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## Joint Regional Strategy



**Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs**  
**Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean**

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## 1. Executive Statement and Mission Statement

*We will partner with diverse stakeholders to advance the interests of the American people, including their safety and economic prosperity, by fostering strong democracies in the Western Hemisphere that deliver for people, honor the dignity and rights of all persons, and promote inclusive, safe, prosperous, and climate-resilient societies.*

Our shared values underpin U.S. engagement with the Western Hemisphere and provide a platform to advance U.S. interests regionally and globally. We focus on aligning our resources to help our democratic partners equitably deliver public goods to strengthen people's faith in democracy and build safe, inclusive, prosperous, equitable, and climate-resilient societies.

Democratic institutions with free and fair elections remain the norm in most countries in the Hemisphere. However, in many countries across the Americas, the aspirations and expectations of citizens, and the challenges facing those populations, outpace the capacity of long-standing political structures to meet those needs. A lack of confidence in democratic institutions to provide essential public services – like equitable justice and security, inclusive economic opportunities, and social services – strains the Hemisphere's democratic culture and increases the appeal of populist and authoritarian leaders. Moreover, pervasive corruption undermines the development of accountable democracies and inclusive economies, benefitting a corrupt and privileged few. Corruption undermines faith in governing institutions, freedom of expression and human rights, equitable access to justice, rule of law, and economic growth. Civil society organizations and networks in the Hemisphere, under assault in many countries, contribute to the national dialogue and provide a voice for accountable governance, social welfare, and inclusion. Stronger investigative journalism and independent media can provide greater government oversight and better inform citizens.

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The Western Hemisphere boasts a large young adult population and rich cultural, social, economic, and geographic diversity. Countries in the region could build stronger, more equitable, and dynamic societies, if they leverage diversity through the deliberate social, economic, and political inclusion of Indigenous persons, African Descendants, women and girls, LGBTQI+ persons, and other underserved communities. Many people of the Americas have strong family ties to the United States, with diaspora communities woven deeply into our civic and cultural fabric.

Challenges in the Western Hemisphere affect the United States more directly than those of any other region in the world due to proximity and strong cultural ties, from extreme weather events resulting from climate change to the economic inequality and lack of security that drive irregular migration and allow transnational criminal organizations to flourish. We will implement the U.S. Strategy for Addressing the Root Causes of Migration in Central America in a cross-cutting way, with an understanding that corruption, insecurity, inequality, and lack of economic opportunity present challenges for building confidence in democratic institutions throughout the region.

Violence and insecurity perpetuated by transnational criminal organizations (TCOs) and gangs contribute to waning faith in democratic institutions, suppress economic opportunities, and drive irregular migration. Transnational criminal networks and gangs thrive in areas where democracies fail to deliver, leading to urban violence, trafficking in persons, exploitation, extortion, and illegal resource extraction that destroys Indigenous lands and biospheres. Regional partnerships, information-sharing, and enhanced border security for countries in the region can counter the spread of illicit networks, counter narcotics trafficking and terrorism, and bolster security for the entire Hemisphere. Land-use protections and environmental law enforcement will contribute to environmental preservation and sustainability and protect forest cover and biodiversity.

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Even prior to the regional economic devastation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the region experienced severe inequality and high levels of economic informality. The pandemic resulted in an economic downturn that disproportionately affected vulnerable and marginalized groups. In the long term, inclusive economic development will allow citizens to build futures in their home countries, reduce drivers of irregular migration, and build economies more resilient to climate change and natural disasters. An integrated approach that focuses on educational opportunities, entrepreneurship, and employment in the formal labor sector for marginalized and vulnerable populations will help lower inequality, build vibrant and innovative communities, and reduce the risk of youth becoming perpetrators and victims of crime and violence, including sexual and gender-based violence.

