



SUMMIT IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW GROUP (SIRG)
First Regular Meeting of 2021
June 16 and 17, 2021
Virtual

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FINAL REPORT

The First Regular Meeting of the Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG) was held virtually on June 16-17, 2021. It consisted of two plenary sessions. The first plenary session of the SIRG, was public and comprised four moderated thematic dialogues amongst SIRG delegations and civil society and private sector panelists to discuss priorities for the upcoming Ninth Summit of the Americas. The second plenary session, held on June 17, was private, with the participation of 32 delegations of participating states and entities pertaining to the Joint Summit Working Group (JSWG). The list of participants was published as document [GRIC/O.1.doc.77/21 rev. 1](#).

1. Opening remarks during the First Plenary Session by Mr. Dale Eppler, National Summit Coordinator of the United States of America

The remarks by Mr. Dale Eppler, Chairman of the SIRG and National Summits Coordinator of the United States were published as document [GRIC/O.1/INF.24/21](#).

The Chairman of the SIRG thanked all the delegations for taking part in the First Regular Meeting of the SIRG in 2021 and for their willingness to ensure that the Summits Process continues to be an inclusive and important forum. He stressed that the United States was proud to renew its commitment to the Hemisphere by chairing the Ninth Summit of the Americas and was ready to work together with all participants in the process to promote sustainable economic growth, defend democratic values, and enhance security in the Americas. The Chairman notified all the delegations that the Ninth Summit will be held in 2022 at a face-to-face meeting with leaders and other participants throughout the region.

The Chairman of the SIRG said that the consultations carried out with civil society and private sector actors will provide a useful perspective shaping and establishing the topic and objectives of the Ninth Summit. He ended his remarks by thanking the Government of Peru for hosting the Eighth Summit and for acting as the Vice Chair of the SIRG and for its leadership in the Summits Process.

2. Remarks by the OAS Secretary General, Mr. Luis Almagro

In his remarks welcoming the National Summit Coordinators, representatives of international and regional organizations pertaining to the SIRG, representatives of civil society organizations, and social actors attending the session, Mr. Luis Almagro, Secretary General of the OAS, drew attention

to the fact that this meeting of the SIRG marked the start of substantive preparations for the Ninth Summit of the Americas at a key time for the region, when it is facing a pandemic that has exacerbated a series of structural issues.

He stressed that Latin America and the Caribbean was the region hardest hit by COVID-19, with more severe economic development gaps, greater inequality and a huge increase in the informal workforce. He maintained that the pandemic had resulted in greater governance challenges and had triggered both social discontent and increased vulnerability. He said he considered the Ninth Summit a major opportunity for multiple actors to discuss initiatives geared to overcoming the crisis and meeting the demands of citizens in the region.

The Secretary General highlighted the leadership shown by the Government of Peru, not only during preparations for and the holding of the Eighth Summit of the Americas, but also for the decision to establish, for the first time, an instrument for monitoring implementation of the mandates agreed upon in the Summits Process. He also welcomed the efforts made to strengthen coordination of the work of the JSWG through ongoing dialogue and cooperation initiatives in support of the countries of the region that would bolster measures aimed at reinforcing integrity amongst public and private actors. He underscored the importance of JSWG participation in determining the core topics to be discussed at the Summit and in providing technical and financial support to States attempting to implement the mandates and initiatives agreed upon.

He stressed that the Summits Process had been enriched by the active participation of civil society and social actors and that their contributions during the preparatory process had ensured a more inclusive dialogue and continued to influence States' compliance with the mandates. The Secretary General highlighted the work of the Summits Secretariat and reaffirmed its commitment to continue broadening the participation of social actors in the Summits Process, in a dialogue that acknowledges the diversity of views in the Hemisphere on a series of topics and facilitates the formulation of policies to attend to the region's multiple social, economic, political, and environmental challenges.

