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REPORT OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF
MANDATES FROM THE FIFTH AND SIXTH SUMMITS OF THE AMERICAS

(United States 2014)

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2014

Introduction

In the 20 years since President Clinton convened the first Summit of the Americas in 1994, the Summits have remained the premier venue for all of the democratically-elected leaders in the Western Hemisphere to discuss common policy goals, affirm shared values, and commit to collaborative action with public and private partners to address challenges in the Americas. The Summit of the Americas provides a foundation for unity, purpose, and cooperation in the hemisphere, and an opportunity for our governments to reinforce our shared commitments to provide democracy, prosperity, security, and peace for our people.

During the Fifth and Sixth Summits in 2009 and 2012, regional leaders committed to upholding democracy and human rights, expanding economic opportunity, improving social equity, promoting clean energy, and increasing citizen security. The United States is working with its partners in the region to support sustainable and inclusive economic growth, entrepreneurship, and increased business linkages; promote clean energy, low-carbon development, and climate-resilient growth; improve access to justice and services for vulnerable and historically marginalized groups; strengthen rule of law institutions and address the root causes of crime and violence; and promote secure, prosperous, and inclusive societies.

The implementation report that follows provides a detailed account of U.S. efforts to achieve the commitments of the 2009 and 2012 Summits of the Americas, by supporting Summit initiatives as well as through domestic policies and programs.

Ambassador Carmen Lomellin

U.S. National Summit Coordinator

Economic Opportunity

Leaders recognized that micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises can generate new employment, improve quality of life, and have a positive impact on development and economic growth. They reaffirmed their commitment to promote economic growth and social inclusion by strengthening cooperatives and micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises. (*Cartagena: Poverty, Inequality and Inequity Chapter, Paragraph 7; Port of Spain: Paragraph 20*)

Small Business Network of the Americas (SBNA)

- The Small Business Network of the Americas (SBNA), launched at the 2012 Summit of the Americas, facilitates an interconnected network of thousands of small business support centers in the Western Hemisphere and assists millions of small business owners. Interconnection expands the pool of available resources for business development, enhances access to business counseling services for entrepreneurs, and fosters small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) growth by providing a framework to connect businesses across the hemisphere. SBNA, in turn, promotes and supports job creation in SMEs and encourages greater trade among these businesses throughout the Western Hemisphere.
- The United States is working with its partners to increase the number of small business development centers (SBDCs) and other small business support centers; increase connections among SBDCs throughout the hemisphere; catalyze cross-border business-to-business connections; and expand resources for business development. In 2013, U.S. efforts generated \$98.5 million in guaranteed lending to small businesses in Latin America.

Microfinance Growth Fund (MiGroF)

- President Obama announced the Microfinance Growth Fund (MiGroF) at the 2009 Summit of the Americas to provide a new source of funding for microfinance institutions (MFIs) in response to the reduction in their lending capacity due to the global credit crisis. It provides a stable medium- and long-term source of financing to allow MFIs throughout Latin America and the Caribbean to continue funding micro and small enterprises that have good

repayment records and to find new entrepreneurs who have lacked access to microfinance services.

- The United States has disbursed \$112 million to MiGroF to date, supporting access to finance for more than 100,000 micro and small enterprises in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Women's Entrepreneurship in the Americas (WEAmericas)

- The United States and 11 private sector partners founded the Women's Entrepreneurship in the Americas (WEAmericas) initiative at the 2012 Summit of the Americas. WEAmericas leverages public-private partnerships to promote inclusive economic growth in the Western Hemisphere by reducing barriers that women entrepreneurs face in starting and growing SMEs. The United States is also working with bilateral partners and has signed memoranda of understanding with Mexico, Brazil, Colombia, and Peru to further women's economic empowerment and the goals of WEAmericas.
- Through these partnerships, the United States and its partners have awarded \$1.5 million in small grants to 24 organizations to support women entrepreneurs across 24 countries, directly benefiting approximately 20,000 women. Approximately 300 women have directly participated in WEAmericas training programs, and over 100 additional women have received training from the initial trainees.
- Through ongoing partnerships, an additional 300 women will participate in WEAmericas training programs by 2015. Ongoing partnerships are also providing increased market access and access to capital for women entrepreneurs. For example, the Inter-American Development Bank is providing up to \$55 million in grants and loans to improve lending to women-owned SMEs and WEConnect International is providing certification and supply chain integration services for women-owned SMEs.
- The United States is working to increase the number of public, private, and bilateral partners to expand opportunities available to women entrepreneurs under WEAmericas.