The region hosts a wealth of natural resources – including 33 percent of the world’s water resources, 30 percent of plant and animal species, and 25 percent of global forests and arable land. Intact and functional ecosystems support human development as climate-change related weather patterns increase landslides, hurricane damage, fishery collapse, flooding, and other extreme weather effects. Climate change threatens rural livelihoods, especially for small and medium-sized farmers. Increasing frequency and strength of hurricanes severely impacts infrastructure, croplands, economic systems, and livelihoods in the Caribbean and Central America. Weather destabilization also contributes to power shortages and water insecurity in South America, where countries rely heavily on hydroelectric power. Areas like the Amazonian and Central American forests provide natural opportunities to sequester greenhouse gases, but deforestation, illegal logging, and resource extraction threaten many of these areas. A sustainable hemisphere will protect forests, move toward sustainable energy, and sustain climate-resilient agricultural systems.

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## 2. Bureau Strategic Framework

### Bureau Goal 1: A Democratic Hemisphere

- **Bureau Objective 1.1:** Support efforts to restore and strengthen accountable, resilient, and inclusive democracies that deliver for their citizens
- **Bureau Objective 1.2:** Counter corruption and impunity to strengthen democratic institutions
- **Bureau Objective 1.3:** Strengthen judicial systems and the equitable application of the rule of law

### Bureau Goal 2: An Inclusive Hemisphere

- **Bureau Objective 2.1:** Promote social inclusion and respect for the human dignity and rights of all persons, especially members of marginalized communities, including African-Descendant, Indigenous, LGBTQI+, persons with disabilities, women, and girls, through diplomatic engagement and public diplomacy
- **Bureau Objective 2.2:** Advance racial and gender equity

### Bureau Goal 3: A Secure Hemisphere

- **Bureau Objective 3.1:** Protect U.S. citizens, ensure secure borders, promote safe, humane, and orderly immigration and asylum systems, enhance protections for refugees and displaced persons, and promote stability in areas impacted by migration
- **Bureau Objective 3.2:** Build safe communities through violence prevention and intervention, including a focus on gender-based violence
- **Bureau Objective 3.3:** Strengthen host country resilience to authoritarian foreign influence
- **Bureau Objective 3.4:** Counter transnational criminal organizations and illicit networks

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**Bureau Goal 4: A Prosperous Hemisphere**

- **Bureau Objective 4.1:** Foster fair trade and investment and a more economically competitive region
- **Bureau Objective 4.2:** Improve the climate for U.S. businesses
- **Bureau Objective 4.3:** Support inclusive and sustainable economic growth
- **Bureau Objective 4.4:** Strengthen health and education systems and improve inclusive access

**Bureau Goal 5: A Climate-Resilient Hemisphere**

- **Bureau Objective 5.1:** Promote a clean, resilient, and secure energy future
- **Bureau Objective 5.2:** Build resilience to climate change and ensure food and water security
- **Bureau Objective 5.3:** Promote natural climate solutions
- **Bureau Objective 5.4:** Conserve biodiversity and protect critical ecosystems in the Hemisphere

**Bureau Goal 6: A Hemisphere Receptive to U.S. Leadership and Values**

- **Bureau Objective 6.1:** Engage publics and influence opinion to build support for American Values
- **Bureau Objective 6.2:** Build support for U.S. positions and leadership in multilateral and regional institutions
- **Bureau Objective 6.3:** Expand connections between U.S. and foreign institutions, organizations, businesses, and people, leveraging spheres of influence to achieve foreign policy goals

**Bureau Cross-Cutting Management Objective 7.1:** Equip a diverse, inclusive, and dynamic workforce with modern and secure tools and infrastructure to support resilience and ingenuity in operations

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### 3. Bureau Goals and Objectives

#### Bureau Goal 1: A Democratic Hemisphere

- **Bureau Goal 1 Description:** We work with allies and partners to promote democratic values throughout the Hemisphere and seek to strengthen democratic institutions to demonstrate that democracies deliver for their people. Much of the Hemisphere has a shared, fundamental commitment to democracy, but faith in democratic institutions has come under strain. We support governments and civil society in creating more democratic, transparent, and inclusive governance that provides public goods and services equitably to all citizens within an open and vibrant civic space. We condemn corruption and impunity and the actors and institutions that enable corrupt practices. We seek to bolster anti-corruption investigations and prosecutions while encouraging increased government oversight and transparency. We work in partnership with others in the region and with allies in other parts of the world to address authoritarian regimes, including in Venezuela, Cuba, and Nicaragua.

