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Governor Scott Announces Additional Speakers for 2017 Latin American Summit

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. – Today, Governor Rick Scott announced additional speakers for the 2017 Latin American Summit on October 2 in Miami. The Latin American Summit will bring together world leaders to improve current partnerships and build new relationships that will better serve Florida families, generate economic prosperity and enhance democracy and human rights throughout Latin America.

Below is a selection of speakers that will be at the Summit. Previously announced speakers can be found [HERE](#).

Ambassador Robert E. Lighthizer, United States Trade Representative

Robert E. Lighthizer was sworn in as the 18th United States Trade Representative (USTR) on May 15, 2017. An experienced trade negotiator and litigator, Ambassador Lighthizer brings a history of tough U.S. trade enforcement and a record of standing up for American workers, farmers, manufacturers, and businesses. Ambassador Lighthizer was formerly partner at the law firm Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP (Skadden), where he practiced international law for over 30 years. Ambassador Lighthizer also previously served as Deputy USTR for President Ronald Reagan. During his tenure, Ambassador Lighthizer negotiated over two dozen bilateral international agreements, including agreements on steel, automobiles, and agricultural products.

Senator Marco Rubio

U.S. Senator Marco Rubio was elected to the United States Senate in 2010, and set one objective for himself while in office: to help bring the American Dream back into reach of those who feel it is slipping away. That's the goal line Senator Rubio strives toward with his every effort, and it's the measure he uses to keep score. Senator Rubio is passionate about the American Dream because he's lived it himself. His parents came to America from Cuba in 1956 and earned their way to the middle class working humble jobs. By their loving and powerful example, he learned the importance of work and family, and developed the belief that all things are possible in America. Prior to being sworn into the Senate in 2010, Marco served as a City Commissioner for West Miami before serving in the Florida House of Representatives from 2000 to 2008.

Congressman Carlos Curbelo

Congressman Carlos Curbelo was elected to serve Florida's 26th Congressional District in 2014 and is currently serving his second term. Born to Cuban exiles that fled Fidel Castro's regime in the 1960s, Carlos Curbelo is a father, husband and former small business owner who has dedicated his life to serving his South Florida neighbors. In 2009, Congressman Curbelo started his public service career as State Director for U.S. Senator George LeMieux and took responsibility for overseeing staff in seven offices throughout the state while also advising the Senator on Latin-American policy and Hispanic issues. He has also previously served on the Miami-Dade Metropolitan Planning Organization and Miami-Dade County School Board.

Francisco Cabrera, Argentine Minister of Production

Francisco Cabrera was appointed the Minister of Production of Argentina in 2015. With his leadership, the Ministry of Production works to create jobs and reduce the nation's poverty rate. Prior to his appointment, Cabrera served as the Minister of Economic Development of the City of Buenos Aires and president of Pensar Foundation, a think-tank dedicated to the study, research and development of public policy to transform Argentina. Cabrera was born in the Argentine province of Mendoza. He completed a Master's Degree in Business Administration from the School of Economics and Business Administration and graduated as an engineer in electricity and electronics from the University of Mendoza.

Luis Almagro Lemes, Secretary General, Organization of American States

Luis Almagro Lemes was elected OAS Secretary General on March 18, 2015. Since taking the helm of the OAS, the motto of his administration has been "more rights for more people," and his work has focused on bringing the Organization closer to the hemisphere's new reality to contribute toward guaranteeing more democracy, more security and greater prosperity for all. A lawyer and career diplomat, he served as the foreign affairs minister of his country, Uruguay, between 2010 and March 2015. He was elected senator during Uruguay's national elections in October 2014.

U.S. Navy Admiral Kurt Tidd, Commander, U.S. Southern Command

Admiral Kurt Tidd serves as Commander of the U.S. Southern Command and is responsible for all Department of Defense security cooperation in the 45 nations and territories of Central and South America and the Caribbean Sea, an area of 16 million square miles. He has served as the 35th Assistant to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, as the Joint Staff Director and Vice Director for Operations (J3), on the National Security Council Staff as Director for Strategic Capabilities Policy and as a Director for Combating Terrorism. Admiral Tidd was awarded the Legion of Honor by the government of France and holds various decorations and awards, including two awards of the Defense Distinguished Service Medal, the Navy Distinguished Service Medal, the Defense Superior Service Medal and four awards of the Legion of Merit.

