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Costa Rica's commitments at the Summit for Democracy

According to the Democracy Index prepared by The Economist, Costa Rica ranked third in Latin America in 2020 and is among the top 20 in the world. This index analyzes five main categories: electoral process and pluralism, civil liberties, functioning of government, political participation, and political culture. Without detracting from this important assessment, Costa Rican authorities understand and recognize that democracy is a continuous process, it is built day by day, with political decisions and concrete actions and that their ultimate objective is to have an impact on the well-being of the population.

As a country without an army since December 1, 1948, Costa Rica believes in multilateralism and bases its democratic principles and respect for international law as its main form of defense.

Costa Rica confers central value to democratic institutions and to the protection and promotion of human rights as a form of state organization.

In this vision, the strategic relationship with the United States of America finds a fundamental basis in the promotion of this vision and of democracy.

In the process of building commitments and initiatives to strengthen democracy, fight authoritarianism, combat corruption and promote respect for and protection of human rights, Costa Rica has been developing a legal system and public policies that shape these objectives.

As part of our commitment, we propose concrete actions at the national and regional level in the following fields, including:

I. Fighting Corruption

Commitment: To continue the commitment to promote **access to justice** as one of the main pillars of the promotion of democracy, to promote actions for the promotion of judicial independence and ensure the pledge not to reduce the national budget and ensure effectiveness, efficiency and transparency in the use of resources.

Commitment: Expand the "Sembremos Seguridad" (Let's Sow Security) program in all the municipalities of the country, as a tool for the prevention of violence, and promote a new program of "Sembremos Anticorrupción" (Let's sow anti-corruption); and promote the exchange of best practices with SICA countries.

II. Defending Against Authoritarianism

Commitment: Bring together youth representatives from all political parties to promote the **adoption of a pact or declaration of principles to reject disinformation**, ahead of the presidential elections of February 2022, which can be signed by all candidates, as well as the main media, as a way to promote the protection of democratic principles in the values of the country's young generations.

III. Advancing Human Rights

Commitment: To defend the inter-American system and to promote the strengthening of the Inter-American Human Rights System that are under threat in the region, through the promotion of a political declaration of support for the inter-American system within the framework of the OAS; the defense of Articles 3 and 4 of the Tegucigalpa Protocol, in the Central American discussions within the framework of the institutionality of SICA and with SICA observer countries, as well as the inclusion of the issue in all the interventions of the high authorities of the Foreign Ministry at the regional level.

Commitment: Join and actively participate in the Lifeline program: Embattled CSOs Assistance Fund, made up of like-minded democratic countries that seeks to support civil society organizations facing threats for their work in favor of human rights, freedom of expression, and association or assembly.

IV. Advance in the creation of human talent capacities for employability and social peace

Commitment: Generate quality employment and improve the quality of education to reverse the trend of inequality and promote labor insertion through the promotion of national and regional programs of focused employability that develop human talent and promote labor insertion, mainly of women and young people, with an inclusive, green, sustainable, resilient, and technological innovation approach. It also seeks to link employment policies with trade and investment policies and promote new circular labour migration schemes. Quality employability produces social peace and has a positive impact on the safeguarding of democratic systems.

V. Advancing the fight against climate change and protecting biodiversity

Commitment: Defend the high climate ambition ahead of COP 26 and the compliance of the Paris Agreement, by defending and promoting the San José principles to guarantee environmental integrity in carbon market systems. Climate vulnerability has had a growing effect on human mobility.

Commitment: Work to achieve the level of ambition in the fulfillment of the national goals of the Paris Agreement through the implementation of the National Decarbonization Plan in a medium-term perspective.

Commitment: Defend the protection of biodiversity, being Costa Rica one of the megadiverse countries, in order to safeguard ecosystem balances (also for its impact on agriculture, food security, health) and to promote sustainable development within a framework of the right to a healthy environment.