Our goal to build strong democracies connects to other U.S. priorities in the region. Strong democracies provide people of the region with increased access to education and healthcare, boost free enterprise and entrepreneurship, and create more equitable economic growth. Countries that have control over their territories and strong, impartial rule of law diminish the likelihood of violence and the presence of transnational criminal networks. A more pluralistic democracy strengthens societies through a diversity of ideas and approaches to challenges.



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**Bureau Objective 1.1:** Support efforts to restore and strengthen accountable, resilient, and inclusive democracies that deliver for their citizens

- **Bureau Objective 1.1 Justification and Linkages:** This objective seeks to ensure that Department of State and USAID policy and programming integrate efforts to restore and strengthen democratic governance at regional, national, and sub-national levels, and across sectors and program areas. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated threats to democracy by increasing inequality, creating deeper societal divisions, and compounding lack of transparency and poor governance. Public opinion survey results conducted across twenty-one countries in the region by Vanderbilt University's Latin American Public Opinion Project show that democratic attitudes in the region are alarmingly weak. Having rebounded from historic lows slightly, less than two-thirds of Latin Americans are satisfied with democracy as a form of government. Several governments in the region have increasingly demonstrated authoritarian tendencies, posing challenges to regional democracy. At the same time, countries like the Dominican Republic and Ecuador have taken positive steps to strengthen democratic institutions. We will respond to emerging challenges and opportunities while focusing on building accountable and inclusive institutions through headquarters and field-based programming that utilizes evidence-based and data-driven approaches. This objective links to Objective 3.1 of the JSP on democracy and governance, promoting good governance and defending strong, accountable, and resilient democracies that deliver for their citizens. This objective also contributes to JSP Objective 3.4 on managing migration through addressing root causes of irregular migration collaboratively with our partners.

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- **Bureau Objective 1.1 Risk Considerations:** Corruption, crime, and the failure of democratic institutions to deliver essential services continue to erode citizen trust. This erosion of trust in democratic institutions opens space for authoritarian leaders to promote policies and actions that restrict freedoms and accountability. Citizens vote with their feet for better services, security, and opportunities elsewhere, feeding the irregular migration crisis. To mitigate authoritarian risks and increase confidence in democracy, Department of State and USAID policy and programming seeks to strengthen accountable, citizen-responsive institutions; bolster impartial judicial and legislative oversight; empower civil society and marginalized constituencies to exercise oversight and ensure inclusion and citizen participation; and strengthen professional independent local media organizations that fight corruption through investigative journalism and counter disinformation in local and national contexts.

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**Bureau Objective 1.2:** Counter corruption and impunity to strengthen democratic institutions