3. Dialogues with representatives of civil society and the private sector

Dialogue A: Governance, Anticorruption and Human Rights

Dialogue A was moderated by Linda Maguire, Deputy Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The speeches by civil society addressed the need to bolster the autonomy and independence of the Judiciary and its relations with the Executive Branch with a view to strengthening the rule of law. They emphasized the processes for appointing Supreme Court judges and forming independent advisory boards that meet inter-American system standards. They also referred to the need to promote and reinforce national labor laws requiring acceptable conditions in the workplace. Ms. Maguire emphasized the need to implement and create more robust institutions for fighting corruption and defending human rights.

For its part, the private sector stressed that transparency and digital transformation are key factors in the governance agenda and pointed out that they should not be analyzed separately, but rather as an integral part of other governance agenda items. The private sector reiterated that intersectoral collaboration and partnerships between the private sector, civil society, and governments are key to achieving better outcomes. It called for more emphasis on economic recovery with inclusion, which

would entail broadening investment to cover neglected communities and incorporating excluded traditional supply chains, especially small and medium-sized enterprises. The private sector underscored the importance of enhancing the rule of law, bolstering transparency and access to justice, and fostering independent judiciaries, so as to create a favorable environment for businesses.

Dialogue B: Pandemic Response and Resilience

Dialogue B was moderated by Dr. Marcos Espinal, Director of the Department of Communicable Diseases and Health Analysis of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). Civil society speakers emphasized the need to strengthen national health systems in order to prevent, detect, and address communicable diseases and other public health emergencies, such as that caused by COVID-19. They also called for the implementation of public policies with a gender perspective, guaranteeing universal access to health. Finally, they reiterated that the pandemic had exposed the weaknesses of public health systems and their impact on global health security.

The private sector added that it is crucial to foster its participation in order to widen the range of innovative health interventions and collaborate with the regulatory agencies lending assistance to the population. Private sector speakers pointed out that adopting new, large scale health practices requires systematic planning, implementation, and monitoring approaches. They underscored the importance of redoubling efforts to expand digital solutions in the health sector and the need to promote more flexible rules that would allow more room for health professionals to broaden their impact and effective contribution to the provision of health services.

Dialogue C: Climate Change and Sustainable Development

Dialogue C was moderated by Valerie Isaac, Coordinator of the Environmental Sustainability Unit of the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), who stressed that climate change is still one of the major challenges for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially given the region's vulnerability to climate disorders that impair productivity, means of sustenance, and economic development. Civil society urged that transition programs be developed for workers affected by climate change, with a recycling approach and substantial income support. Speakers stressed the need to ensure that social and economic development include and address climate change challenges.

The private sector pointed to the need for more in-depth exploration of energy resources and the need to expedite energy transition with ample participation by stakeholders. Speakers also drew attention to matters relating to the storage of energy, energy integration, interconnection, and distribution. They emphasized that renewable energy needs to be made available to all segments of the population. They also called for sustainability and environmental policies highlighting the private sector's role in contributing to sustainability. They argued that those policies would help expedite change, risk and mitigation analysis, and the development of trade facilitating the deployment of financial instruments to address the impacts of climate change. They also pointed to the need to prioritize the allocation of resources to the most vulnerable countries, especially small island states.

Dialogue D: Economic Growth and Social Inclusion

Dialogue D was moderated by Mr. Roberto Taliercio, Regional Director in the Latin America and Caribbean region for the Equitable Growth, Finance, and Institutions (EFI) department of the World Bank. During this meeting, civil society and social actors emphasized the need to promote

development policies focusing on vulnerable groups and incorporating a gender perspective. Accordingly, they called upon States to renew their commitment to promoting social dialogue, addressing crises, and promoting a more inclusive recovery.

For its part, the private sector stressed the importance of policies for closing the digital divide and therefore promoting social inclusion. Finally, it pointed out the need to develop policy strategies for making the most of the benefits of the technological revolution as well as fostering broad participation in the global digital transformation.

