The Americas and the Caribbean need its regional organization to be effective, to achieve concrete results, and to provide tangible benefits. We need the OAS responds to the region’s main problems and challenges, attends the priorities and needs of our States and societies, and helps us solve the conflicts we face.

The OAS was created to be a meeting place. That is the reason why it exists and it demands we make the efforts to solve together the problems we face. Political dialogue is the only mean available to achieve meaningful agreements and decisions. The power of resolutions by the OAS rests on the strength of the support they are able to gather.

Which are the main problems the region and the organization are facing?

In first place, political polarization undermines multilateralism’s two essential components: constructive dialogue and consensus-building. Its most pernicious effects are precisely to deepen divisions, fracture dialogue, and entangle actions and decisions.

The General Secretariat needs to work closely with member States to reduce polarization, bringing together divergent positions. It cannot deepen divisions but, on the contrary, it must strengthen dialogue among its members, aiming at supporting the adoption of effective decisions.

In second place, the General Secretariat must maintain a functional relation with member States, in accordance to the organization’s rules.
States define policies and guidelines for actions and the General Secretariat must carry out the duties they entrust. The legitimacy of the organization’s collective action lies on its member States, and the General Secretariat promotes the implementation of policies and actions decided by the States, as the OAS Charter says.

- If I have learned something from my long experience at the OAS it is that the organization is truly effective when the States and the General Secretariat work together, with clear goals and persistence. On the contrary, lack of coordination among them dilutes efforts and impoverishes the quality of results.

- In third place, the region needs the OAS to facilitate peaceful means to solve controversies. The General Secretariat must guarantee impartiality and it requires to count with credibility as a broker capable of mediating and negotiating with effectiveness. Its key role is to contribute to achieve agreements and to help to implement effective solutions. The OAS does not nor can impose solutions, but it can furnish means necessary to allow conflicting parties find viable negotiated settlements to political crises. To propose the use of force to solve a crisis denies the OAS’ essence.

- The organization’s relevance rests on its capacity to achieve results and to provide benefits. Relevance should not be confused with media-attention. Public confrontations certainly attract attention of the press, but the OAS’ role does not lie in prominence in social networks.

- The General Secretariat’s media projection should respond to the organization’s interests. It should reflect decisions by the States, as well as concrete steps and achievements in the implementation of programs and projects and in conflict-resolution.

- In sum, Peru presents my candidature as a balanced alternative before polarizing perspectives that are weakening the effectiveness and relevance of the OAS as a hemispheric multilateral body. It proposes a constructive, moderate, and institutional vision that allows the organization to fullfil its regional role, and to be more effective in the
defense of common principles and values, in the promotion of regional
development and prosperity, and in the solution of conflicts and
controversies. The goal pursued is that the OAS recovers the capacity
to achieve more effective results that produce better tangible benefits.

- There are two basic guidelines that I believe the General Secretariat’s
  work should follow. First, it should focus on the organization’s four
  pillars - democracy, human rights, security, and development-
  managing its resources with efficiency and transparency. Secondly, it
  should attend with equilibrium the priorities of all geographic areas that
  belong to the OAS.

- Now I am going to share with you the main guidelines that I believe
  should direct the General Secretariat, underlining initiatives that should
  be prioritized with the support of member States.

**DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

- Democracy should be defended effectively. Its defense demands
  results. It cannot be restricted to being declarative. The General
  Secretariat needs to assume, with conviction, the responsibility and
  commitment to contribute to carrying out the essential diplomatic task
  of facilitating viable solutions to political crises that threaten democratic
  institutions.

- The difficulty to solve a political crisis cannot inhibit the OAS’ diplomatic
  action. The General Secretariat needs to be part of the solution. Its role
  cannot deepen crises, nor adopt positions that exclude the OAS from
  negotiation efforts aimed at trying to solve them.

- The defense of democratic principles cannot vary according to
  circumstances. It demands coherence and consistency. Firmness is
  not show by the eloquence of public speeches, but by achieving
  improvements that can be perceived.
• Just as democracy is indispensable for the enjoyment of human rights, the protection of human rights is a necessary condition for the existence of a democratic society. That is why I commit my support to the Inter-American Human Rights System and, particularly, to the strengthening of women’s human rights, their empowerment, and the eradication of gender violence.

• Peru, as the most recent chair of the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM), led the approval of the Lima declaration on equality in the exercise of women’s economic rights, including specific measures to close income-gaps and to ensure equal access to employment. Peru’s chair also presented model laws to prevent political violence against women, and to prevent, punish, and eradicate the violent deaths of women.