- **Bureau Objective 1.2 Justification and Linkages:** Corruption undermines governance throughout the Western Hemisphere and affects U.S. national security and foreign policy goals. Rooting out corruption requires concerted action to address its underlying causes, disincentivize corrupt actors, and strengthen institutions to promote transparency and openness. The Department of State and USAID will work to combat corruption through bilateral and multilateral efforts that increase accountability, reduce opportunities for corruption, and investigate, prosecute, and hold corrupt actors accountable. We will seek to strengthen democratic institutions, increasing oversight, transparency, and accountability mechanisms to shore them up against corruption's corrosive effects. We will leverage international anti-corruption conventions and commitments, while working from the ground-up on prevention efforts that engage citizens and civil society. To address impunity, the Department of State and USAID will work to ensure the efficacy and independence of judicial actors, including specialized investigators and prosecutors. Civil society and other oversight bodies support both prevention of corruption and oversight of government bodies. This objective links to JSP Objective 3.3 on combatting corruption. This objective contributes to JSP Objective 3.4 on managing migration through addressing root causes of irregular migration collaboratively with our partners.
- **Bureau Objective 1.2 Risk Considerations:** A lack of political will to enact meaningful reforms could hamper efforts to counter corruption and impunity. When political elites engage in corruption, they do not pursue democratic and transparent policies to constrain or dismantle the structures that enable their impunity. We will mitigate this risk by working with a wide variety of partners, including diverse political actors, civil society organizations, and the private sector. We will seek to hold corrupt actors accountable through visa restrictions and sanctions, public reporting, and other mechanisms.

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**Bureau Objective 1.3:** Strengthen judicial systems and the equitable application of the rule of law

- **Bureau Objective 1.3 Justification and Linkages:** Improving structures and institutions that secure the rule of law and ensure the equal application of the law can reduce pervasive corruption and irregular migration and increase citizen security and confidence in democratic governance. The Department of State and USAID will work to strengthen legal and judicial institutions to ensure they can build independent, equitable, and accessible justice systems. We will build the capacity of criminal justice actors and institutions, including civilian law enforcement, to respect human rights and respond to the needs of underserved and underrepresented communities, including women, indigenous groups, and other marginalized groups. Our efforts will strengthen the technical skills of justice sector and civil society actors to help build a more transparent and effective prosecutorial system through better application of evidence and case management. Integrated approaches to complex issues such as gender-based violence and youth in conflict with the law will help reduce impunity and improve protection of those at most risk for abuse. This objective contributes to JSP Objective 3.4 on managing migration through addressing root causes of irregular migration collaboratively with our partners.
- **Bureau Objective 1.3 Risk Considerations:** A risk to efforts to strengthen the judicial system involves a lack of sustainable engagement. Judicial personnel turnover, gradual loss of institutional memory on training and skills, lack of political will and a culture of lawfulness, and backsliding on reforms could result in a loss of momentum to strengthen judicial systems. We will mitigate this risk through continued monitoring and engagement with courts that have already received training, working with relevant actors to train and retrain, and continued monitoring and engagement on implementation of reforms to prevent backsliding on progress.

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**Bureau Goal 2: An Inclusive Hemisphere**

- **Bureau Goal 2 Description:** The Western Hemisphere suffers from high levels of social exclusion and marginalization of racial and ethnic minorities, women and girls, and LGBTQI+ persons. Public institutions face a crisis in confidence in their capacity to deliver services equitably and with dignity to all citizens. Disparities in access to justice, health, education, and employment opportunities stymie economic growth and hinder the ability of individuals to contribute to their full potential in their communities. Members of racial, ethnic, and religious minority groups, LGBTQI+ persons, migrants, refugees, women and girls, and persons with disabilities often face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, making them more vulnerable to insecurity when crises arise. We will support our partners in advancing inclusive, citizen-centered democratic governance and respect for human rights throughout the Western Hemisphere. The full participation and inclusion of all individuals contributes to the spread of well-functioning democracies, citizen well-being, and advances U.S. influence, prosperity, and security.

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**Bureau Objective 2.1:** Promote social inclusion and respect for the human dignity and rights of all persons, especially members of marginalized and underserved communities, including African-Descendant, Indigenous, LGBTQI+ persons, persons with disabilities, women, and girls, through diplomatic engagement and public diplomacy

