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Testimony for House Foreign Affairs Committee,

Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere

“Latin America Forgotten:

A Look at President Biden’s FY 2025 Budget Priorities”

July 24, 2024

Chairwoman Salazar, Ranking Member Castro, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today on the Administration’s Fiscal Year 2025 budget request for the Western Hemisphere.

The President’s budget request includes \$2.2 billion in foreign assistance for the Western Hemisphere that addresses the hemisphere’s most pressing challenges, from democratic resilience and irregular migration to economic growth and climate change.

Our approach is rooted in the Administration’s commitments, and the request prioritizes increasing resources for Haiti, migration management, sustaining assistance for Central America and support for democratic actors, building Caribbean countries’ climate and economic resilience, advancing a positive economic agenda across the hemisphere, and countering the influence of the People’s Republic of China.

Haiti is 650 miles from the United States. We share close historical, familial, cultural, and economic ties. Supporting Haiti and the Multinational Security Support mission ranks as a top foreign assistance priority. The situation in Haiti remains critical, and our funding is essential to improve

security on the ground, lay the groundwork for free and fair elections, and encourage additional financial and personnel contributions from other international donors. The FY 2025 request includes \$356.7 million for Haiti across multiple accounts, including funding to support the Multinational Security Support mission.

Under the Los Angeles Declaration on Migration and Protection – endorsed by 22 countries in the region – we have affirmed our collective commitment to respond to migration and forced displacement across the region. The FY 2025 request includes \$218.7 million in development, economic, health, and security assistance to ensure the Department of State and USAID can sustain and expand regional efforts to manage migration safely, humanely, and effectively.

As we address democratic challenges in the region, we also endeavor to unlock the region’s economic potential and ensure democracies can deliver prosperity to their citizens. The Americas Partnership for Economic Prosperity represents a pivotal initiative to advance economic growth and strengthening our affirmative offer in contrast to our strategic rivals. We also emphatically support a capital increase for IDB Invest, and the Administration’s budget request includes \$75 million as a first payment. A reinforced IDB Invest will deliver on key U.S. objectives for the region by bolstering private sector-led growth, building resilient supply chains, creating economic opportunity for entrepreneurs and the middle class, and offering a transparent and accountable alternative to PRC lending in the region. APEP also supports transparent procurement and regulatory frameworks that open opportunities for our partners and enable them to rely less on the PRC.

Central America remains a focal point of our foreign assistance strategy. The FY 2025 request provides \$658.6 million in State and USAID

bilateral and regional funding, robustly resourcing the five pillars of the U.S. Strategy for Addressing the Root Causes of Migration in the final year of the President's commitment to provide \$4 billion over four years. This funding will deepen our engagement on priority issues, such as migration and security cooperation. It will also foster inclusive economic growth, combat corruption, and safeguard human rights.

Through the Root Causes Strategy, we work with diverse partners including civil society and the private sector. Vice President Harris' Central America Forward initiative has mobilized over \$5.2 billion in private sector commitments that already created over 70,000 jobs. By addressing the root causes of migration, we aim to create a more stable and prosperous region where citizens can thrive in their homelands and benefit their communities while avoiding the dangerous journey of irregular migration.

The Caribbean remains another critical area of focus. The FY 2025 request provides over \$190 million across various accounts to strengthen the region's ability to withstand climate shocks, respond to natural disasters, build energy resilience, and support conservation efforts. Climate change poses a significant threat to the Caribbean, and our assistance aims to help these countries build resilience and adapt to the changing environment. This funding also advances the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative to continue building our Caribbean partners' capacity to disrupt illicit trafficking and transnational crime.

The restoration of democracy in Venezuela remains at the center of our policy agenda. We continue to harness all diplomatic tools and leverage sanctions to this end, including working with Venezuelans and regional and international partners to encourage Maduro and his representatives to hold competitive and inclusive elections on July 28th. The FY 2025 Request

includes nearly \$54 million to support these and other efforts including critical health support. While we are clear eyed about the prospects for a competitive election on July 28th, we must prepare for a scenario that Venezuela returns to democratic rule in the future.

In conclusion, the FY 2025 request for Western Hemisphere foreign assistance reflects our commitment to address the hemisphere's challenges through a partnership-driven foreign policy. Our efforts are guided by the principles of democracy, human rights, economic growth, and security, as well as a focus on fostering strong partnerships with our neighbors in the Western Hemisphere.

Thank you again for the opportunity to discuss our foreign assistance request for the Western Hemisphere, and I look forward to answering your questions.