



SUMMIT IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW GROUP (SIRG)
First Meeting at the Ministerial Level of 2023
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REMARKS BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL
OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES (OAS)

(Mr. Luis Almagro)

At the previous OAS General Assembly in Lima, we agreed that we would further solidify our commitment to building a democracy for all citizens in the region, in keeping with the principles and values articulated in the OAS Charter, the Inter-American Democratic Charter and the inter-American human rights instruments.

Welcome to this the first ministerial-level meeting of the Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG), which is held annually to coincide with our General Assembly.

We would like to extend special appreciation to the Government of the United States for assuming the chairmanship of the Ninth Summit of the Americas and for its leadership in the Summit process, as well as for driving a frank and direct political dialogue for consensus building and implementation efforts involving the governments of the Americas, civil society, youth leaders, women's organizations, and the private sector.

For us, the initiative to host the Cities Summit of the Americas in Denver this past April was indeed laudable. The inclusion of stakeholders from all levels of government will be an important legacy of the Ninth Summit of the Americas.

Today's meeting is an opportunity to take stock of the work done in the cycle of the Ninth Summit, since the time the United States assumed the chairmanship of the process in July 2020, in order to meet the goal proposed under the theme "Building a sustainable, resilient, and equitable future."

Together with the five political commitments approved, this objective provides a framework for action to address the hemisphere's most pressing problems, such as threats to democracy, the climate crisis, and the lack of equitable access to economic, social, and political opportunities; and allows us to place special emphasis on the populations in the most vulnerable situations and historically marginalized.

We would like to reiterate the commitment of the OAS General Secretariat – as technical secretariat and institutional memory of the Summit Process – to continue working and rendering active support to the follow-up and implementation of the mandates that were adopted.

Post-pandemic renewal of international development cooperation is especially important for the region, in that it demands that we address the development needs of countries, over and above an income criterion, by incorporating a multidimensional approach to sustainable development.

In this respect, we call on the Joint Summit Working Group (JSWG) institutions to make a concrete offer of technical and financial support to meet the scale of the regional challenges.

Likewise, we must recognize the important role of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) in furnishing the participating states with technical assistance to chart the roadmap for a more robust regional preparedness and response in terms of health emergencies and future pandemics.

With the “Action Plan on Health and Resilience in the Americas” submitted for consideration and adoption by this Ministerial SIRG, a vision and political commitment has been established for promoting collective action to address emerging infections, the burden of non-communicable diseases, the impact of climate change on health, and the need for equitable access to critical supplies, especially vaccines.

At the Ninth Summit, the leaders of the Americas renewed what has been a key aspiration since the First Summit of the Americas: to strengthen the rule of law, free and fair elections, human rights, and other pillars upon which free and open societies are based.

Working through the OAS and the other mechanisms of the inter-American system, we will continue promoting policy dialogue in defense of democratic institutions.

And finally, in terms of anticorruption efforts and follow-up on the Lima Commitment, the software for the Mechanism for Follow-up and Implementation of the Lima Commitment will be transferred from Peru’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the OAS General Secretariat, under an agreement with the Government of Peru.

This is intended to ensure continuity in the management of this Mechanism and that it remains accessible to the various players in the Summits process.

While the task ahead is anything but easy, it is nonetheless a determining factor in moving forward on implementing the mandates from the Summits.

The Government of the Dominican Republic will shortly be leading the new cycle towards the Tenth Summit, and we are truly grateful that it has taken on the role of spokesperson for the region in order to channel a renewed regional agenda.

I would like to conclude by stressing, once again, the commitment of our Summits Secretariat to continuing to support the Chair and the states in this Process and to continuing to strengthen the participation of both the member institutions of the Joint Summit Working Group and social actors, who are an integral part of the Process.

Thank you very much.