- **Bureau Objective 2.1 Justification and Linkages:** Advancing respect for diversity and protecting the human rights of members of marginalized communities remains core to our work to improve security, strengthen democratic governance, and promote inclusive economic growth in the region. In every country of the region, marginalized groups confront barriers preventing them from participating in political, economic, and social life. Through diplomatic engagement, foreign assistance, and public diplomacy, the Department of State and USAID will work with partner governments, civil society, and the private sector to promote a more inclusive, secure, prosperous, and democratic hemisphere, especially for marginalized communities. The WHA/LAC goal to promote an inclusive hemisphere links to JSP Objective 3.2 on equity and inclusion and advancing equity, accessibility, and rights for all.
- **Bureau Objective 2.1 Risk Considerations:** The failure of governments to deliver for their people has disproportionately affected the Hemisphere's marginalized and underserved communities, including women, African Descendants, Indigenous peoples, LGBTQI+ persons, and persons with disabilities, who have suffered from longstanding, often intersecting forms of discrimination and social exclusion. Increasingly this has led to civil unrest and increased migration. We will engage partner governments to promote social inclusion and support our partner nations' efforts to deliver for their citizens, to strengthen democracy and economic development, to advance U.S. interests, and to ensure the human dignity of all persons.

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**Bureau Objective 2.2:** Advance race and gender equity

- **Bureau Objective 2.2 Justification and Linkages:** The Western Hemisphere suffers from high levels of social exclusion and marginalization of racial and ethnic minorities and women and girls. People of African descent in Latin America and the Caribbean comprise one-third of the population, or approximately 200 million people, yet make up nearly 50 percent of its poor. Indigenous peoples represent between 47 and 71 million persons, yet often suffer from political, economic, and social marginalization, and violence affects them disproportionately. High levels of gender-based violence in the region hinder the ability of individuals to participate in society and contribute to their families and communities. People with disabilities as well as Indigenous, African-Descendant, lesbian, and transgender women and girls often face multiple forms of discrimination, making them even more at risk when conflicts arise. The WHA/LAC goal to promote an inclusive hemisphere links to JSP Objective 3.2 on advancing equity, accessibility, and rights for all. This objective also links to Executive Order 13985 on Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities through the Federal Government and Executive Order 14020 on the Establishment of the White House Gender Policy Council. This objective also aims to involve women and racial and ethnic minorities in the peacebuilding process, linking to JSP Objective 1.4 on peace and security.
- **Bureau Objective 2.2 Risk Considerations:** Lack of racial and gender equity creates both human rights and national security risks and endangers lives and livelihoods. Economic, political, and social equity, particularly for women and racial and ethnic minorities, serves to stimulate economic growth, builds resilience in conflict-prone societies, and leads to lasting stability. The Department of State and USAID will partner with civil society and partner nations to increase political engagement and representation and advance reforms that lead to a safer environment with more opportunities for women and girls in all their diversity and racial and ethnic minorities.

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**Bureau Goal 3: A Secure Hemisphere**

- **Bureau Goal 3 Description:** We work through strong partnerships to fight transnational criminal organizations (TCOs) that threaten borders by moving contraband, trafficking in persons, and engaging in illicit finance and money laundering. TCOs in the Western Hemisphere pose an immediate security threat to the United States. Illegal drugs trafficked by these groups, including fentanyl, heroin, and cocaine, killed over 93,000 U.S. citizens in 2020. Gangs engage in violence, extortion, and corruption that threaten citizen security, undermine democratic governance, and strangle economic opportunity. TCOs and gangs threaten lives and livelihoods in communities across the Americas and act as drivers of irregular migration. To address these challenges, we catalyze regional efforts to bolster the rule of law and confront transnational crime and gang activity through strong diplomatic engagement. We support local efforts to professionalize judicial institutions, police, and security forces, to strengthen communities to resist violence and the lure of irregular migration, and to counter competitors and illiberal actors who undermine our collective security.

