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Joint Statement by President Biden, Prime Minister Justin P.J. Trudeau of Canada and President Andrés Manuel López Obrador of Mexico—Building Back Better Together: A Secure, Prosperous North America

November 18, 2021

We, the leaders of North America, met today in Washington, DC for the first time since 2016 to reaffirm the strength of our relationship and to chart a new path for our collaboration at a time when we face incredibly complex global challenges. We share a vision of a North America that remains the most competitive and dynamic region in the world. We are determined to make democracy deliver by providing a better future for all people, creating the conditions for prosperity, sustainability, security, and equity, as well as and by supporting the most marginalized and vulnerable among us. We are closely bound by history, culture, a shared environment, and economic and family ties, and strongly believe that by strengthening our partnership we will be able to respond to a widening range of global challenges.

Together, we are an economic powerhouse. Home to nearly five hundred million people, the United States, Mexico, and Canada generate close to one third of global goods and services. Since signing our first trilateral trade agreement in 1994, three-way trade has grown over 250 percent and created the foundation for us to enter into the most modern and comprehensive trade agreement in the world in 2020, the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA). We are more than just trading partners—we make goods together, have integrated service platforms, and depend on each other to add value to our supply chains. This position of strength has allowed us to face the COVID–19 pandemic and its socioeconomic impact as a region, and has led us to this moment: a springboard for a new era where we can build back better together as North America.

Our highest priority today is managing and ending the COVID–19 pandemic and driving an equitable and inclusive economic recovery. Our vision is to support sustainable growth and resilient infrastructure, build upon the foundation established by our trade agreement to protect workers' rights, and actively promote gender, racial, ethnic, and social equity to unlock the region's tremendous human capital. As supply chains constrict globally, we seek to deepen our economic ties, support the development of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), and enhance our collective security, while raising labor and environmental standards. We pledge as governments to prioritize across our entire agenda solidarity, cooperation, racial equity, justice, diversity, and inclusion as core pillars that reflect our values and the just and free societies we strive to create in our three nations.

Managing COVID–19 and Promoting Global Health Security

Our world has been rocked by the COVID–19 pandemic, and in North America the impact has steeled our resolve to fight this and future pandemics together. We share a vision of a world safe and secure from global health threats posed by infectious diseases, and will collaborate to make the world and our own nations safer and more prepared. To ensure that we are ready to face the next pandemic and other health threats, we will look at ways to shore up our medical supply chains, improve global vaccine distribution, support global health security, invest in our health workforce, and combat counterfeit medications. We will also work together toward the recognition of COVID–19 vaccines deemed safe and efficacious by the WHO to ensure safe and secure mobility in the region.

Just as the United States shared vaccines with Canada and Mexico earlier in the pandemic, and Mexico and Canada have since donated to other countries, all three countries will now act together to provide vaccine donations that will help meet the Latin American and Caribbean region's unmet vaccine needs. We will also study making future vaccines for diseases beyond influenza in North America. We used our existing framework on pandemic influenza during this crisis to share information and best practices and now commit to strengthening this plan beyond influenza to other global health threats.

During the pandemic, the opioid crisis worsened, with overdose deaths in North America reaching all-time highs. In the United States, we have surpassed the heartrending number of 100,000 drug overdose deaths in a 12-month period. This impact is also seen in Canada, with nearly 7,000 apparent opioid toxicity deaths from April 2020 to March 2021, representing an 88 percent increase from the same time period prior to the pandemic. In addition, we are experiencing a public health epidemic of gun violence, in part due to the diversion of firearms into illegal markets. For example, hundreds of thousands of firearms cross into Mexico annually, empowering transnational criminal organizations and generating irreversible damages to society. To address these issues, and protect our communities from harms emerging from the global illegal drug environment and firearms trafficking facing North America, we need a comprehensive, coordinated approach. We commit to continue addressing these issues via venues like the North American Drug Dialogue in 2022 and beyond.

Fostering Competitiveness and Creating the Conditions for Equitable and Sustainable Development

North America needs resilient, sustainable, diverse, and secure supply chains to ensure our economic prosperity and security. We recognize global threats can affect critical manufacturing capacity and the availability and integrity critical goods, products, and services, and have a shared goal to make supply chains more reliable as we look to bring them closer to home. Together as allies and partners who share values, we are united in protecting our economic and regional security and strengthening the capacity to respond to international disasters and emergencies in accordance with the policies and priorities of each country. We are taking concrete steps to support SMEs and align definitions of essential industries to minimize disruptions and reduce the vulnerability to counterfeit and pirated goods that threaten our integrated supply chains.