4. Report on Implementation of the Lima Commitment, Presentation by Peru

The presentation of the Report on Implementation of the Lima Commitment of Ambassador Rolando Ruiz Rosas Cateriano, Deputy National Summit Coordinator, was published as [GRIC/O.1/INF.21/21](#).

His presentation underscored the progress made since 2019 with the Mechanism for Monitoring and Implementation of the Lima Commitment, which was adopted by 32 States and seeks to promote regional cooperation in the fight against corruption. The report stated that 18 countries and eight JSWG organizations documented progress made with regard to the mandates of the Lima Commitment and that their inputs helped compile a database of best practices and regional capacity in the fight against corruption.

5. Report on the activities of the Summits of the Americas Secretariat and of the JSWG in follow-up to the Lima Commitment and the COVID-19 pandemic. Presentation by Ambassador James Lambert, Secretary for Hemispheric Affairs

Ambassador Lambert's remarks were published as document: [GRIC/O.1/INF.19/21](#).

Ambassador Lambert gave a report on the work being done by the Summit's Secretariat in connection with the Summits Process, including ongoing support for the Office of the Chair, support to member states in their efforts to implement the mandates, coordination in its capacity as Chair of the JSWG, and supervision of constructive participation by civil society and social actors. He also underscored its role as the institutional memory of the Summits Process including the Mechanism for Follow-up and Implementation of the Lima Commitment.

He mentioned renewed efforts by the JSWG to provide coordinated support to the countries of the Americas. He reported that JSWG support has been demonstrated in both the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding, which reinforces commitments by the entities involved, and in the presentation of the summary of its activities. Ambassador Lambert also highlighted the positive impact of the incorporation, in early 2019, of the Organization for Economic Development (OECD) in the 12-body team of the JSWG. He stressed that four meetings of High Authorities of the JSWG had been held in 2020 to enhance the coordination of assistance efforts in the region.

He said that this new dynamic had turned the JWSG into a major support tool for the Office of the Chair in the run-up to the Ninth Summit, citing as examples the participation of the authorities of JWSG entities in dialogues between the private sector, civil society, and social actors at the SIRG

meeting, which helped identify challenges prior to the Ninth Summit. He also underscored the concern voiced by JSWG entities to the Chair regarding the impact of the pandemic on governance in the region.

Finally, he mentioned other efforts by the Summit Secretariat, including technical assistance to member states related to money laundering, tax crimes, open data, and civil service integrity in collaboration with other members of the JSWG, including OAS bodies. He ended by thanking the Summits Secretariat for all its work, in spite by the challenges posed by the pandemic.

6. Comments by Delegations on the Presentations

The delegation of Canada underscored the support given to the Summits Secretariat aimed at strengthening the participation of women's organizations in the Summits Process, with an investment of US\$660,000. This project will seek to empower women and enhance the part their organizations play in the inter-American system, via the Summits Process. The delegation also congratulated JSWG institutions for their contribution to the Summits Process and for their help with addressing COVID-19 in the Hemisphere.

The delegation of Ecuador thanked the Summit Secretariat for its work and highlighted the new Government of Ecuador's efforts to combat corruption. It reported that the Government is working to strengthen due process by enhancing the separation of Legislative, Executive, and Judicial branches. The Representative also referred to the efforts made to provide vaccination for Ecuadorians and to migrants residing in the country.

The delegation of Guatemala described efforts in their country to combat corruption, and especially to recover public funds. It also underscored contributions made by the OAS through a variety of cooperation mechanisms.

The delegation of the Dominican Republic reported on progress made with promoting transparency. It stressed the importance of feedback from the SISCA platform for achieving regional synergy in the fight against corruption. It further highlighted the creation of transparency portals for digital transformation and guarantees for access to information.

The delegation of Jamaica thanked the Summit's Secretariat for its work, particularly with respect to dialogue with civil society and the private sector, which had helped make the Summits Process more inclusive. It emphasized that, even though the COVID-19 pandemic had prevented detailed feedback on the Mechanism for Follow-up and Implementation of the Lima Commitment Platform, Jamaica will continue its efforts in that regard.