Supporting Local Businesses and Communities

- The United States promotes and invests in the best ideas from local communities for their own economic and social development through the Inter-

American Foundation (IAF). The IAF grants multi-year funding to citizen-led, grassroots development projects throughout the region and supports project implementation by providing technical advice and independent verification of project goals throughout the life of the grant. These grants enable community enterprises, cooperatives, and local businesses to get off the ground, refine their products and services, create jobs, and access the global marketplace. The U.S. government's support helps vulnerable people improve their lives, strengthen the local economy, and remain in their communities to contribute as workers and leaders.

- The IAF has dedicated 22 percent of its grant funds from 2009 to 2013 to enterprise development and 25 percent to training or education, for a total of \$36.3 million. This support created, improved, or sustained at least 3,882 jobs in 2013 and 5,300 jobs in 2012, and resulted in many new micro and small businesses in the region. Through the IAF, the United States committed another \$25.2 million in the last five years to grants for agriculture, many of which enabled or improved food production for sale in domestic and international markets.

Social Equity and Human Prosperity

Leaders reaffirmed their commitment to pursue strategies and policies on youth employment; promote technical and vocational education and training opportunities with a view to generating a skilled workforce that would expand economic opportunities for young people and vulnerable groups; and provide access to comprehensive education and training for in-demand skills.

(Cartagena: Poverty, Inequality, and Inequity Chapter, Paragraphs 6 & 16; Port of Spain Declaration: Paragraph 39)

Education Partnership for At-Risk Youth

- The Education Partnership for At-Risk Youth initiative, launched at the 2009 Summit of the Americas, promotes public-private partnerships that expand education and employment opportunities for at-risk youth in Latin American and Caribbean countries that have high levels of inequality, significant youth unemployment, and an active and engaged private sector and civil society.
- During the initial phase of the initiative, the United States implemented three regional public-private partnership pilots established via the International Youth Foundation's (IYF) *Obra* program, based in sub-regional hubs in Jamaica, Guatemala, and Peru. The United States provided seven *Obra* innovation grants to promising or existing youth-focused public-private partnerships in those three countries, providing 1,500 youth received life skills and employment training. The United States mobilized an additional \$3.5 million in commitments from private sector partners within the three countries to support at-risk youth. The Youth Upliftment Through Employment (YUTE) program reached 600 youth in Jamaica.
- With lessons learned from *Obra*, the United States and its partners expanded the successful *A Ganar* Alliance. The *A Ganar* program started as a four-country pilot in Jamaica, the Dominican Republic, St. Kitts and Nevis, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and was expanded to include four additional countries: Dominica, Suriname, Guatemala, and Honduras. *A Ganar* now covers 16 countries in the region through support from the U.S. government and Inter-American Development Bank. U.S. government support to *A Ganar* Alliance has provided life skills and technical training to 3,600 youth since 2009, and will reach an additional 2,400 at-risk youth by 2015.

Investing in Young People

- The United States invests in education and vocational training programs designed and administered by local community members and parents to help their young people develop the skills they need to become leaders, find employment and launch enterprises that contribute to the local economy.
- Nearly 20 percent of active Inter-American Foundation (IAF) grants in 2009-2013 were dedicated to working with marginalized or at-risk youth, and 25 percent of IAF grant funds during this period were committed to education or training initiatives, for a total of \$19.6 million. Youth aged 18 years or younger make up about one-third of beneficiaries from U.S. government grants through the IAF.