**Bureau Objective 3.1:** Protect U.S. citizens, ensure secure borders, promote safe, humane, and orderly immigration and asylum systems, enhance protections for refugees and displaced persons, and promote stability in areas impacted by migration

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- **Bureau Objective 3.1 Justification and Linkages:** The Root Causes Strategy and Collaborative Migration Management Strategy, directed by the President in Executive Order 14010, lays out a four-pronged comprehensive approach that includes addressing the root causes of irregular migration, collaboratively managing migration in the region, expanding lawful pathways for protection and opportunity in the United States, and restoring and enhancing asylum processing at the U.S. Southwest border. We will cooperate with regional partners in their efforts to expand legal pathways for migration, strengthen asylum systems, and provide humanitarian assistance and resources for the socio-economic integration into receptor communities of a large influx of migrants in the region, notably from Venezuela. Security programs in Central America, Mexico, and the Caribbean will help disrupt transnational criminal organizations, strengthen rule of law institutions, and improve our shared border security to prevent illicit trafficking. This objective contributes to JSP Objective 3.4 on managing migration through addressing root causes of irregular migration collaboratively with our partners, promoting a safe, humane, and orderly immigration and asylum system, and enhancing protections for refugees and displaced persons. This objective also links to Objective 1.3 of the JSP on humanitarian leadership.
- **Bureau Objective 3.1 Risk Considerations:** Risks to a successful reduction in irregular migration include partner governments' lack of capacity to provide protection and resettlement to migrants, lack of political will to return migrants without protection claims or other legal bases to remain in the United States to their home countries, and public misperception that the United States does not follow through with its own commitments. We can address these risks by assisting partner nations with capacity-building training and equipment, engaging diplomatically to build political will for these policies and efforts, and communicating directly to the public to enhance understanding of the issues and build support for proposed solutions. We will continue to engage with nations throughout the region to ensure that all countries have in place a process for timely acceptance of their nationals subject to final orders of removal from the United States.

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**Bureau Objective 3.2:** Build safe communities through violence prevention and intervention, including a focus on gender-based violence

- **Bureau Objective 3.2 Justification and Linkages:** High rates of crime and violence in the Western Hemisphere threaten democratic stability, exacerbate social inequality, inhibit sustainable economic growth, and drive irregular migration. Drivers of this violence include powerful TCOs; rampant impunity; weak security and justice institutions; income inequality; and limited educational, social, and economic opportunities for youth. Young people primarily perpetrate crime and violence and suffer as victims. Women and girls, LGBTQI+ persons, ethnic minorities, and underserved communities tend to experience heightened levels of violence with little protection or access to justice. To prevent crime and violence, we will partner with key institutions in high-violence countries – including judiciaries, police, youth ministries, education ministries, civil society organizations, and municipal and community leaders – to build their capacity. We will work within at-risk communities to address the factors that make youth more likely to become involved in crime and violence, as well as to target specific types of violence, like sexual and gender-based violence, with tailored interventions. Our physical security and stockpile management (PSSM) programs professionalize security forces and prevent illicit diversions of weapons and ammunition to decrease armed violence. This objective contributes to JSP Objective 3.4 on managing migration through addressing root causes of irregular migration collaboratively with our partners.
- **Bureau Objective 3.2 Risk Considerations:** Major risks that threaten violence prevention and intervention include: low institutional capacity; a lack of government resources; endemic corruption; few constructive economic opportunities for at-risk youth; and the historical political, economic, and social marginalization of vulnerable population groups, including women and girls in all their diversity. Engagement to mitigate this risk and build political will include collaboration with host government and community partners at all levels to increase opportunities for marginalized populations and for youth.