Finally, the delegation of Guyana stressed that the Government of that country is working to ensure effective implementation of the Lima Commitment and is reassigning funds and entering into partnerships with the private sector to promote governance. It pointed out that Guyana is reinforcing the independence of oversight bodies and financial intelligence units so that they can perform their mandates effectively while striving to prosecute corruption.

7. Outcomes of national dialogues and presentation of civil society and private sector recommendation for the Ninth Summit of the Americas. Presentation by María Celina Conte, Interim Director, Summits of the Americas Secretariat.

The remarks by María Celina Conte, Interim Director, Summits of the Americas Secretariat were published as document [GRIC/O.1/INF.20/21](#).

Ms. Conte reported that, prior to the dialogues, the Summits Secretariat had organized preliminary consultations (known as Prep Talks) for civil society and social actors in 31 countries in the Hemisphere based on concept papers provided by the Office of the Chair in 2020. She underscored that those meetings had enabled participating civil society and social actors to put forward specific recommendations that served as a basis for sharing and discussing ideas in national dialogues.

Ms. Conte reported on the findings of the national dialogues between National Summits Coordinators and civil society and social actors in the run-up to the Ninth Summit. She said that the dialogues had provided an opportunity for meaningful exchanges amongst civil society representatives, social actors, and National Coordinators with a view to establishing priorities to be addressed at the Ninth Summit of the Americas. She pointed out that 17 national dialogues had been conducted, with the participation of representatives from 270 civil society organizations and social actors.

She listed topics of common concern and the problems and challenges facing citizens of the Americas that participants had identified:

- In the *political-institutional* sphere, participants stressed the importance of implementing an anti-corruption, transparency, and open data agenda;
- In the *human rights* sphere, participants stressed the need to guarantee and prioritize food security and access to safe water, and providing protection for informal sector workers;
- In the *social sphere*, participants called for public policies guaranteeing access to high-quality education;
- In the *public health* sphere, attention focused on boosting public policies to guarantee timely, cost-free, and quality access to health services for the entire population and, thereby, mitigating the impacts of COVID-19;
- In the *economic* sphere, the conversation revolved around a post-pandemic reactivation of the economy that would be sustainable, inclusive, and equitable;
- In the *environmental* sphere, participants stressed that sustainability policies should prioritize more robust environmental governance mechanisms guaranteeing citizen participation;
- In the *digitalization* sphere, participants stressed the need to promote digitalization and the incorporation of information technologies in a number of areas, along with promotion of open government geared to improving government procedures.

Ms. Conte ended by saying that the national dialogues had afforded an invaluable opportunity for representatives of civil society and social actors to interact with their governments within the framework of the Summits Process.

8. Presentation by Rodrigo Contreras, Coordinator of the Americas Business Dialogue, Integration and Trade Sector, of the Inter-American Development Bank

Mr. Rodrigo Contreras stressed that, in the run-up to the Ninth Summit of the Americas, two lines of action were being pursued, both aimed at bolstering consultation with the private sector with a view to promoting its participation in the Summits Process. He emphasized the support provided to member states with national dialogues and their respective private sectors, during which the main problems of the Hemisphere were identified. Mr. Contreras reiterated that the Bank was conscious of the differences between countries and tailored the dialogues to reflect those differences. He explained that the goal of the dialogues was to engage in an exchange of ideas and robust and participatory dialogue open to different opinions that could contribute to the Summits Process.

Mr. Contreras pointed out that the America's Business Dialogue had begun to define priorities and prepare recommendations throughout the Hemisphere in preparation for the upcoming Summit. He emphasized that this would lead to a technical and ministerial dialogue helping to generate consensus among the countries of the region. He ended by reaffirming support for the efforts being made by States to prepare for the Ninth Summit.

