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Joint Statement by President Trump and President Mario Abdo Benitez of Paraguay

December 13, 2019

Today, President Donald J. Trump and President Mario Abdo Benitez of Paraguay committed to deepening the partnership between their two countries. The two leaders focused on increasing economic prosperity and strengthening democracy and the rule of law.

President Trump and President Abdo Benitez reiterated the United States and Paraguay's support for democracy in the region, including for Interim President of Venezuela Juan Guaido, the democratically elected National Assembly, and the Venezuelan people as they work to restore constitutional order in Venezuela. The two leaders also agreed to support Bolivian Interim President Jeanine Anez's efforts to conduct free and fair elections.

The two leaders agreed to deepen their countries' robust defense and security cooperation. President Abdo Benitez emphasized Paraguay's need for assistance in reforming its police and penitentiary systems. President Trump announced the United States will offer two Special Forces Joint Combined Exchange Training events in Paraguay in 2020 and 2021, and the United States Southern Command will execute a regional crisis response exercise, Fused Response, in Paraguay, in 2021. The United States also provides International Military Education and Training funding for Paraguay.

President Trump and President Abdo Benitez discussed other means by which the United States supports economic prosperity and rule of law in Paraguay, for example through the Department of the Treasury's Office of Technical Assistance (OTA). OTA works with Paraguay's Ministry of Finance and Central Bank to strengthen efficient and accountable management of government finances and to develop deeper financial markets that support investment and economic growth.

President Trump announced that, upon launch, the United States International Development Finance Corporation (DFC) will pursue providing finance to Jerovia Mount Sinai Medical Center, an internationally accredited 240-bed tertiary medical center in Asuncion, Paraguay. DFC will work with Taiwan to provide technical assistance and financing for the project. The two leaders endorsed working within the Trade and Investment Framework Agreement in order to promote investment in Paraguay and to increase bilateral trade. To this end, President Abdo Benitez reaffirmed his willingness to continue strengthening intellectual property protections in Paraguay.

The United States Department of Agriculture's regulatory authorities are working closely with Paraguay's regulatory authority. The United States looks forward to opening market access for beef and beef products once food safety and animal health can be fully assured.

The two leaders noted the historical ties between the people of Paraguay and the United States, including President Rutherford B. Hayes' role in helping Paraguay maintain control of its territory following the Paraguayan War in the late nineteenth century, and confirmed their desire to continue building upon the strong friendship between the two countries.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Categories: Joint Statements : Paraguay, President Abdo Benitez.

Names: Abdo Benitez, Mario; Áñez Chávez, Jeanine; Guaidó Márquez, Juan Gerardo.

Subjects: Bolivia : Interim President; Paraguay : President; Paraguay : Relations with U.S.; Paraguay : Security cooperation with U.S.; Paraguay : Trade with U.S.; Venezuela : Interim President.

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