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The Honorable Joseph R. Biden

President of the United States of America

The White House

1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden:

I would like to congratulate you on your inauguration as the 47th President of the United States of America. Costa Rica welcomes U.S. leadership and commitment to the Region of the Americas. As you know well, the challenges in Latin America are complex and longstanding.

The COVID-19 pandemic has added incredible strain on the health of our populations, the strength of our economies, and increasing impediments in our fight against inequality and poverty. Despite our efforts to implement strong public health measures and mitigate the effects of COVID-19, Costa Rica and other Latin American countries continue to struggle. COVID-19 has severely impacted the health and livelihoods of our families and communities, our economic development and sustainability, and the peace and security we seek for our citizens.

Costa Rica is working through the COVAX Facility to procure vaccines for at least twenty percent of their most vulnerable populations. However, current progress in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) is far from reaching the coverage necessary to protect these vulnerable groups to reduce the high mortality that has been experienced in LAC, and even further from the vaccination coverage needed to achieve herd immunity against COVID-19 (estimated to be 70-80% of the population) and control the transmission.

As Member States, we value PAHO’s technical cooperation in health. The PAHO Revolving Fund for Vaccines has been an integral pillar of its technical cooperation to Member States for more than 40 years as it facilitates their access to safe, efficacious, and high-quality vaccines at affordable prices as well as their access to syringes and other related supplies. As we battle the COVID-19 pandemic, vaccination of our populations will ensure that our people and economies can begin to rebuild, recover, and renew our efforts to address the threats of inequality and poverty.

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Respectfully, I ask the United States to consider expanding COVID-19 vaccines deliveries in countries of the Region once you have secured the adequate number of vaccines you need for coverage of the U.S. population. This expansion could occur through vaccine donations or vaccine loans, or additional purchases through the COVAX Facility, among other alternatives. With PAHO, we have a strong vaccine supply and delivery system and the public health expertise to accept and deliver donations and support vaccination deployment efforts in our countries.

Mr. President, I appreciate U.S. domestic priorities to mitigate the COVID-19 pandemic, yet once again, Costa Rica and others must look to the United States to help the Region of the Americas to save lives and recover faster and stronger. There is no time to lose as the Region of the Americas has been and remains the epicenter of the COVID-19 pandemic.

I look forward to welcoming you in Costa Rica one day soon. Until then, please accept my very best wishes for your success.

Sincerely yours,

Carlos Andrés Alvarado Quesada

President