Leaders agreed to foster greater international exchange of students in order to provide them with the greatest possible learning opportunities. (*Cartagena: Poverty, Inequality, and Inequity Chapter, Paragraph 4*)

Scholarships for Education and Economic Development (SEED)

- At the 2009 Summit of the Americas, President Obama announced that 1,300 students would receive scholarships over five years through the Scholarships for Education and Economic Development (SEED) program to study in the United States. SEED advances social inclusion by providing scholarships for two-year technical training to disadvantaged high school graduates and for six-month to one-year development programs for professionals. This initiative provides opportunities for potential leaders who would not otherwise have access to higher education. At least 50 percent of participants are women and at least 80 percent are from rural areas.
- SEED has provided a total of 1,323 scholarships between 2009 and early 2014 to students from the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, and Nicaragua, and is on track to provide 74 more during 2014.

100,000 Strong in the Americas

- President Obama launched *100,000 Strong in the Americas* in March 2011 and reaffirmed the U.S. commitment to increasing educational exchanges between the United States and Latin America and the Caribbean at the 2012 Summit of the Americas. The goal of *100,000 Strong in the Americas* is to achieve 100,000 educational exchanges annually between the United States and other Western Hemisphere countries, in each direction, by 2020.
- In support of *100,000 Strong in the Americas*, the United States established the Innovation Fund, a capacity-building program to expand collaboration between higher education institutions, with Partners of the Americas and NAFSA Association of International Educators. The Innovation Fund has awarded 22 university grants, with plans for two additional grant rounds in 2014. The Fund's first capacity-building workshop for Latin American university officials will take place in May 2014. To further facilitate an increase in student exchanges, the United States created the Innovation Network, which currently includes 740 higher education institutions and continues to grow.
- *100,000 Strong* is on target to meet its goals. In the 2011-2012 academic year, the number of U.S. students studying in Latin America and the Caribbean went up 12 percent to 44,677. The number of Latin American and Caribbean students studying in the United States went up four percent in 2012-2013 academic year to 66,864, reversing a trend of declining numbers in previous years.

Leaders committed to exchange information on policies, experiences, programs and best practices in combating poverty and sought to deepen inter-American cooperation in development and social protection. They supported establishing the Inter-American Social Protection Network. (*Cartagena: Poverty, Inequality and Inequity Chapter, Paragraph 6; Port of Spain: Paragraph 9*)

Inter-American Social Protection Network (IASPN)

- The Inter-American Social Protection Network (IASPN) facilitates cooperation among governments, non-governmental organizations, international organizations, and experts from across the region to share best practices on implementing innovative anti-poverty programs.
- In support of IASPN, the United States implemented a series of grants to the Organization of American States (OAS) to support bilateral and trilateral technical assistance on social protection programming involving ten countries,

including seven IASPN international conferences and workshops, as well as the creation of two social protection certification programs. The grants also supported the creation of the bilingual IASPN Knowledge Portal (socialprotectionet.org), where social protection practitioners can share information on social protection programs. The United States and OAS are also working to catalyze public-private partnerships for financial inclusion.

- The United States is also supporting civil society organizations' efforts to improve delivery of and access to community social protection programs in Ecuador, Guatemala, Jamaica, and Peru.

Leaders committed to encourage the participation of communities and civil society in the design and execution of development policies and programs.
(Port of Spain: Paragraph 94)

Innovation Fund for the Americas (IFA)

- At the conclusion of the Sixth Summit of the Americas, President Obama announced the Innovation Fund for the Americas (IFA) to invest in the world's most cost-effective, breakthrough solutions to development challenges. The IFA supports solutions to environmental vulnerability, citizen insecurity, at-risk youth, poor quality education, weak governance, uncompetitive SMEs, and Haiti's reconstruction.
- Through the IFA, the United States makes awards ranging from \$100,000 to \$15 million on a rolling basis, tapping into the best development ideas coming from non-traditional partners in academia, the private sector, and civil society.
- To date, IFA has awarded 11 innovation grants, totaling \$1.5 million, to discover and test development solutions in Brazil, Colombia, Haiti, Mexico, and Peru.

Citizen-Led Grassroots Initiatives

- Through the Inter-American Foundation (IAF), the United States identifies and invests directly in the most promising initiatives designed and implemented by marginalized communities in Latin America and the Caribbean to help their communities thrive. The U.S. government invests in the knowledge, skills, ingenuity, and organizational strength of local citizens to facilitate the success

of their projects. In addition to the external results of such projects, local communities gain invaluable experience in project management, business development, and organizational governance. This substantially improves their ability to sustain their own efforts beyond U.S. support and to the strengthening of civil society.

