

STATEMENT OF FRENCH MINISTER LE DRIAN & 18 EUROPEAN COUNTRIES & LATIN AMERICA

AND THE CARIBBEAN

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USPA NEWS - The French Diplomacy releases the joint statement of French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jean Yves Le Drian and eighteen European countries and the Caribbean and Latin America, and the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. " We, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of eighteen countries [1] from Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, meeting today at the On the occasion of the ministerial conference organized on July 10, 2020 at the invitation of France, Spain and the European Union, let us pay tribute to the victims of the COVID-19 pandemic. We express our deep appreciation and our strong support to health professionals, caregivers and others working on the front line for their dedication, their efforts and the sacrifices they have made, far beyond what their duty imposed. We express our conviction that the unprecedented health, economic and social crisis caused by the pandemic requires that we join forces in the framework of an in-depth political dialogue, faithful to the spirit of solidarity and cooperation which animates relations between our two regions." Source: French Diplomacy

THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS JOINT STATEMENT TO THIS END-----

1. We reaffirm our will to strengthen cooperation between our two regions to face the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences, in particular economic and social. This cooperation, which is based on the bi-regional strategic partnership and on our shared values, is part of our common desire to see our populations living in just, united, prosperous, sustainable and democratic societies. We are convinced that by giving new impetus to the close and trust-based dialogue between our two regions, we will help overcome the difficulties linked to the current crisis in order to build a better future for the countries of the European Union, d 'Latin America and the Caribbean.-----
2. We recall that relations between our two regions also play a decisive role with regard to their economies and societies: the European Union, the leading investor in Latin America and the Caribbean, is also the region's primary contributor to cooperation , and this is one of the historic engines of growth of the international economy. In addition, trade between the European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean has grown continuously over the past decade; according to the EU's external strategy to combat COVID-19, this is a lever for a rapid resumption of growth.-----
3. We are pleased with the solidarity that exists between us, which manifested itself at the outset of the health crisis linked to COVID-19. Our countries have cooperated effectively, with the contribution of the European Union, to ensure that their nationals surprised by travel restriction measures while traveling abroad are taken care of. We have joined forces and will continue to do so so that the repatriation of these people to their country of origin continue.-----
4. We recognize that the COVID-19 pandemic is disproportionately affecting the poorest and most vulnerable and that it is affecting progress in health and development, especially in developing countries, which makes it difficult to achievement of the 2030 Agenda Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).-----
5. We reaffirm our support for the United Nations, and in particular the World Health Organization, which plays a major role in the international coordination of the response to COVID-19, so that it may continue its efforts aimed at deal with the health crisis, while respecting the principles of transparency and consistency when drawing up recommendations. Cooperation and solidarity must be at the heart of our response to the pandemic. We support the impartial, independent and comprehensive assessment, carried out as soon as possible, to implement the lessons learned from the international health response to COVID-19 coordinated by WHO and provided for in the resolution "Response to COVID- 19 " adopted by the World Health Assembly on May 19. We are committed to strengthening the international health protection system, including the full implementation of consensus health standards, such as the International Health Regulations.-----
6. We are committed to addressing the shortage of essential medical supplies, to encouraging the adequate flow of equipment and supplies necessary for the prevention and treatment of the disease, and to consider access to future vaccines as public goods worldwide. To this end, we are supporting the tool accelerator initiative against COVID-19 (ACT Accelerator), whose objective is to accelerate development, production and equitable and universal access. COVID-19 testing, treatment and vaccines; and strengthening health systems, especially in the most vulnerable countries and for the most fragile sectors of our societies. We also encourage scientists and public health officials from our two regions to continue and intensify their exchange of

experience.-----

7. Beyond the health emergency, we must learn from the crisis and prevent the most damaging consequences in the medium and long term. To do this, we will take stock of our cooperation in the field of medical, biological and pharmaceutical research in order to determine how it could be strengthened. The next bi-regional meeting of senior science and technology officials (joint research and innovation initiative or JIRI), scheduled for the second half of 2020, will analyze how we could contribute more effectively to these efforts.-----

8. The economic and social consequences of the health crisis, including increased unemployment and significant loss of income, are of major concern to us. To overcome them, only one way: the complete and safe resumption of economic activities, taking into account the diversity of situations and in accordance with the instructions of the competent authorities. We are currently reorienting national cooperation instruments and European funds and programs in order to facilitate recovery and achieve a lasting solution to the crisis, leading to more sustainable, prosperous, just and democratic societies, giving more space to digital technology.-----

9. We call on civil society organizations, in each of our countries, to remain mobilized to reach the SDGs in accordance with the 2030 Agenda, and we invite all bi-regional bodies, in particular those working in this direction, such as that the EU-LAC Foundation or the EU-CELAC technical groups, to support them in this effort. We agree to study together the measures likely to help restore the exchanges of persons, in particular students, researchers, cooperation specialists and entrepreneurs, as soon as possible between our two regions. We recognize that cooperation to tackle the pandemic must include different public and private actors in order to optimize the use of resources.

10. We recall that our two regions also maintain a close dialogue and cooperate in the context of humanitarian or political crises by seeking political and peaceful solutions. A recent example bringing together the countries of the two regions was the International Conference of Donors in Solidarity with Venezuelan Migrants and Refugees in the Countries of the Region, organized by Spain and the European Union on May 26, 2020.-----

11. We reaffirm our support for all the objectives and goals of the Charter of the United Nations, as well as our determination to reach ambitious agreements at the next conferences on climate change (COP26) and biodiversity (COP15) in 2021. We are convinced that the current crisis is an additional argument in favor of strengthening the multilateral system.-----

12. We reaffirm that respect for human rights, freedom of expression and all other fundamental freedoms and the rule of law is a guarantee of the legitimacy of the measures necessary to deal with the crisis caused by the pandemic, even under the most adverse conditions.-----

13. In order to achieve these objectives, we decide to maintain a regular dialogue and we call on the other interested States of our two regions to join us.

[1] Germany, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Ecuador, Spain, France, Italy, Mexico, Netherlands, Peru, Portugal, Dominican Republic, Slovenia, Sweden. Source: French Diplomacy

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