• I am convinced the General Secretariat must maintain, in all of the OAS’ working spaces, a policy of zero-tolerance against sexual harassment, as well as against all forms of abuse of power. Corresponding sanctions must be imposed with no exceptions.

• The General Secretariat must strengthen the struggle against corruption, which erodes public trust, the legitimacy of state institutions, and the efficiency of public management. Corruption and impunity threaten stability of democratic governance throughout the region.

• It is indispensable that the General Secretariat strongly supports national efforts to prevent and to combat corruption and impunity, within the framework of the Lima Commitment approved in the last Summit of the Americas.

• We must promote the implementation of an Inter-American system against corruption that allows us to present a regional proposal to the United Nations Special General Assembly against Corruption, scheduled for April 2021.
SECURITY

- The transnational nature of threats to regional security demands a concerted and multidimensional response through effective regional cooperation.

- The General Secretariat needs to provide increasing attention to new criminal activities in the fields of cyber-security and illicit financial operations.

- Areas of the South Pacific and the Caribbean suffers the increase of natural disasters. The General Secretariat must urgently focus disaster prevention and mitigation as an integral component of multidimensional security. Devastating effects of climate change demand to maximize capacities and to increase financial, human, and technological resources, in coordination and cooperation with donor countries, cooperation agencies, and countries receiving support programs and funds.

- I have held conversations with the president of the IDB to finance the implementation of a unit of experts at the OAS to coordinate cooperation and international aid to facilitate immediate response to natural disasters.

DEVELOPMENT

- The General Secretariat should cooperate again more intensely with other institutions of the Inter-American system, in special with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the Development Bank of Latin America (CAF). Contributions to the OAS from both institutions have dropped drastically since the years 2012 and 2013.

- The scarce presence of IDB and CAF funds in the pillar of integral development should be reverted. We have identified with the heads of
both banks areas of common interest to revamp cooperation with the OAS.

- One of them is specifically to provide technical assistance to member States to improve the design and the financial structure of development projects, aiming at facilitating their approval by international financial institutions.

- Cooperation and joint efforts with the European Union (EU) have traditionally proven to be very effective with efforts by the OAS to promote development. I would seek to relaunch this significant partnership, and I have already contacted leaders at the EU for that purpose.

- Finally, massive migration has become an issue that affects different countries in the region. It has generated a humanitarian emergency and it pressures limited resources at hand for the States to attend health, education, and other areas just as sensitive. It is indispensable and urgent to agree on common policies to confront this issue with a collective and coordinated approach.

CONCLUSIONS

- An organization as diverse and complex as the OAS requires strong institutional support to achieve ambitious initiatives. Because of that, if elected, the first thing I would do is define with member States a specific short and mid-term agenda, rearrange the General Secretariat’s tasks to comply with and to carry out said agenda.

- I offer diplomatic professional experience of more than 40 years, specialized in multilateral affairs, negotiation, and conflict-resolution. I have the specific experience of having worked more than 16 years at the OAS, ten of them as Chief of Staff of two different Secretary Generals and the six additional ones representing my country at the OAS.
• My professional experience solidifies my conviction that the strongest collaboration among member States and the General Secretaries is indispensable to allow the organization to achieve effective and beneficial results.

• It also strengthens my conviction that the region needs to OAS to fulfill, with effectiveness, its essential functions, and that American citizens need and able and reliable diplomacy from its main multilateral body. Member States and the General Secretariat must exercise diplomatic negotiation to seek consensus through dialogue, aiming at adopting decisions with strong backing, as well as facilitating conflict-resolution and achieving effective agreements.

• The issues I have mentioned during this presentation are based upon my long personal experience at our hemispheric organization. On that basis, I can assure that they are feasible, and that I know how to implement them. These issues also respond to the viewpoints I have gathered during the multiple meetings and conversations I have been holding with most of the leaders of member States.

• I am running only to serve one term as Secretary General of the OAS. I want to focus my efforts in helping the organization to recover its effectiveness and its efficiency in administrating with transparency its human and financial resources.

• I am convinced the direction of the General Secretariat should follow a rotation by geographic zones so the organization becomes truly Inter-American. I am also convinced the OAS needs the General Secretariat to be headed with equilibrium, without any other motivation than assuring it works at its best to achieve results that benefit all American citizens, becoming once again the hemispheric forum our countries created to meet and to concert.