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**Bureau Objective 3.3:** Strengthen host country resilience to authoritarian foreign influence

- **Bureau Objective 3.3 Justification and Linkages:** We remain intent on strengthening the Western Hemisphere as a coalition of resilient democracies that champions our shared values. We work with allies and partners, with a sustained commitment in our bilateral and multilateral relationships. The People's Republic of China (PRC) and other foreign actors have increased their presence in the Western Hemisphere through infrastructure and other investment, influence in cultural and academic spaces, and other means. We do not oppose engagement and investment from strategic competitors throughout the region. However, when foreign government investments lack high-standards, transparency, and competitiveness, it undermines the interests of both the United States and our partners. A proliferation of disinformation and propaganda from authoritarian regimes and a lack of transparency threaten to undermine democratic institutions and regional security. As our world becomes more technologically connected, threats from malign foreign actors arrive online and within networks. This objective addresses JSP Objective 2.3 on technological leadership and U.S. competitiveness.
- **Bureau Objective 3.3 Risk Considerations:** The hemisphere faces the longstanding challenges of economic inequality, corruption, human rights abuses, and weak democratic institutions. Exacerbated by the pandemic, these challenges render the region more susceptible to influence from illiberal foreign actors. Continued U.S. support and engagement to promote rule of law, transparency, democracy, and human rights helps to counter this risk.

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**Bureau Objective 3.4:** Counter transnational criminal organizations and illicit networks

- **Bureau Objective 3.4 Justification and Linkages:** We confront the threat of TCOs and illicit networks by enhancing the political will and capacity of partner governments to address the permissive environment that allows these groups to operate. Our engagement builds stronger institutions, promotes judicial reform, strengthens law enforcement to develop skills ranging from basic policing to complex cybercrime and money laundering investigation and anti-corruption efforts. Such engagement also improves economic development and builds community resilience. Principal partnerships include the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative, the Central America Regional Security Initiative, the Root Causes Strategy, the U.S.-Mexico Bicentennial Framework for Security, Public Health, and Safe Communities, and our historic relationship with Colombia. Given the deadly consequences of the drug trade on the United States and its role in sustaining transnational crime, our strategies place special emphasis on counternarcotics. Our approach remains to reduce the supply and production of illicit synthetic opioids, heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine, and their precursors, and to couple eradication and interdiction with alternative development programs. U.S. programs in Latin America and the Caribbean seek to disrupt illicit markets along the entire criminal supply chain, including wildlife trafficking and illegal logging and mining. This objective contributes to JSP Objective 3.4 on managing migration through addressing root causes of irregular migration collaboratively with our partners.
- **Bureau Objective 3.4 Risk Considerations:** Nonexistent or weak state presence in some areas remains a risk that could open ungoverned space for criminal networks to take root. To bolster less capable states, we must leverage the willingness and ability of partners such as Colombia and Mexico to lead regional and sub-regional operations and capacity building. TCOs adapt to exploit corruption and weak governance in the Hemisphere. Addressing the underlying causes of instability as an enabling factor of transnational crime will prevent TCOs from moving into new areas and will allow partners to respond to changing threats.

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**Bureau Goal 4: A Prosperous Hemisphere**

- **Bureau Goal 4 Description:** We will promote equitable and inclusive economies. By limiting economic informality and promoting transparent, market-oriented business practices to create a fair playing field for U.S. businesses, we will foster investment and innovation and ensure marginalized populations benefit from economic growth. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, economies in the region suffered from some of the highest levels of inequality in the world. COVID-19 especially affected marginalized and underserved communities and contributed to rising inequity and levels of poverty. More equitable economies that encourage private investment, trade, formal employment opportunities with rights and benefits, quality educational opportunities for all citizens, and access to healthcare will help restore trust that democratic institutions can deliver better livelihoods and will address the long-term economic causes of irregular migration. The COVID-19 pandemic squeezed public resources, tempting governments to accept less sustainable and lower-standard finance, credit, or infrastructure development offers from strategic competitors. We will promote high-standard, transparent, competitive, sustainable, and equitable investment that follows market practices and promotes real economic growth.

