



COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hearing Statement of Oversight, Management, & Accountability Subcommittee Chairman Lou Correa (D-CA)

Call to Action: Private Sector Investment in the Northern Triangle and its Impact on Homeland Security

February 17, 2022

Responding to irregular migration at the U.S. Southern border remains one of the key areas of focus for several Department of Homeland Security components. DHS is a key player in our national security. And it is looking beyond our borders to help our Southern neighbors stabilize their local economies.

Over the last year, this Subcommittee has had the opportunity to dive deeply into these issues. We have heard from a variety of governmental and non-governmental experts who are working hard to understand and combat the root causes of migration. And it is certainly no easy task. The Northern Triangle countries of Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador face enormous economic, political, and social challenges.

This Committee has held hearings to examine how the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change have significantly impacted these countries' already battered economies. How weak governing systems have too frequently allowed corrupt actors to divert aid money intended to help support development. And how transnational criminal organizations exploit vulnerable communities, particularly those who seek a better life in the U.S.

One message has rung out loud and clear: we cannot expect migrants to stop making the dangerous journey to the U.S. until they have hope in a better life at home. Building this hope will take time and collaboration across the public and private sectors. Although DHS and the U.S. government have committed significant resources toward helping the Northern Triangle governments bolster their security and improve customs enforcement, there is only so much the U.S. government can do to help create jobs and support economic development.

We have learned that simply sending aid money to these governments will not create the meaningful and sustained change that is required. However, this is an area where our private sector partners can help create some unique new opportunities for the people of this region. Recognizing this, Vice President Harris has called upon companies to support efforts to increase economic development in the Northern Triangle.

With the launch of this *Call to Action* last May, the Vice President secured commitments from several major companies and organizations who collectively pledged to invest over \$1.2 billion in the region. These investments will be made in a variety of sectors including the development of sustainable agricultural practices, bringing internet access to millions of homes, and banking services to individuals across the region.

Just as critical will be the number of new employment opportunities these investments will bring, helping to reduce poverty and giving people hope in upward mobility. Increasing access to long term employment will remove one of the most common causes of migration to the U.S.

Today I am pleased to welcome three companies who answered the Vice President's *Call to Action*. I look forward to hearing directly from these private sector partners about their plans and how these investments will create much needed change in the Northern Triangle region.

I also look forward to hearing about any challenges they face and how the U.S. government can be an effective partner in this effort. Creating long lasting change is difficult, but we are lucky to have partners such as these to help lend a little of the hope and opportunity that makes America a good partner to our neighbors in the south.

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