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REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED MEXICAN STATES, MR. ENRIQUE PEÑA NIETO, PLENARY SESSION OF THE EIGHTH SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS

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"The serious problems that are drug trafficking, violence, and migration cannot be resolved in isolation," EPN

Thank you very much.

Your Excellencies, Heads of State and Government,
Distinguished heads of delegations and representatives of international organizations,
Ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of my country and myself, I would like to thank the people and Government of Peru for their warm hospitality and congratulate our hosts on their excellent organization of this meeting. I bid welcome to President Martín Vizcarra Cornejo and praise Peru's democratic institutions, which have demonstrated their strength and shown unfailing respect for the constitutional order.

Mexico would like to join in expressing its solidarity with the people of Ecuador, its president, Mr. Lenin Moreno, and the families of the recently murdered journalists. We condemn those acts. With regard to last night's events in Syria, Mexico reiterates its utter condemnation of the use of chemical weapons.

We hope that the end to the use of such devastating weapons can be achieved through international law and multilateral instruments.

Mexico returns to this gathering of the Americas with full confidence in our countries' capacity to address the great regional challenges through dialogue and cooperation.

Over the decades, we have worked together at this and other forums to strengthen our democracies, promote trade, and improve wellbeing in our societies.

I would like to acknowledge the support of the Organization of American States for this important platform for discussion and cooperation, which has contributed to the advancement of our region through the years.

In the economic sphere, most of our countries have experienced growth in recent decades, which has helped to raise living standards in our societies.

Thanks to that growth, over the last 24 years we have seen a greater reduction in poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean than at any other period in history.

In the political sphere, too, there has been significant progress.

When we established this platform, we committed to preserving and strengthening democracy as the only political system that guarantees respect for human rights and the rule of law.

Today, almost all the Hemisphere's countries have democratic governments that respect human rights and allow freedom of expression through elections that are free and transparent, witnessed by international observers, and consistent with international standards.

In this context, we are concerned about the serious situation in Venezuela, which led to the absence of that brother country from this Summit. Mexico reiterates its support for the decision of the Government of Peru.

We hope that Venezuelans themselves will be able to resolve the crisis in a peaceful manner by restoring democracy.

Mexico will continue working through diplomatic channels to contribute to that outcome through the Lima Group, the Organization of American States, and any other means for achieving that goal.

Almost a quarter century after the First Summit, our region has made significant strides. However, there are still important challenges that we must confront together.

Without a doubt, one such challenge is the fight against corruption, which affects all our nations and erodes citizens' trust in institutions.

At the national level, our respective governments have taken concrete action.

In Mexico, we are driving forward with the implementation of a set of initiatives aimed at rooting out corruption from public life:

First, by establishing the National Anti-corruption System, which reinforces reporting, investigation, and sanction mechanisms, as well as encouraging a culture of integrity.

Second, by guaranteeing, through the National Transparency System, the right of access to all public information held by state authorities.

Third, by undertaking a broad e-Government agenda that enhances access to information, provides digital access to government services, and promotes citizen engagement.

And fourth, by adhering to the guidelines of international mechanisms such as the Inter-American Convention against Corruption, the G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group, and Goal 16 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Consistent with those efforts, I endorse Mexico's support for the goals of the Lima Commitment, which we adopted this morning.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Mexicans understand that their progress is tied to that of the region.

As such, we have sought to foster an ever-closer relationship with each country in the Hemisphere.

We know that each country has its strengths and challenges. We know that in today's world, the great national problems cannot be solved without intense international cooperation.

These days, isolation means falling behind. We must work together on the basis of our shared values to overcome the obstacles confronting us.

The serious problems that are drug trafficking, violence, and migration cannot be resolved in isolation.

In particular, history has shown that our joint efforts in that regard, our common front against the ills that plague our region, must be founded on respect for each other, for our citizens, and for the fact that we each have a duty to defend our country's interests.

We Mexicans respect and admire all the nations that make up this vast and diverse Hemisphere.

We are convinced that the progress of a community of nations should be measured not only by the advances of the most prosperous, but also by those of its less developed and vulnerable members.

That is what makes a community: when the efforts of all contribute to the success of one.

As José Santos Chocano, that great poet of Peru and the Americas who lived in Mexico, yearned, our collective labors will elevate our hemispheric spirit and give shape in a not-too-distant future to the unity of the Americas.

Thank you very much.