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RECOMMENDATIONS PRESENTED BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR
(Paula Uribe, Director of Government Affairs, PepsiCo, Inc.)

Good morning to Mr. O'Reilly, National Summit Coordinator for the United States. Also, to the regional government representatives today, and to representatives from the region's youth, civil society, and my colleagues from the private sector participating in this meeting today.

My name is Paula Uribe, I am Director of Government Affairs at PepsiCo, I am here today in my capacity as Chair of the Food and Agribusiness WG of the Americas Business Dialogue (ABD).

The ABD, which is part of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), with active support from the US Chamber of Commerce, has been shepherding the private sector's work to draft recommendations for the region's leaders, as part of the Summit of the Americas process, on different areas, one of them Food and Agribusiness.

All Working Groups have been meeting and drafting these recommendations for over a year.

As you may be familiar, this process has always taken place before every Summit.

Today, I will speak about the role the private sector can play to support efforts toward a GREEN FUTURE in the Americas.

The private sector is a relevant stakeholder when we talk about reaching many regional goals.

Many private companies are striving to help mitigate the impacts of human activity on the planet. We know that we must take care of it because it is the future of humankind.

I will share an example of the commitments made by companies, like the one I work for, PepsiCo.

PepsiCo recently launched the PepsiCo Positive (PEP+) corporate sustainability agenda, through which we strive for positive action for the planet and people. PEP+ is focused on three pillars: positive agriculture, positive value chain and positive choices.

This includes spreading regenerative farming practices across seven million acres globally; becoming net water positive by 2030 by reducing absolute water use and replenishing water sheds; and achieving NET-ZERO emissions by 2040 by increasing the use of renewable energy.

As part of the work of the members of the ABD F&A WG, we brainstormed for months and agreed that the Americas are key for the future of global food security.

This group was lucky to have representatives and experts from the whole region, members included companies, food and agriculture industry associations, and support from the IDB and the Inter-American Institute for Agricultural Cooperation (IICA).

Together, we identified important areas of opportunity for the region where the food and agribusiness sector can play an important role, as a result, we drafted a set of recommendations for leaders in the Hemisphere.

I will now mention a couple of our recommendations that are deeply connected to the GREEN FUTURE:

Promote digital transformation for agricultural practices and farmer's talent development.

Digital access in rural areas can help in many ways, including with training and capacity building for farmers everywhere to massively adopt sustainable farming practices, which can help preserve soils, water, ecosystems, etc.

Another recommendation mentions the need to champion climate smart and nature based solutions for resilient and sustainable agribusiness while tackling climate change. Within this priority, I want to point out the following:

Stimulate the development and adoption of innovative technologies, modern and regenerative practices to anticipate impacts, mitigate and build resiliency to climate change.

Unlock financing opportunities for value chains to foster climate smart solutions (regenerative and modern agriculture, bioeconomy) to tackle climate change and future pandemics.

It is imperative to transform farming practices across this hemisphere so soils and food security in the Americas are protected.

A joint public-private effort (coalition) could eliminate millions of tons of greenhouse gas emissions by the end of the decade.

To accomplish this, governments should strive to educate, measure and finance regenerative and climate smart farming projects and groups across the region to adopt practices, which build resilience and improve and restore ecosystems.

Our recommendations will be shared with leaders once we get to the SOA, but we will be happy to discuss with all governments, civil society, and youth on how to better accomplish a GREEN FUTURE for the Americas.

After reading the OUR GREEN FUTURE draft political commitment, I would like to point out the following:

There is a need for a more prominent mention of the food and agriculture sector. This sector is necessary, and we can't forget the Americas can become a global agricultural powerhouse.

Most efforts so far have been focused on reactive mitigating actions or in protecting forests and biomes.

As a result, there have been few efforts toward soil restoration for agricultural use and very little has been done to incorporate regenerative agriculture at a large scale, beyond efforts by IICA and some private sector stakeholders such as Happy Family, General Mills, PepsiCo, Cargill, Patagonia, and Timberland, who are investing in research, supporting farmers, and driving sustainable practices within their value chains.

I would like to take this opportunity to urge all governments to give a more positive, prominent mention of agriculture and collaboration with the private sector as part of the GREEN FUTURE commitment.

THANK YOU.