- The United States requires grantee partners to invest their own resources and mobilize contributions from others, helping to multiply the effect of U.S. government funding. On average over the last five years, each dollar invested by the United States leveraged \$1.30 from grantee partners or others. In fiscal years 2009-2013, grantee partners committed \$100.9 million in cash or in kind, more than matching the United States' investment of \$77.8 million. Over the past five years, the United States has funded the initiatives of more than 400 civil society organizations.

Leaders recognized the need for public policies that promote decent, dignified, and productive work, and protect children from economic exploitation and the worst forms of child labor (*Cartagena: Poverty, Inequality and Inequity chapter, Paragraph 6*)

Initiatives to Combat Child Labor and Forced Labor

- Since 2009, the U.S. government has provided nearly \$68 million for multiple projects to address the worst forms of child labor, including among highly vulnerable indigenous and Afro-descendant children in Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, Peru, and Paraguay. In Ecuador, initiatives have also focused on the relationship between child labor and disabilities.
- In 2012 and 2013, the United States provided \$6 million to consolidate and disseminate efforts to combat forced labor in Brazil and Peru, and to share lessons between the two countries.

Democratic Governance and Human Rights

Leaders reiterated their commitment to protect and promote human rights in the Hemisphere, and to the strengthening of the inter-American human rights system, with due respect for its autonomy and independence. (*Port of Spain: Paragraph 83*)

Support for the Inter-American Human Rights System (IAHRS)

- The United States continues to engage actively in the institutions of the independent inter-American human rights system (IAHRS), including the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), to build multilateral support for the protection of human rights throughout the hemisphere, including within the United States.
- The United States supported the March 2013 resolution of the OAS General Assembly, which reaffirmed the importance of strengthening the IAHRS. The IACHR is stronger and more capable as a result of the decision of all OAS member states to seek full financing for its operations and to strengthen its rapporteurships.
- Ongoing U.S. funding for the IAHRS reflects strong U.S. support for the Commission's work, as well as the need for increased resources to support friendly settlement efforts, reduce case backlogs, and advance thematic initiatives of Commission rapporteurs within the framework of the 2011-2015 IACHR Strategic Plan.
- The United States also worked with the IACHR to build support for the rights of LGBTI people. In 2011, President Obama and Brazilian President Rousseff announced joint support for the establishment of a Commission Rapporteurship on the human rights of LGBTI people. A special Unit on the Rights of LGBTI Persons began operating in 2012, and a Commission Rapporteur was designated to oversee the Unit's work in February 2014.

Leaders reaffirmed their commitment to fostering credibility and public trust in democratic institutions, in particular the legitimacy of electoral processes and full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. (*Port of Spain: Paragraph 78*)

Electoral Cooperation and Observation

- The United States is committed to supporting the work of the OAS Department of Electoral Cooperation and Observation (DECO) and remains one of the top contributors to these missions. The U.S. government supports OAS efforts to strengthen these missions in order to address current day challenges to elections and ensuring transparent, open and fair electoral processes.
- OAS electoral observation missions represent one of the most important areas of the organization and are vital in strengthening democracy and democratic institutions in the Americas.

Leaders reaffirmed their commitment to increasing transparency, integrity, accountability, and efficiency in the public and private sectors, and their support for the Inter-American Convention against Corruption and the United Nations Convention against Corruption. (*Port of Spain: Paragraph 80*)

Open Government Partnership

- In September 2011, the United States was one of eight governments – including Brazil and Mexico – to launch the Open Government Partnership (OGP). At the inaugural OGP meeting on September 20, 2011, President Obama reiterated his belief “that the strongest foundation for human progress lies in open economies, open societies, and in open governments.”
- The United States has worked both domestically and internationally to ensure global support for Open Government principles to promote transparency, fight corruption, energize civic engagement, and leverage new technologies in order to strengthen the foundations of freedom.
- The United States is in the process of implementing the second U.S. Open Government National Action Plan, which was published in December 2013. Under this Action Plan, the United States is working to increase public integrity, manage resources more effectively, and improve public services.

