

To: President Donald Trump

From: Student Conference on U.S. Affairs Delegates of the Western Hemisphere

Date: November 2, 2019

Subject: Intersection of United States Domestic and Foreign Policy in the Western Hemisphere

Purpose: The United States strategic vision for the Western Hemisphere is the promotion of security, prosperity, and U.S. values. Our end state for the Western Hemisphere is: (1) Stabilized beneficial and sustainable free, fair trade and investment; (2) Established political and military partnerships based on trust in U.S. influence and values including human rights and democracy; (3) Controlled asylum and immigration; and (4) Reduced drug flow, crime, and violence along the U.S.-Mexico border.

## **I. People's Republic of China in Latin America**

Chinese business practices in the Western Hemisphere have repeatedly violated previously agreed upon international laws of trade and investment. This creates an unfair playing field for American and international companies competing against Chinese state-owned enterprises (SOE). These enterprises have utilized corrupt practices, threatening the integrity of Latin American economies through predatory investing and data mining. These acts are in violation of mutually agreed upon laws of international commerce, and the U.S. must take these breaches to the World Trade Organization (WTO).

(1) The U.S. seeks to foster transparent and strong trade and investment in order to create a level playing field in the Western Hemisphere. Through the use of open and public bids, it hopes to increase the transparency of the economic sector and incentivize U.S. FDI to compete in a fair and free market system. The cornerstone of this is the promotion of strong institutions in Latin American countries. By creating a more transparent system with clear oversight, we can reduce the threat of Chinese predatory business and lending practices.

(2) In addition to filing a claim with the WTO, the U.S. will work with its allies to reinforce their systems of regulatory laws and increase transparency throughout the process. Strengthened regulatory laws through the use of multilateral institutions will reform the foreign direct investment bidding system. Previously, Chinese SOEs have utilized opaque systems to bribe and subvert governance to gain exploitative contracts. An open and fair bidding process will reduce opportunities for corruption, and allow American and international companies to compete and succeed on a fair and level playing field.

## **II. Maduro's Regime in Venezuela**

Maduro's Venezuela poses a challenge to American security, values, and prosperity. Venezuela, a source of regional subversion, has cooperated militarily with Russia, China, and Cuba. The regime commits human rights violations, including the lack of free and fair elections, seizure of power by the executive branch from the National Assembly and Supreme Court, and wanton violence to quell protests. Finally, the regime's economic mismanagement has led to a deep recession, hyperinflation, and hunger, creating a humanitarian crisis in neighboring countries and sending waves of migrants North towards the U.S.

The U.S. should: (1) Echo Colombian calls in the UN to classify Venezuela as a state sponsor of terror to increase international pressure, due to subversion in Ecuador and Colombia. (2) Initiate multilateral sanctions on the PDVSA, including secondary sanctions on regime and corporate officials, through provisions in the Rio Treaty, cooperation with the Lima group and OAS proceedings. (3) Encourage OAS states to "clean up" mineral supply chains by adhering to stricter trade guidelines, thus allowing mineral trade with Venezuela while closing the revenue stream from illegal mining to armed syndicates and Colombian guerrillas. (4) Direct U.S. aid into the country

through regime-compliant NGOs to still get some type of food and assistance to the population, even if the regime predate on the majority of aid delivered.

### **III. Migration from Mexico and Central America**

The migration crisis from Central America and Mexico represents a threat to U.S. security and values. While we recognize current efforts to increase border security, we recommend an immediate overhaul of the asylum system and process of aiding nations in crisis through localized, economic development. We have a duty to provide assistance to those seeking asylum from countries where they face poverty and danger.

(1) With more than 800,000 asylum cases pending at the border, the largest barrier is the waiting period; pending cases nearly doubled since 2017. Three in four of the pending cases involve Mexicans or Central Americans, and the average case takes 578 days to complete. Rather than limit the processing of these cases, the U.S. should increase the number of asylum judges at the southern border to 1,066. With respect for the rule of law and due process, recognizing that everyone deserves to have their case heard holistically without time pressures, the quota of 700 cases per day per judge should be struck.

(2) To incentivize economic development and growth in Central America and prevent potential migration, we recommend a reformed aid process. Recognizing that U.S. foreign aid targets infrastructure development, education, health, poverty, and crime, we recommend stipulations to aid. Assistance will flow through local NGOs and be stipulated on collaboration with local governments and communities through a resident coordinator under strict oversight. The U.S. will continue to support UNHCR aid for financial support, legal aid, and safe housing only under these same requirements. We recommend increasing aid in two areas in coordination with UNHCR: (1) aid to migrants in route and (2) aid specific to developing rural areas.

### **IV. Transnational Criminal Organizations**

Transnational criminal organizations cause citizen insecurity and high homicide rates, a symptom and cause of failures of state capacity and government corruption. This causes migration to the U.S., violence along the U.S.-Mexico border, and instability in the region. The current administration emphasizes interdiction of drugs, removal of key cartel figures, and cooperation with key states.

(1) In the near term, the U.S. should: (A) Increase communication between the U.S. Coast Guard and key states on interdiction; (B) Increase targeting of TCO financing, through TFI partner assistance to states on the “Majors List”; (C) Increase the liberality of extradition treaties to enable prosecution of TCOs within the U.S.C.; (D) Increase investigations to identify, expose, and prosecute corruption and disrespect for the rule of law.

(2) In the long term, the U.S. should: (A) Build partner capacity for a trusted law enforcement and justice system through support for and oversight of an extensive program of (a) training of personnel (b) developing strong justice institutions with checks and balances (c) isolating corruption and human rights abuses through investigations, polygraphs, and financial tracking; (B) Support legal, rural economic opportunities through revitalized investment and trade; (C) Pressure structural reform of economic injustices that prevent access to legal jobs; and (D) Reduce domestic demand through prevention and education campaigns.