

Third Retreat of the Group of Friends of Monterrey

March 19th, 2018

Amb. Agustín García-López Loaeza

Mr. Alejandro Murat, Governor of the State of Oaxaca

Excellencies Ambassadors and Permanent Representatives,

Distinguished Delegates and Representatives from International Organizations,

Representatives from Civil Society, Businesses and Philanthropic Organizations,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. At the outset, I would like to express my gratitude to all of you, for travelling all the way to the beautiful State of Oaxaca to participate in this Third edition of the Retreat of the Group of Friends of Monterrey.
2. Furthermore, we are extremely thankful for the generous welcome of the Government of Oaxaca. Allow me to recognize their willingness to provide all the support required for the organization of the meeting, including this excellent facilities. Even more so underlying that we are in the aftermath of a series of unfortunate natural events that stroke the State, which include severe earthquakes in September last year and as close as last February. I

take this opportunity to recognize the decided and brave response of Governor Murat and his team, to these terrible events.

- 3.** I would also like to recognize the contributions of the Cohost countries, Bangladesh, Belarus, Cabo Verde, Chile, Czech Republic, Ethiopia and Indonesia, whose political support and enthusiastic contributions made this event a reality. A special word for Germany and Switzerland, who besides co-hosting, generously shared the financial burden with us.
- 4.** Allow me also to acknowledge the presence of the high level authorities that are with us today. Ambassador Marie Chatardova, President of ECOSOC, Mr. Liu Zhenmin, Undersecretary General for Development and Social Affairs, Ambassadors Courtenay Rattray from Jamaica and Francisco Duarte from Portugal, who have accepted the important challenge of Co-facilitating this year's Outcome of the FFD ECOSOC Forum. In total, delegates from 40 Countries and representatives from 12 International Organizations from the UN Family and beyond.

Ladies and gentlemen,

- 5.** Mexico had the honor 16 years ago of hosting the first International Conference on Financing for Development in the city of Monterrey.
- 6.** Monterrey was the first conference sponsored by the United Nations to address this novel agenda, whose relevance was demonstrated by the

participation in the forum of 54 Heads of State and Government, the Secretary General of the United Nations and the heads of international organizations, as well as all relevant stakeholders.

- 7.** The Conference took place only months after the most hideous terrorist attack suffered so far in the western hemisphere on 9/11, demonstrating the willingness of the international community to advance towards a more prosperous, fair and peaceful international order.
- 8.** Monterrey placed the mobilization of resources for development at the core of the United Nations Agendas. For the first time the financing, trade and development communities came together in order to agree on coordinated actions for the mobilization of resources destined to boost inclusive and sustainable economic growth, combat poverty, promote global financial stability and reach the global development goals, including back then, the Millennium Development Goals.
- 9.** Of course, much has happened since Monterrey and the Doha Review Conference, which took place in 2008.
- 10.** On the bright side, we have been successful in promoting global economic growth, advance in the eradication of poverty. Through the concerted quick response of the international community, the impact and consequences of the 2008 financial crisis were mitigated, and we have been for the last years in a positive economic outturn. The Global South

has also risen, with millions of people coming out from extreme poverty. International development cooperation, contrary to the common belief, has been on the rise. Official Development Assistance has more than doubled in real terms since the turn of the Century, and South-south Cooperation has also become a stronger force, showing the willingness of all, developed and developing countries, to promote solidarity towards the common good.

11. However, challenges remain. Inequality within and among countries; global threats like climate change directly related to human activity and the disasters due to extreme weather events; lack of access to appropriate financing for ensuring integrated domestic policies that allow to build strong and resilient societies; ensuring safe and orderly migration flows. And, of course, questionings to the multilateral and free trade systems that jeopardize the gains and make it even more difficult to advance towards the common actions that are needed to respond to these challenges.

12. In this context we need more multilateralism, not less, more openness, not less, more development cooperation, not less.

Distinguished colleagues

13. The adoption by the UN of the 2030 and the Addis Ababa Action agendas, changed the development paradigm. We, as international community, have recognized that sustainable development entails considering in a balanced manner the social, economic and environmental

aspects. When fighting poverty and promoting economic growth, we need to be mindful of carbon emissions, or else, we jeopardize the livelihood of the current and future generations. Human rights are at the core of this new conception of development. Good governance and a functional rule of law are requisites for economic growth to be inclusive. Achieving gender balance and empowering women and girls; ensuring that children reach their full potential through education and access to social services; appropriately guaranteeing citizens equality and safety and that no group is left behind are not only actions towards “fairness”, but essential in building prosperous and resilient societies.

- 14.** And, of course, we will not be successful in our development strategies if we do not build democratic alliances with the whole array of actors with a stake in development, such as civil society, business sector, parliamentarians, academia and local governments, among others.
- 15.** In this context, I would like to share with you the rationale of hosting the Third edition of this Retreat in this beautiful location. Oaxaca is a vibrant and diverse State, with abundant natural resources, characterized by the cultural richness of its people, its history, traditions and architecture, which led to its naming by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site. Furthermore, it is also an up-and-coming investment hub, which can be attested by this newly built Convention Center.

- 16.** However, Oaxaca is also an entity with many development challenges. Its geographical and ethnical diversity, with coastal areas easily linked to global economic flows and tourism, but also, with mountains and communities difficult to reach, in scarcely populated areas, which are prone to self-subsistence activities. As already mentioned, it is located in one of the most geologically complex areas in Mexico, vulnerable to the occurrence of natural phenomena such as earthquakes and hurricanes.
- 17.** We came here to exemplify how a region within a Middle Income Country, such as Mexico, is addressing, under the leadership of its Governor and with the hard work of its people, the challenges of achieving sustainability while tackling inequality, vulnerability and poverty. But also, how can international cooperation and the multilateral system provide useful support and responses.
- 18.** Later today, the Government of Oaxaca will be establishing its State level Committee for advancing towards the implementation of the 2030 Development Agenda. This initiative is linked to the National Committee for the 2030 Development Agenda, which was established by President Peña Nieto almost one year ago in order to translate the vision of the SDG's and the Addis Ababa Agenda into a reality, in benefit of all citizens, but in particular of those who need it most.

Dear friends

19. On behalf of all the cohosts, I thank you again for travelling to Mexico, in order to continue with the tradition of the Retreat of this Group of Friends, and carry on with the spirit of the Monterrey Consensus.

¡Bienvenidos amigos!