Inter-American Convention Against Corruption (IACAC)

- The United States continually undertakes enhancements to its legal system and institutions to increase its ability to prevent, detect, and prosecute corruption.

The United States is subject to peer reviews on its compliance with anticorruption standards not only in the IACAC follow-up mechanism for implementation (MESICIC) and the UN Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) review mechanism, but also in the Council of Europe Group of States Against Corruption (GRECO) and the OECD Working Group on Bribery.

- The United States is a leading provider of technical assistance to help developing countries strengthen their measures to combat corruption, providing approximately \$1 billion in funding for programs on anticorruption and good governance globally each fiscal year. The United States provides funding to MESICIC to support IACAC implementation and to the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and other partners for UNCAC implementation.
- In the current round of IACAC MESICIC reviews, the United States has served as an expert peer reviewer of Bolivia and Grenada. The United States will be reviewed in 2014-2015. The U.S. government actively supports the debates in the MESICIC plenary and it has championed approaches to enhance transparency and the involvement of civil society in various stages of the process.

Leaders emphasized that all forms of discrimination inhibit the full participation of all persons in society and committed to taking continued steps to combat them. Leaders reaffirmed their commitment to respect the rights of indigenous peoples and promote the exercise of their rights, their full participation in national activities, and the creation of the conditions that allow them to overcome poverty, social exclusion and inequality. (*Port of Spain: Paragraphs 85 and 86*)

Supporting Marginalized Groups and the Practice of Democracy

- The U.S. government, through the Inter-American Foundation, supports grassroots initiatives that advance the economic, social and civic inclusion of the region's disadvantaged or historically excluded citizens, including women, African descendants, indigenous peoples, children and young people, persons with disabilities, and LGBTI persons. Grantee partners are building a more democratic citizenry and a more inclusive civil society by training and encouraging marginalized communities to exercise their civic responsibilities, respect rights, engage public officials and hold them accountable.

- U.S. government grants active in fiscal year 2013 have benefitted more than 357,000 people in poor and marginalized communities in 20 countries throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.
- The United States is also working with bilateral partners to reduce racial and ethnic discrimination through the U.S.-Brazil Joint Action Plan to Eliminate Racial and Ethnic Discrimination (Joint Action Plan) and the U.S.-Colombia Action Plan on Racial and Ethnic Equality (CAPREE). Both initiatives seek to share best practices in addressing racial and ethnic disparities in health, environmental justice, education, economic opportunities, and access to the justice system.

Americas Partnership for Social Inclusion and Equality (APSIE)

- The Americas Partnership for Social Inclusion and Equality (APSIE) aims to raise visibility of and provide support for social inclusion efforts in the region, building on lessons learned from civil society.
- As part of APSIE, the U.S. government supports historically marginalized groups in the Western Hemisphere, including LGBTI persons, women and girls, people of African descent, indigenous peoples, and people with disabilities, through technical assistance, training, and education. The United States has leveraged over 1.4 million dollars to fund projects that build the capacity of vulnerable groups to access economic and educational opportunities and to promote inclusive practices and civic engagement through eight projects in five countries (Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, and Peru).

The Global Equality Fund

- In December 2011, the United States launched the Global Equality Fund to support civil society organizations working to advance the human rights of LGBTI persons.
- The Global Equality Fund is a multi-stakeholder platform bridging like-minded governments, foundations and corporations. The Fund leverages resources from the U.S. government, other governments and private donors.
- The Fund also provides emergency assistance to LGBTI human rights defenders and civil society organizations who find themselves under threat from state or nonstate actors.

