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Remarks by

His Excellency Nestor Mendez, Assistant Secretary General of the OAS

Distinguished Chairperson of the Summit Implementation and Review Group

Distinguished National Coordinators and Permanent Representatives

Participants from the Joint Summit Working Group

Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen

A pleasant good morning,

Just over four months ago we were honored to participate in the VIII Summit of the Americas held in the city of Lima. At that important meeting for the first time in 13 years, Heads of State and Government from the region achieved a consensus on an agenda of common action in the hemisphere, in this case to address the scourge of corruption.

As we reflect on this important accomplishment, it is important to recognize Peru’s leadership in presiding over the Summit Process.

As national coordinators of the SIRG process, you have been the co-authors of this success and as such are intimately aware of the complexity of the challenges that have been addressed to date. The conclusion of the Lima undertaking and the 57 point agenda it outlines represents a new high for the Summit Process.

Of course, as has been seen in the past, the articulation of ambitious goals is only half the battle. And, for this reason, we appreciate the manner in which the Government of Peru is moving assiduously on the implementation process.

The Implementation Mechanism that you are in the process of constructing will be a powerful instrument. It sets out a work plan that begins under the Peruvian presidency, but which will carry forward for reporting at the next Summit of the Americas to be held in 2021 in the United States. The VIII Summit of the Americas was remarkable not just for the pertinence of its thematic agendas, but also for the innovation it marked in its open format and inclusive preparation. The improved quality of the parallel fora and the inclusion of representatives of business, youth, civil society and indigenous peoples in the dialogue contributed greatly to the legitimacy of the process.

Throughout this process the active collaboration of the 12 institutions that comprise the Joint Summit Working Group (i.e. the JSWG) has been indispensable. This will be even more the case as we enter into the implementation phase. Indeed a good half dozen of the 57 mandates conferred at Lima call on the JSWG members, either individually or collectively, to support this process.

Importantly for participating states, paragraph 52 of the Lima Undertaking clearly requests that the “Joint Summit Working Group assists states with resources and technical capacity building, so that they can implement the commitments undertaken at this Summit in the area of strengthening democratic governance and the fight against corruption, including those commitments that refer to implementation of legislation, institution-building, training and cooperation.”

Against this background, I wish to take a moment to inform the SIRG of the robust response from the community of Inter-American institutions to support the Lima Commitments and Implementation mechanism. In fact, at five o´clock this afternoon, National Coordinators and Permanent Representatives have been invited to witness the signing by the Secretary General along with the Heads of these Institutions of a renewed Memorandum of Understanding that will guide this work. This will take place in the Hall of Heroes upstairs to be followed by a reception in the Patio Azteca.

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In this manner, it is the intention of the OAS, as Chair of the Joint Summit Working Group, to transform the Joint Summit Working Group from solely a clearing house that reports on the work of each institution, to a vehicle that ensures alignment, coordination, and cooperation among those important partners so as to avoid duplication of efforts. I have stated on many occasions the importance of working together as hemispheric bodies who serve the same constituents. It is my firm belief that through coordinated action and willful knowledge sharing we can have an even greater impact on improving the lives of the peoples of the Americas.

In that vein, I wish to acknowledge the invaluable role and dedication of the Summit Secretariat and the Secretariat for Hemispheric Affairs who, in close cooperation with Peru, have helped to bring us to this new level of commitment and achievement.

I thank you.