9. Presentation by Luis Viguria, Chief Executive Officer of the Young Americas Business Trust (YABT)

The remarks by Mr. Viguria, Chief Executive Officer of the YABT, were published as document [GRIC/O.1/INF.22/21](#).

Mr. Viguria said he was grateful for the opportunity to present the results of young people's recommendation for the Ninth Summit of the Americas, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. He maintained that the pandemic had hit youth, especially women, and those already living in poverty hardest. The recommendations made echoed the priorities of this segment of the population; fighting climate change, collaboration with young people for development through entrepreneurship, and innovation in actions geared to social, economic, and environmental recovery.

Mr. Viguria provided information about the development and implementation of the program known as *Reto InnovAcción: Innovación en Acción* in response to COVID-19, which forms part of the 16th version of the Talent and Innovation Competition of the Americas (TIC Americas). He pointed out that this was a multisectoral effort by the YABT, the Summits of the Americas/OAS Secretariat, the Inter-American Foundation, and the Government of the United States (State Department) to foster work with young people in support of economic and social inclusion in connection with member states' efforts to recover from COVID-19.

He emphasized that taking part in the first stage of the program were 1,312 young people from 32 member states, who came up with 1,052 solutions in priority areas that had been defined on the basis of recommendations made by young people themselves. The emphasis was on social inequality, gender equity, young citizen participation, and industrial reactivation. The idea is for member states and international organizations participating in the Summits Process to access proposals and contributions to recovery plans for the countries of the regions.

Mr. Viguria reiterated the importance of maintaining an official, effective, and permanent process to ensure the participation of young people in the Summits Process and he underscored both the commitment of the YABT and the willingness of young people at the VI Young Americas Forum

to contribute to the success of the upcoming Summit of the Americas. He thanked the Government of the United States, the Summits of the Americas Secretariat, and the Inter-American Foundation for including the YABT in efforts to contribute to the wellbeing of young people in the Americas.

10. Report by the Chair on dialogues among social actors, delivered by Dale Eppler, National Summit Coordinator of the United States of America

The remarks by Mr. Dale Eppler, Chairman of the SIRG and National Summit Coordinator of the United States were published as document [GRIC/O.1/INF.23/21](#).

Mr. Dale Eppler thanked the National Coordinators and government representatives for taking part in the first plenary meeting of the dialogues. He acknowledged the existence of more opinions that need to be heard and stressed that dialogue with interest groups ought not to begin or end at that meeting. Rather, there should continue to be ways of connecting constructively and meaningfully with all participants in the Summits Process.

He underscored that the dialogues covered a wide range of topics, such as the importance of governments addressing citizens' needs, the need to work on the lack of rule of law in the region, recommendations for using digital technology, the development of technologies that help to address many of the challenges facing the Hemisphere, and collaboration between civil society, the private sector, and governments.

As regards *dialogue on governance, anticorruption, and human rights*, the Chair emphasized that it is important to listen to people's needs and to redouble efforts to promote and defend democracy and human rights throughout the Hemisphere, and thereby make concrete progress with matters that have an impact on the livelihoods and wellbeing of the peoples of the Americas.

As regards the *dialogue concerning the response to the pandemic and resilience*, Mr. Eppler asserted that it was important to narrow divides and reduce inequalities in access to health care through greater inclusion and access to technology, as these would enhance resilience in the region. He stressed that establishing a formal mechanism covering several ministries would facilitate coordination and responses at times of crisis. At the same time, it would result in more resilient systems, eliminate redundancies, and facilitate the assessment of a variety of risks, needs, and vulnerabilities, as well as contribute to equitable access to resources and technology (including vaccinations, education, and communications technology).

As regards *dialogue on climate change and sustainable development*, the Chair of the SIRG emphasized that the mitigation of climate change and promotion of sustainable development would require solutions focusing on individuals and should include major participation by young people. He referred to the need to concentrate on protecting land and natural resources, safeguarding the wellbeing of individuals (especially the most vulnerable), enhancing food security, lowering dependence on fossil fuels, and de-carbonizing our economies.