Infrastructure and Technology

Leaders reaffirmed their intent to foster increased connection of telecommunication networks among the region’s countries, recognizing the importance of working with international organizations, the private sector, and social actors to expand access to, and use of, information and communication technologies (ICTs) to achieve greater social inclusion. (*Cartagena: Integration of Physical Infrastructure Chapter, Paragraph 7; Cartagena: Access to and Use of ICTs Chapter, Paragraph 4*)

Broadband Partnership of the Americas (BPA)

- At the 2012 Summit of the Americas, President Obama announced a three-year Broadband Partnership of the Americas (BPA) to “provide faster internet to more communities in Latin America and the Caribbean, especially in rural areas...to ensure that no one is left behind in our digital age.”
- The BPA mobilizes the expertise and resources of the U.S. government, the donor community, regional organizations, and the private sector to support the broadband rollout and adoption efforts of motivated countries in the region. It promotes universal access to communications and broadband technologies as a tool for competitiveness, development, and economic prosperity.
- The United States and partner countries in the region are exploring ways to accelerate connectivity to and use of broadband for development. Since 2012, the BPA has shared U.S. government technical and regulatory expertise via sub-regional meetings on universal access, broadband plans, spectrum and frequency management, and implications for broadband deployment.

Leaders committed to promote and/or optimize electrical interconnection and foster the development of renewable energy generation in the Americas. (*Cartagena: Integration of Physical Infrastructure Chapter, Paragraph 5*)

Connecting the Americas 2022 (Connect2022)

- Colombia and the United States co-launched Connect 2022 at the 2012 Summit of the Americas under the Energy and Climate Partnership of the Americas (ECPA). Connect2022 aims to provide all citizens of the hemisphere with

access to clean, reliable, and affordable electricity through increased interconnection of electricity grids and accelerated deployment of clean energy technologies by 2022.

- Under this initiative, the United States continues to promote increased power sector integration, access to electricity, and greater deployment of clean energy by interconnecting power grids, building regional power markets that can facilitate electricity trade and investment, and creating an attractive climate for investment in renewable energy sources. It also aims to improve policies and regulatory frameworks to facilitate the integration of lower carbon technologies, including distributed generation and renewable energy into power systems.
- During the Connect2022 Ministerial in Washington, D.C., in June 2013, representatives of the governments of the member countries of the Central American Electricity Interconnection System (SIEPAC) signed on to the Action Plan for the Consolidation of the Regional Electricity Market. In the lead up to the 2015 Summit of the Americas, the United States and the Inter-American Development Bank plan to follow through on a commitment in the Action Plan to hold an annual investors' forum.

Energy, the Environment, and Disaster Risk Reduction

Leaders committed to develop strategies that will advance hemispheric energy cooperation, including promoting access to reliable, efficient, affordable, and clean energy; sharing best practices and experiences; increasing energy efficiency; diversifying energy sources; and minimizing environmental impact. (*Port of Spain: Paragraph 56*)

Energy and Climate Partnership of the Americas (ECPA)

- The Energy and Climate Partnership of the Americas (ECPA), launched at the 2009 Summit of the Americas, provides a flexible framework for partnerships between governments, private sector companies, and non-governmental organizations to collaborate on low-emissions development and climate-resilient growth. As a mechanism to exchange best practices in the development of renewable resources, energy efficiency standards, and clean production cycles, ECPA is helping ensure solutions can be replicated more broadly.
- In addition to clean energy technologies, ECPA continues to serve as an important tool for promoting low carbon development and reduced emissions. Through ECPA, partner countries work on more than 40 distinct projects on issues including, but not limited to, clean energy technology, energy efficiency, glacier monitoring and water resource management, deforestation, biodiversity, climate-resilient planning, and unconventional gas development. Together, the United States and partner countries are developing solutions that will increase the region's collective energy security and promote diverse energy sources in the hemisphere.

Leaders committed to strengthen institutional platforms for disaster risk management through to facilitate joint research, and the exchange of information. (*Cartagena: Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Chapter, Paragraphs 3*)

Renewable Energy and Climate Change – Metrology and Technology Challenges for the Americas

- The United States and the OAS are implementing the Metrology and Technology Challenges for the Americas project. The collaborative project provides regional capacity-building activities through workshops, seminars, training, exchange missions and targeted technical or policy assistance as core, demand-driven activities to be implemented within the region.
- The goals of the project contribute to ECPA's goals for advancing of renewable energy technologies and low carbon economic growth. The project assists in the development of measurement capabilities and standards for renewable energy and climate science to reduce the region's potential contribution to climate change, while promoting its overall economic development and energy independence.

