to Argentina, our region is free from nuclear weapons and is a zone of peace, but further north, the United States is taking us down the path of a potential nuclear conflict and is spending billions of dollars to continue building weapons of mass destruction.

Based on my country's experience, since we closed the US military bases and expelled the DEA and USAID, since we recovered our political and economic sovereignty and freed ourselves from the impositions of the International Monetary Fund, we have begun to overcome all our challenges in keeping with our identity.

Brothers and sisters,

Bolivia categorically condemns the unilateral sanctions and threats of invasion proffered by the government of the United States against Venezuela. Our region is not anyone's backyard. We deeply

regret that our brother Nicolás Maduro is not seated here with us, as a result of the United States' pressure.

The OAS has to define whether it is an organization for integration or an instrument for exclusion, whether it respects the peoples' sovereignty or is a neocolonial puppet.

Brothers and sisters,

Bolivia demands that the United States' illegal economic and financial blockade of Cuba be unconditionally lifted and Guantanamo be returned to Cuba.

Bolivia stands behind the free self-determination of the people of Puerto Rico.

Bolivia reaffirms its support for the return of the Malvinas Islands to Argentine sovereignty.

Brothers and sisters,

I thank the solidarity of many states, peoples, and leaders who have expressed their support for our maritime cause. I avail myself of this occasion to reiterate that we extend our fraternal hand to the sister Republic of Chile so that we do not bequeath to future generations a fraught legacy and so Bolivia may, through good faith negotiations, have sovereign access to the Pacific Ocean.

Brothers and sisters,

If we really want a world order based on solidarity, equality, social justice, and respect for the rights of peoples to peace and development; if we really want to represent the interests of our peoples and fight against corruption, it is essential that basic services be recognized and implemented as human rights, that the rights of mother earth be recognized, and the fight against capitalism, colonialism, and imperialism be waged.

These are not times of competitiveness, these are times of complementarity. These are not times for walls of confrontation, rather for bridges of understanding. These are not times for invasion, rather for integration.

Bolivia, which is about to assume the pro tempore chairmanship of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) and the top position at the helm of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), commits to working unflaggingly for the integration of the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean, with full respect for states' sovereignty.

Thank you very much.