U.S. Coast Guard Rear Admiral Peter Brown, Assistant Commandant for Response Policy

Rear Admiral Peter Brown oversees the development of strategic response doctrine and policy guidance for all Coast Guard forces. His Coast Guard career has primarily focused on sea duty and tactical law enforcement, with three tours afloat and four TACLET/LEDET tours of duty, including command of TACLET South in Miami Florida, and USCGC Boutwell (WHEC 719) Alameda, CA. Rear Admiral Brown has previously served as the Chief of Response for the Seventh Coast Guard District, with responsibility for search and rescue, maritime law enforcement, and international operations, including disaster relief, in South Carolina, Georgia, Florida and throughout the Caribbean, and in 2011, he became the Chief of Staff for Coast Guard Atlantic Area before promotion to flag rank in 2013. Rear Admiral Brown's awards include two Legion of Merit, five Meritorious Service Medals, two Commendation Medals and three Achievement Medals.

Carlos Sanchez Berzain, Human Rights Activist

Carlos Sanchez Berzain is a political refugee living in exile in the United States. He is a lawyer, political scientist and sociologist and is a professor of Constitutional Law and Public International Law and Executive Director of the Interamerican Institute for Democracy. Berzain has served as Minister of State of the Republic of Bolivia five times, Minister of National Defense in the constitutional government of President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada, and Minister of the Presidency of the Republic twice. Berzain He has sponsored historical causes in defense of fundamental freedoms and constitutional control in Bolivia and is the author of *The Dictatorship of the XXI Century in Bolivia* (2014) and *Fight for Democracy* (2015).

Ambassador Armando Valladares, Human Rights Activist

Ambassador Armando Valladares is Cuban poet, Diplomat, human rights activist and Director of the Interamerican Institute for Democracy. In 1960, he was arrested by the Cuban government. For conflicting reasons, the Cuban government alleged that he had been complicit in anti-Castro terrorism, while foreign sources regarded his arrest as being due to his protesting communism, leading Amnesty International to name him a prisoner of conscience. Following his release in 1982, he wrote *Against All Hope: The Prison Memoirs of Armando Valladares* detailing his imprisonment and torture at the hands of the Cuban government. In 1988, he was appointed by U.S. President Ronald Reagan to serve as the United States Ambassador to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

Carlos Vecchio, Co-Founder of “Voluntad Popular”

Carlos Vecchio is co-founder of “Voluntad Popular,” a Venezuelan social and political movement aimed at youth and working to eliminate poverty peacefully and within democracy. He has worked to expose constitutional and human rights abuses in his country and ran campaigns for Venezuelan opposition presidential candidates in 2011 and 2012. Vecchio is also a former Fulbright Scholar and editor of political discrimination documentary, “The List.”

Carlos Alberto Montaner, Writer and Journalist

Carlos Alberto Montaner is a writer and journalist, with articles published in dozens of newspapers in Latin America, Spain and the United States for over thirty years. His recent books include *Time of Scoundrels* (2014), *Goodbye Again* (2012), *Latin Americans and the West* (2003), *The Cubans* (2011). Montaner has also been a university professor in various institutions in Latin America and the United States and is currently President of the Interamerican Institute for Democracy.

Thomas H. Kenna, President and Director General, Panama Canal Railway Company

Thomas Kenna joined the Panama Canal Railway Company (PCRC) in 2000 as Director of Marketing and was appointed President and Director General of the railroad in 2008. He is active in many leading organizations of Panama, including as a former Director of the Association of Airlines of Panama, a founding member of the Board of the United States-Panama Business Council, and a member of Panama’s Chamber of Shipping Board of Directors, the American Chamber of Commerce Executive Committee, and Chair of the Association of American Chambers of Commerce in Latin America and the Caribbean. Kenna also currently serves as Trustee for the Pan American Development Foundation and is a member of the International Policy Committee of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

For more information about the 2017 Latin American Summit, click [HERE](#).

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