Citizen Security

Leaders committed to fostering comprehensive policies, strategies, and actions that seek to prevent crime and insecurity; address all causes of violence and promote peaceful coexistence among citizens, with special attention to youth and other vulnerable groups; and strengthen national and regional capacities through increased cooperation and technical assistance. (*Cartagena: Citizen Security and Transnational Organized Crime Chapter, Paragraphs 1 & 2; Port of Spain: Paragraph 71*)

Central America Regional Security Initiative (CARSI)

- CARSI assists the seven nations of Central America in the strengthening and integration of security in coordination with other nations, international financial institutions, the private sector, civil society, and the Central American Integration System (SICA).
- The United States has appropriated more than \$642 million to CARSI programs and activities in the region. CARSI programs are designed to assist law enforcement and security forces to create safe streets, confront illicit trafficking, reduce the negative effects of gangs and criminal organizations, and strengthen border security deficiencies. CARSI also works to build the capacity of law enforcement and the justice sector to serve citizens and to address regional threats, and to advance community policing, gang prevention, and economic and social programming for at-risk youth and communities disproportionately affected by crime.

Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI)

- The Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI) is a multi-year, regional citizen safety engagement with the Caribbean that stemmed from commitments made at the 2009 Summit of the Americas. The United States, CARICOM member nations, and the Dominican Republic are improving citizen safety throughout the Caribbean by working together to substantially reduce illicit trafficking, increase public safety and security, and promote social justice.
- Since 2010, the United States has appropriated \$263 million in funding for CBSI activities with its partners in the Caribbean. Activities include maritime and aerial security cooperation, law enforcement capacity building, border/port

security, firearms interdiction, justice sector reform, crime prevention, and at-risk youth.

Merida Initiative

- The Merida Initiative is an unprecedented partnership between the United States and Mexico to fight organized crime and associated violence while furthering respect for human rights and the rule of law throughout Mexico.
- The United States has appropriated \$2.1 billion since the Merida Initiative began in fiscal year 2008. Under the Initiative, the United States and Mexico have improved citizen safety in affected areas to fight drug trafficking, organized crime, corruption, illicit arms trafficking, money-laundering, and the demand for drugs on both sides of the border.
- Bilateral efforts support strengthening Mexico's institutions, especially police and justice systems at both the federal and state level; bolstering development of a secure border that facilitates legitimate trade and travel while disrupting illicit trade; and building strong and resilient communities able to withstand the pressures of crime and violence.

U.S.-Colombia Action Plan on Regional Security Cooperation

- At the 2012 Summit of the Americas, President Obama and Colombian President Santos announced an agreement to develop a coordination mechanism to support capacity-building to improve citizen security in third countries: the U.S.-Colombia Action Plan on Regional Security Cooperation.
- Activities under the Action Plan support hemispheric citizen security priorities through capacity building in multiple areas, such as asset forfeiture, investigations, polygraphs, and interdiction. The United States and Colombia implemented 39 activities in Central America in 2013 and agreed to implement 152 activities in Central America and the Caribbean in 2014.

Colombia Strategic Development Initiative (CSDI)

- The U.S. government supports the Colombian government's National Consolidation Plan by selectively working in key "consolidation zones" where drug trafficking, violence, and the lack of government presence have

historically converged. The U.S. government coordinates its efforts in these areas through the Colombia Strategic Development Initiative (CSDI), an inter-agency, whole-of-government approach to providing specific U.S. assistance in eradication and interdiction; capacity building of the military, national police, access to rule of law; and creation of viable options for citizens in the licit economy, particularly in the agricultural sector.

- CSDI also provides general support for the implementation of Colombian government reforms in land restitution; reparations for victims and vulnerable populations; demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants; strengthening the Colombian Attorney General’s Office in support of human rights, the rule of law, and protection of vulnerable citizens; and addressing global climate change and environmental issues.

