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Fact Sheet: Summit of the Americas: Advancing the Common Agenda

Prepared by the Office of Regional Economic Policy and Summit Coordination, U.S. Department of State, February 1997.

The Miami Summit was a watershed event for the Western Hemisphere. In December 1994 President Bill Clinton and his fellow leaders in the Americas met to commemorate the region's commitment to democracy and free market economies. The Summit, the first of its kind in 27 years, brought together the 34 democracies of the hemisphere to articulate their shared vision of the future.

Leaders agreed to a series of initiatives in support of the four Summit themes--strengthening democracy, promoting economic prosperity, eradicating poverty and discrimination, and guaranteeing sustainable development. Since 1994, the Miami Plan of Action has produced tangible results. Cooperative efforts are underway in several important and groundbreaking areas.

The Summit reflected a new vision of hemispheric relations, based on the principles of consensus and cooperation. This "Spirit of Miami" created the context for addressing critical challenges, such as forging the Mexican finance stabilization package and supporting constitutional democracy in Paraguay.

The Miami Summit engaged governments, international institutions, and the public in support of an ambitious, progressive agenda. The Organization of American States (OAS) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) have actively responded to the mandates of the Summit. A process began in Miami that will lead to better lives for the people of the Hemisphere. It is a process that will be continued by the next Summit of the Americas hosted by the Government of Chile in March 1998 in Santiago.

During his State of the Union address President Clinton emphasized the importance of the hemisphere to U.S. national interests. He plans to travel to the region twice this year and attend the Santiago Summit next year. The President also appointed Counselor Thomas F. "Mack" McLarty as his Special Envoy for the Americas.

Key Miami Follow-up Actions

I. Strengthening Democracy

The commitment to democracy is a singular feature in our Hemisphere; protection of democracy was cited during the Summit as "the central priority of the Americas." The democracy initiatives have produced several notable results:

- Entry into force of the OAS Anti-Corruption Convention, completed in March 1996. This unprecedented accord has been signed by 23 countries, including the United States; two countries, Paraguay and Bolivia, have completed the ratification process.

- Establishment by USAID of a network of non-governmental organizations to link NGOs throughout the Hemisphere, increasing public participation in policymaking.
- Agreement via the OAS on an Anti-Drug Strategy in the Hemisphere, which represents a balanced approach to counteract the problems of drugs;
- Implementation of the Buenos Aires Communiqué to combat money laundering continues.
- Approval by Summit governments via the OAS of concrete measures that governments can take individually and collectively to combat terrorism.

II. Promoting Economic Prosperity

Progress already had been realized in liberalizing markets and undertaking market integration before the Summit.

Leaders in Miami sought to build upon these economic endeavors, committing to negotiate the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) by 2005. Among the activities in promoting prosperity:

- Preparations continue for the May 1997 Trade Ministerial in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, at which ministers will make recommendations on how and when to launch the Free Trade Area of the Americas negotiations. The Clinton Administration is continuing its efforts to obtain the fast track authority necessary to negotiate trade agreements, a key step in the effort to create the FTAA. At the same time, it is vital to fulfill the Administration's commitment to conclude a trade agreement with Chile.
- Revitalization of the Tripartite Committee, consisting of the OAS, IDB and UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), to coordinate specific assigned follow-up programs in support of the FTAA.
- Formation of a Committee on Hemispheric Financial Issues to advance capital markets development and liberalization in support of the process of regional economic integration. Key elements of the Committee's work include: an inventory of national capital market regulations, support of the regional associations of bank and securities regulators, and a review of the remaining problems of debt in the region.
- Successful conclusion of the Senior Telecommunications Officials meeting, which approved hemispheric guidelines that will serve as the basis of regional telecommunications agreements.