For our economies to remain competitive and to propel our future growth, we need to create the right conditions for businesses and workers to thrive. Good regulatory practices, strong labor rights protections, a safe, secure, and reliable cyber ecosystem, predictability in trading relations, strong critical infrastructure, high environmental standards, and a continuous dialogue with diverse stakeholders are key priorities. We need to work together to combat shared cyber threats from every source and close the gap in access to information and communication technologies, and we reaffirm our commitment to promote international security and stability in cyberspace consistent with the UN framework for responsible state behavior. SMEs are the backbone of the North American economy, and we intend to take concrete steps to help our companies thrive, including investing in and enhancing opportunities for companies led by members of historically marginalized populations so they can find new markets across the United States, Canada, and Mexico. A modern, resilient North American economy has no place for goods made through labor exploitation, and we reaffirm our commitment to advance respect for the human rights of workers and eradicate forced labor, including forced child labor, from our supply chains. Furthermore, we will work with private, public, and civil society organizations to ensure that all businesses are treated equitably and have access to the same tools, investment opportunities, and technology necessary to succeed.

To ensure that our industries of today and the future have the human capital to succeed, we plan to foster collaborative education and training in North America and explore new partnerships. We can undergird sustainable economic growth by building a dynamic workforce and by bridging our efforts on technology, economic development, supply chains, and regional competitiveness in priority sectors.

Addressing the Climate Crisis

We collectively commit to taking swift and coordinated action to fight climate change, which increasingly jeopardizes our prosperity. In North America, we have seen more frequent and powerful hurricanes destroy businesses and communities. Wildfires have ravaged our forests, farms, and homes, and record heat waves, extreme cold, floods, and droughts have stressed our infrastructure and led to thousands of deaths each year and millions lost in damaged crops. Climate change also drives the movements of migrants who arrive at our borders. We recognize the importance of global efforts to limit warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius and share the view that the 2020s are a decisive decade for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. As we gathered in Glasgow this month and pledged to do more to combat climate change, we now come together in North America to take action.

Climate change poses a threat to our economies and our communities, especially those that are vulnerable and underserved. But it also presents a tremendous opportunity to build back better, to create well-paying and reliable jobs in ever-growing markets, and to position North America as a global leader in clean solutions. Our three nations have joined the Global Methane Pledge and intend to develop a North American strategy to reduce methane and black carbon emissions.

We commit to raising the region's climate ambition, and have pledged to work toward ending deforestation and to conserve 30 percent of North American land and waters by 2030. We pledge to enhance our oceans strategies, prioritizing climate security, food security, and biodiversity. We commit to rapidly accelerating renewable energy deployment across the region, considering opportunities for exchange of best practices and technology to address the climate crisis.

The three countries intend to advance ambitious policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transportation this decade, including by rapidly accelerating the transition to zero emission vehicles, a global market trend that offers a historic opportunity for North America. In support of this goal, the three countries commit to launch efforts to enhance cooperation on the transition with the goal of developing a strategy that ensures the sector's competitiveness, prosperity, environmental sustainability, and social inclusion across the region. The three countries will also work together to advance the commitment of their respective aviation industries to the goal of net-zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2050, and to catalyze the use of cleaner fuels in their rail, aviation, and marine transportation sectors. We committed to work together to accelerate the manufacturing and deployment of zero-emission vehicles as we work to achieve an all-electric future.

Our cities and states have a unique vision for climate action, and we will connect them to develop a coordinated North American approach to climate action at all levels. In parallel, we plan to establish a North American Climate Adaptation Workplan under the Commission for Environmental Cooperation, which will work to improve early warning systems for extreme events and promote climate adaptation solutions. We will explore commitments to discuss and implement protection mechanisms to improve labor conditions of migrants, as part of trilateral actions to respond to climate change from an inclusive perspective. We also reiterated our G20 efforts to phase out and rationalize inefficient fossil fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption over the medium term, or by 2023 in the case of Canada, and to put an end to the

provision of international public finance for new unabated coal power generation abroad by the end of 2021.