Leaders reaffirmed their commitment to implement policies containing measures to prevent, investigate, punish, penalize, and eradicate sexual and gender-based violence. (*Cartagena: Citizen Security and Transnational Organized Crime Chapter, Paragraph 3*)

National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security, and the U.S. Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence Globally

- Building on the recognition that countries are more peaceful and prosperous when women are accorded full and equal rights and opportunity, President Obama released the first National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security in December 2011 and signed an executive order directing the plan’s implementation. The National Action Plan represents a fundamental change in how the United States approaches its diplomatic, military, and development-based support to women in areas of conflict by ensuring that their perspectives and considerations of gender are woven into the fabric of how the United States approaches peace processes, conflict prevention, the protection of civilians, and humanitarian assistance.
- In August 2012, the United States released the first U.S. Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence Globally, accompanied by a presidential executive order directing its implementation. The Strategy includes a comprehensive, multi-sector approach to prevent and respond to gender-based violence through increased coordination of gender-based violence prevention and response efforts among U.S. government agencies and with other stakeholders; enhanced integration of gender-based violence prevention and

response efforts into existing U. S. government work; improved collection, analysis, and use of data and research to enhance gender-based violence prevention and response efforts; and enhanced or expanded U.S. government programming that addresses gender-based violence.

Leaders emphasized the importance of strengthening the system of hemispheric cooperation to prevent and combat transnational organized crime through mechanisms that support the strengthening of the necessary national capacities to confront these threats in a concerted manner. (*Cartagena: Citizen Security and Transnational Organized Crime Chapter, Paragraph 5*)

Strategy to Combat Transnational Organized Crime

- In July 2011, the White House announced the Strategy to Combat Transnational Organized Crime to build, balance, and integrate the tools to combat transnational organized crime and related threats to U.S. national security – and to urge the United States’ partners to do the same.
- The strategy proposes 56 priority actions, starting with ones the United States can take within its borders to lessen the impact of transnational crime domestically and on the United States’ foreign partners. Other actions seek to enhance U.S. intelligence; protect the financial system and strategic markets; strengthen interdiction, investigations, and prosecutions; disrupt the drug trade and its facilitation of other transnational threats; and build international cooperation.

Military Cooperation on Transnational Organized Crime

- Beginning in January 2012, the U.S. military and its partners in the Western Hemisphere and Europe launched Operation Martillo, a joint effort targeting illicit trafficking routes in coastal waters along the Central American isthmus.
- Operation Martillo is a critical component of the U.S. government’s coordinated interagency regional security strategy to counter transnational organized crime in the Americas. Fourteen countries are participating: Belize, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, France, Guatemala, Honduras, the Netherlands, Nicaragua, Panama, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Chile has also contributed to the operation.

Leaders committed to strengthen efforts to prevent and fight the smuggling of migrants and trafficking of persons, particularly of women, children and adolescents, and to promote cooperation among states to that end. (*Cartagena: Citizen Security and Transnational Organized Crime Chapter, Paragraph 9*)

Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons

- In March 2012, President Obama established the Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons. The task force is committed to furthering U.S. efforts to eradicate trafficking in persons and it draws on tools ranging from law enforcement and victim service provisions, to public awareness building and diplomatic pressure. The task force also increased U.S. government partnerships with a broad coalition of local communities, faith-based, and non-governmental organizations, schools, and businesses.

Leaders emphasized the need to cooperate to prevent, combat and eradicate illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, ammunition, explosives and other related materials. They reaffirmed the value of the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and other Related Materials (CIFTA) and its model legislation as a basis for such cooperation. (*Port of Spain: Paragraph 75*)

Convention on Illicit Trafficking in Firearms (CIFTA)

- The ratification of the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and other Related Materials (CIFTA) is a priority for the Obama administration.
- The United States has offered technical assistance to a variety of countries to trace illicit firearms and control, store, or destroy excess national stockpiles. Through the OAS, the United States provided more than \$1 million for the provision of marking equipment to countries in the hemisphere, increasing hemispheric capability to trace firearms and identify illicit trafficking routes and suppliers.
- The United States has signed eTrace agreements with all seven countries in Central America, and fourteen of the fifteen countries in the Caribbean. Expanding eTrace participation throughout the hemisphere is a priority for the U.S. government.

<http://scm.oas.org/pdfs/2014/SUMMIT/CMBRS01173.pdf>