III. Eradicating Poverty and Discrimination

Heads of government in Miami recognized the need for the full participation of all people in the hemisphere to achieve the goals of the Summit. Results have been:

- Approval by the IDB of \$1.5 billion in loans for education infrastructure, especially in the primary education area.
- Participation by Mrs. Clinton at the 6th Conference on Wives of Heads of State and Government held in La Paz, Bolivia. Mrs. Clinton witnessed the signing of a \$2.25 million USAID grant to the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) to improve emergency obstetrical care in the Americas.
- Launching by USAID, with the participation of Mrs. Clinton, of the hemispheric Partnership for Education Revitalization in the Americas (PERA), making education more accessible, more effective and more participatory.
- Success in carrying out at PAHO a program to eliminate measles from the Hemisphere, specifically in the English-speaking Caribbean.
- Approval at PAHO of a Pan-American Charter on Health and the Environment, linking development, health and environmental issues.
- A commitment by the IDB of \$500 million in loans specifically for microentrepreneurs, the majority of whom are women struggling to escape poverty.

IV. Guaranteeing Sustainable Development

The leaders at the Summit also recognized the importance of environmentally sound development practices and called for an increase in technical and management capacity as well as in public awareness in the environmental sector. Achievements to date include:

- Agreement at the December 1996 Santa Cruz Summit for Sustainable Development, attended by Vice President Gore, on a series of measures to protect the environment and improve social conditions. Follow-up projects include new marine centers in the Caribbean and establishment of hemispheric networks to support biodiversity and enforce environmental laws. The World Bank has committed \$11 billion and the IDB \$10 billion in lending for sustainable development projects in the future. The OAS will coordinate Santa Cruz follow-up activities.
- Progress in hemispheric energy initiatives via the Bolivia Energy Ministerial July 1996, including projects in rural electrification, renewable energy, and technology transfer.
- Development of a Partnership for Pollution Prevention, in which, for example, governments, NGOs and multilateral institutions are working together to improve water quality and to phase out leaded gasoline in the Hemisphere.

Institutionalizing the Summit

Foreign Ministers are overseeing the implementation phase of the Summit. In June 1996, ministers met in Panama to take stock of the progress of the previous year. They agreed to continue working to implement the agreements of Miami.

To support Foreign Ministers in their task, governments formed in March 1995 the Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG), which meets periodically since Miami to monitor and promote all follow-up activities. The OAS established a special committee to coordinate actions assigned to that organization by the leaders.

Implementing the comprehensive Summit agenda necessitated a decentralized implementation plan. As a result, countries and regional organizations have volunteered as "Responsible Coordinators" to advance specific Summit initiatives.

The Santiago Summit of the Americas

The Government of Chile will host the next Summit of the Americas March 28-29, 1998 in Santiago. The Summit will address the themes of strengthening democracy, achieving economic integration, and alleviating poverty. The Santiago agenda will consist of seven or eight new initiatives achievable in a two- to three-year period. They agreed to meet in Lima June 1997 to further discuss these issues.

The ministers also designated the SIRG as the principal negotiating forum for the next Summit and called for negotiations to be carried out in the same open and transparent manner that characterized the Miami Summit.

A spirit of cooperation barely imaginable only a short time ago has taken root and blossomed. While setbacks have and will continue to occur, we now have in place a mechanism to address challenges creatively, constructively, and cooperatively. Building on our remarkable progress to date, we are moving forward toward the hemisphere's definition of a brighter future.

Miami Summit Action Items

1. Strengthening Democracy
2. Human Rights
3. Invigorating Society
4. Cultural Values
5. Combating Corruption
6. Illegal Drugs and Related Crime
7. Terrorism
8. Building Mutual Security
9. Free Trade in the Americas
10. Liberalizing Capital Markets
11. Hemispheric Infrastructure
12. Energy Cooperation
13. Telecommunications
14. Science and Technology
15. Tourism
16. Access to Quality Education
17. Basic Health Services
18. Women in Society
19. Microenterprise
20. White Helmets
21. Sustainable Energy Use
22. Partnership for Biodiversity
23. Partnership for Pollution Prevention

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