Migration, Development, and a Secure North America

The complex factors causing an extraordinary increase in irregular migration throughout the hemisphere underscore the need for bold regional cooperation. We recognize the social, health, economic, human rights, environmental, and security challenges facing countries of origin, refuge, transit, destination, and return. This requires a coordinated regional response as well a global resource response, with respect for law, rooted in solidarity with migrants and among States, prioritizing orderly, safe, and regular migration. The United States, Canada, and Mexico seek to promote access to legal pathways for protection and opportunity. We intend to work together to address this challenge in our hemisphere. We affirm our commitment, based on shared responsibility, to adopt an ambitious and comprehensive approach to safe, orderly, and humane migration management. We look forward to working with partners throughout the Americas to support this goal.

The United States, Canada, and Mexico each have a responsibility to manage, consistent with our international commitments and domestic laws, the flow of migrants across international borders, prioritizing respect for and the guarantee of human rights. Our vision is to strengthen and expand access to protection for refugees, asylum seekers, and vulnerable migrants throughout the region. This includes opportunities to access localized protection pathways, integration programs, and support for the most at-risk groups, including internally-displaced persons and human smuggling and trafficking victims. We can help people find safety and sustainable livelihoods within their own countries, prevent their exploitation, and combat their stigmatization due to xenophobia and racism. We also commit to strengthening opportunities for legal pathways for migrants to enter our respective countries, whether for seasonal and temporary work, family reunification, or humanitarian protection, including through resettlement.

We are committed to addressing the root causes of migration and investing in the region, prioritizing cooperation for development to create economic opportunity for all. We are looking to promote regular migration pathways through labor mobility programs, especially in the agricultural sector, including the intent to develop a dialogue to share expansion plans, best practices, and lessons learned temporary worker visa programs. We support multilateral efforts to develop value chains and physical infrastructure in the Americas that will generate employment and equitable growth. We pledge to help countries better respond to natural disasters, institutional challenges, and reduce food insecurity. We also support multilateral fora that address migration challenges, such as the Global Compact on Migration, Regional Conference on Migration (RCM), and the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS). We invite the private sector and civil society to join us in implementing the commitments we make today. We encourage more countries to join us to address the challenges of unprecedented migration through a bold new regional compact on migration and protection.

Realizing Our Full Potential

Inclusion and equal opportunity are essential to democracy. The diversity of North America's population is one of our greatest strengths, but for too many, full and meaningful participation in our democracies and economies remains out of reach. Converging economic, health, and climate crises have highlighted and worsened existing inequities and injustices. COVID–19's economic impact has greatly affected women's participation in the workplace, setting women back to levels not seen since the 1980s. It has deepened the disparities facing Indigenous peoples, people of color, religious minorities, LGBTQI+ persons, and others who have been historically disadvantaged, underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected by persistent poverty, inequality, and systemic racism. We stand firm in our commitment to achieving racial justice,

equity, and inclusion for all. To that end, our countries will enhance collaboration in this area by working toward a trilateral plan for racial equity and inclusion. We reaffirm our work to prevent and respond to violence against Indigenous women and girls and Two-Spirit people/gender diverse people. We remain committed to advocating globally to eliminate laws and policies that discriminate against persons based on their sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or sex characteristics, and to combat all acts of violence targeted toward LGBTQI+ persons. Our diversity is our strength and a key to unlocking our future.

The Road to the Summit for Democracy and the Summit of the Americas

As democratic leaders, we reaffirm our commitment to protect human rights, especially for members of the most vulnerable and historically marginalized communities. Our countries are determined to reinforce democracy at home and inspire democratic development around the world. In our aim to fight against impunity and address inequality, we recognize that fighting corruption is an essential element of the health of our democracies. Our governments look forward to participating in the Summit for Democracy and the Summit of the Americas as important opportunities to come together as a region to affirm our values and advance our regional priorities of security and prosperity, as well as commit to address poverty, focusing on the poorest people in the world who live on less than two dollars per day.

Together as North America we stand strong, and look to better build back our communities, our infrastructure, and our shared future as integrated partners. We will continue our dialogue at the highest level next year in Mexico for NALS 2022.

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

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