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1ST SESSION

S. RES. 120

Recognizing the Ninth Summit of the Americas and reaffirming the commitment of the United States to a more prosperous, secure, and democratic Western Hemisphere.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 17 (legislative day, MARCH 16), 2021

Mr. RISCH (for himself, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. KAINÉ, and Mr. CASSIDY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

RESOLUTION

Recognizing the Ninth Summit of the Americas and reaffirming the commitment of the United States to a more prosperous, secure, and democratic Western Hemisphere.

Whereas the United States has pursued multiple collaborative initiatives to advance the region's enduring and shared interest in a more secure, prosperous, and democratic Western Hemisphere;

Whereas the United States will host the Ninth Summit of the Americas for the first time since it hosted the inaugural Summit in Miami, Florida in 1994;

Whereas, since 1994, the Summit of the Americas is a valuable forum for democratically elected heads of state and governments of the Western Hemisphere to discuss com-

mon policy issues, affirm shared values, and commit to concerted actions at the national and regional level to address the novel and existing challenges facing the Americas;

Whereas the First and Second Summits of the Americas advanced commitments to lower trade barriers, improve transparency and market access, and facilitate economic integration, and, following those Summits, the United States has signed free trade agreements with 12 of the 35 countries in the region;

Whereas, since 2018, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Panama, Suriname, and Uruguay have signed Memorandums of Understanding with the United States under the America Crece Program to leverage private investment in energy and infrastructure projects and advance economic prosperity, security, and good governance;

Whereas, during the 2018 Summit of the Americas, the United States announced additional humanitarian assistance for Venezuelans who have fled their country as a result of the political, economic, and security crises created by the regime of Nicolás Maduro, including support for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) response to assist Venezuelan refugees in Colombia and Brazil;

Whereas Transnational Criminal Organizations (TCOs) and their involvement in money laundering and the trafficking of people, narcotics, and weapons in the region pose complex transnational threats to United States public health and national security, as well as the stability of the Americas, by undermining citizen security, basic human

rights, the rule of law, good governance, and economic development;

Whereas the United States has sought to improve regional security through friendly and sustained relationships that build interoperability, readiness, and capability with regional security partners, including through programs such as Plan Colombia, the Merida Initiative, the Central America Regional Security Initiative (CARSI), and the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI);

Whereas the pandemic caused by coronavirus disease 2019 (commonly referred to as “COVID–19”) has had devastating health and socioeconomic consequences for the states and peoples of the Americas that have—

- (1) overwhelmed health systems;
- (2) led to the worsening of economic conditions and contraction of gross domestic product per capita;
- (3) led to an increase in unemployment, especially for individuals working in small- and medium-size businesses and large informal sectors across the region, and a rise in the number of people living in poverty; and
- (4) created conditions that have strengthened the illicit activities of criminal organizations;

Whereas the United States Government remains deeply concerned about the negative, often predatory effects of China’s growing political, economic, military, and technological influence throughout the region, including significant illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing activities in the Southern Atlantic Ocean and Eastern Pacific Ocean and opaque infrastructure investments that impose unsustainable financial burdens on recipient countries, enable corruption, and undermine good governance;

Whereas the United States Government is deeply concerned about the Government of the Russian Federation's employment of a wide array of diplomatic, military, intelligence, cyber, misinformation, and commercial tools to undermine democratic systems in the region, including through its deepening political, economic, and security support for the Maduro regime in Venezuela;

Whereas the United States Government is deeply concerned about efforts by the Government of Iran to expand its political, economic, and security presence in the region, including through its deepening ties with the Maduro regime in Venezuela;

Whereas the regimes of Nicolás Maduro in Venezuela, Miguel Díaz-Canel in Cuba, and Daniel Ortega in Nicaragua, have systematically eroded democratic institutions, commit widespread human rights violations, draw lessons from one another to sharpen state-sponsored repression and internal control mechanisms, and receive the support of malign state and non-state actors, which pose a challenge to United States national security and national interests;

Whereas entrenched corruption, linkages between transnational criminal organizations and political actors, and the harassment and murder of journalists, human rights defenders, environmental activists, and civil society leaders in Latin America and the Caribbean weaken citizens' confidence in democracy and negatively affect United States national interests; and

Whereas weak rule of law, elevated levels of criminal violence, and systemic corruption in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras fuel irregular migration that affects regional stability: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) commemorates the occasion of the United
3 States hosting the Ninth Summit of the Americas;

4 (2) reaffirms the commitment of the United
5 States to promote economic prosperity, security, and
6 democratic governance throughout the Americas;
7 and

8 (3) calls on the President to lead a strong and
9 coordinated diplomatic effort during the Summit
10 process to ensure the Ninth Summit of the Amer-
11 icas—

12 (A) strengthens democratic governance by
13 building on the 2018 Lima Commitment to—

14 (i) reduce bureaucracy;

15 (ii) strengthen the independence of ju-
16 dicialies;

17 (iii) increase transparency through the
18 use of new technologies;

19 (iv) encourage private sector partici-
20 pation in the formulation of public anti-
21 corruption policies;

22 (v) protect whistleblowers, journalists,
23 and law enforcement officials;

- 1 (vi) work towards preventing regional
2 financial systems from being used to trans-
3 fer and conceal illicit funds; and
- 4 (vii) identify resources to strengthen
5 hemispheric anticorruption mechanisms;
- 6 (B) strengthens post-COVID–19 pandemic
7 economic recovery efforts by outlining specific
8 commitments to deepen trade and investment
9 integration throughout the Americas and pur-
10 suing effective nearshoring and reshoring initia-
11 tives;
- 12 (C) builds upon United States efforts to
13 enhance the institutional capacity and technical
14 capabilities of partner countries to strengthen
15 the rule of law, civilian security, respect of
16 human rights, and government transparency;
- 17 (D) builds upon United States efforts to
18 enhance regional cooperation to disrupt, de-
19 grade, and dismantle malign state and non-
20 state influences, including transnational orga-
21 nized criminal networks, and terrorist organiza-
22 tions;
- 23 (E) reinforces the capacity of member
24 states to—

1 (i) implement actions and initiatives
2 in support of peaceful and democratic ef-
3 forts of the people of Cuba, Nicaragua,
4 and Venezuela, who desire to hold free and
5 fair elections and restore democratic order
6 and the rule of law in their respective
7 countries; and

8 (ii) support the people of El Salvador,
9 Guatemala, and Honduras as they strive to
10 address weak democratic governance and
11 the elevated levels of corruption, violence,
12 and criminality that drive irregular migra-
13 tion; and

14 (F) explores a comprehensive approach to
15 forced displacement and migration challenges in
16 the Western Hemisphere, takes stock of human-
17 itarian crises and flashpoints in the region, and
18 mobilizes member state commitments to advo-
19 cate for and support multilateral humanitarian
20 and development responses.

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