As for the *dialogue on economic growth and social inclusion*, the Chair of the SIRG pointed out that economies need a workforce endowed with new skills and access to opportunities in an era of rapid technological change. He also underscored that vulnerable groups had lost further ground with respect to education as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Finally, he stressed that broad agreement had been reached in all the dialogues and that they had effectively addressed the challenges facing the region. He pointed out that those challenges required robust partnerships between governments, civil society, and the private sector. He also considered that the dialogues had served to draw attention to a wide range of topics of great importance for the region and to identify opportunities for cooperation that are key to the Summits Process.

11. Priorities for the Ninth Summit of the Americas: SIRG considerations and comments

The Chair of the SIRG, Mr. Dale Eppler, gave the floor to the delegations present to hear what they had to say regarding priorities for the Ninth Summit of the Americas.

The delegation of Guyana stressed that the Ninth Summit should focus on problems derived from the COVID-19 pandemic, especially in connection with the economies of Caribbean countries. He reported that Guyana was being affected by climate change and immigration and that the topics taken up in the dialogues with civil society had confirmed those regional challenges. The delegation considered that the Summit should focus on bolstering the health sector to enable it to address the pandemic. He ended by saying that the following topics should be considered priorities: food and nutritional security, increasing financing for sustainable construction, reducing the Hemisphere's debt burden, and strengthening democratic governance.

The delegation of Canada emphasized that the Summit affords a great opportunity to develop a hemispheric agenda establishing a unique set of regional objectives. It maintained that these can be achieved by promoting health, economic growth, care for the environment, and fostering more robust institutions throughout the Hemisphere, in the hopes of restoring trust in governments and their institutions. The delegation reiterated that combating corruption was of the utmost importance for ongoing efforts to address the problems created by the COVID-19 pandemic. The delegation said that Canada welcomes the inclusion of nongovernmental actors in the Summits Process.

The delegation of Paraguay drew attention to the importance of lessons learned and of acknowledging the challenges facing the region. It said that that would facilitate efforts to narrow inequalities, reduce poverty, and overcome stagnation.

The delegation of Jamaica maintained that the region needs to adopt a unified approach when it comes to addressing issues such as: social inclusion, digitization of the economy, education, and access to health care (including access to vaccinations that are key to socioeconomic recovery). Jamaica also addressed the issues of climate change, recovery from the pandemic, dealing with the regional debt burdens, and the needs of vulnerable women's groups.

The delegation of Costa Rica suggested considering four topics in the run-up to the Ninth Summit. The first is democratic governance and institution-building. Second is sustainable, green, and inclusive reactivation, with technological transformation and innovation, and the importance of adopting this approach to trade, investment, tourism, and the environment. As a third topic, Costa Rica also stressed the importance of focusing on health and the health crisis from a multilateral perspective. It also underscored the importance of addressing migration and hemispheric security as phenomena requiring comprehensive policies that take structural causes into account.

The delegation of Brazil proposed that the following topics be addressed in the run-up to the Ninth Summit of the Americas: joint responses to the pandemic, development, democracy, closer ties among the countries of the region, and the need to study value chains in the region.

For its part, the delegation of Argentina stressed that it was vital to address post-pandemic recovery throughout the region. It also pointed to the need to work together collectively and to cooperate regarding courses of action geared to enhancing equal opportunities, gender equality, trade, and economic growth.

The delegation of Trinidad and Tobago pleaded for a variety of opinions to be taken into account for an inclusive approach to the Ninth Summit, paying special heed to the current crisis affecting humanity as a whole.

12. Final considerations, other business, and adjournment of the meeting

There being no further comments by the delegations, the Chair of the SIRG and National Summit Coordinator of the United States thanked them for participating. He said that the numerous challenges and resulting priorities discussed would be taken into account when choosing the topic of the upcoming Summit. At 1:00 p.m., on June 17, he declared the meeting closed.