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**Bureau Objective 4.1:** Foster fair trade and investment and a more economically competitive region

- **Bureau Objective 4.1 Justification and Linkages:** We will promote American prosperity by advancing bilateral and multilateral trade relationships to improve market access for U.S. goods and services, secure commercial opportunities, and foster investment and innovation that contribute to equitable job creation. We will work to support U.S. businesses by modernizing trade arrangements to better promote a fair playing field, protect labor rights, address climate change, strengthen transparent regulatory development, and reinforce robust anti-corruption policies. We will coordinate and focus our advocacy, development finance tools, and trade missions on strategic industries. Initiatives like Build Back Better World (B3W) will provide opportunities to improve transparency in procurement procedures while also improving the infrastructure needed by business. We will help governments improve tax collection to raise revenues critical for supporting higher levels of public and private investment. Improved connectivity will introduce electronic government and business processes that will increase efficiency and reduce corruption. This objective links to JSP Objective 2.1 on economic governance to promote a global economy that creates opportunities for all Americans. It also addresses JSP Objective 2.3 on technological leadership and U.S. competitiveness.
- **Bureau Objective 4.1 Risk Considerations:** In the attempt to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, countries may choose to institute protective trade measures, attempting to accelerate short-term growth. Governments may struggle to raise tax revenues to provide essential public goods and higher sovereign debt levels increase the risk of economic crises. Strategic competitors with financial resources may provide short-term access to financing that weakens the competitiveness of U.S. companies and damages long-term prospects for fair and equitable economic growth. Other risks include local government resistance and lack of resources for trade facilitation improvements. We will mitigate these risks by championing high-standards, transparency, competitiveness, and sustainability in business practices, trade, and investment.

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**Bureau Objective 4.2:** Improve the climate for U.S. businesses

- **Bureau Objective 4.2 Justification and Linkages:** We will encourage the region to adhere to more transparent business norms and bidding practices to stem corruption and create more opportunities for U.S. businesses. We will promote engagement between governments and the private sector to increase transparency and implement business-friendly, job-creating policies. A more favorable business-enabling environment for local businesses, along with an educated and healthy workforce, will help to address high informality, broaden economic opportunity, and expand potential markets for U.S. businesses. This objective links to JSP Objective 2.1 on economic governance to promote a global economy that creates opportunities for all Americans. It also addresses JSP Objective 3.5 by improving livelihood services, especially for women, youth, and marginalized groups.
- **Bureau Objective 4.2 Risk Considerations:** Governments may accelerate use of non-competitive contracting and non-transparent regulatory processes in efforts to recover from the pandemic. Appetite for anti-corruption measures may weaken in the face of demand for short-term growth, damaging the prospects of U.S. businesses and products. We will mitigate this risk by emphasizing policies and programming that address economic growth in an equitable, transparent, and effective way.

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**Bureau Objective 4.3:** Support inclusive and sustainable economic growth

- **Bureau Objective 4.3 Justification and Linkages:** Inclusive economic development provides the fundamental sense of progress underpinning the hopes of the people of the Western Hemisphere for a better future. The United States' longstanding commitment to a better future for all defines a key feature of our role in the region. Helping the region achieve faster and more inclusive economic development will validate this role, help resolve many societal ills, and deliver for the American people the benefit of having prosperous, peaceful neighbors. Prior to COVID-19, the region demonstrated weak growth, severe inequality, and high levels of economic informality. The pandemic resulted in a historic economic downturn, which disproportionately impacted marginalized groups, exacerbating poverty, inequality, and exclusion. As the region looks to recover, we will promote entrepreneurship, small and medium enterprise (SME) development, women's economic empowerment through education, and economic opportunity for vulnerable and marginalized populations by rebuilding their skills for better employment opportunities. We will promote formal employment opportunities and aim to catalyze innovation and partnership by identifying new ways to engage with the private sector, philanthropic actors, academic institutions, and partner country governments. We will provide support to sustainable development in agriculture, water, energy, and affordable healthcare, in the face of risks like climate change, and emphasize inclusion of traditionally underserved, marginalized, and vulnerable communities. This objective links to JSP Objective 2.2 on inclusive and sustainable growth and opportunity for communities around the globe.

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- **Bureau Objective 4.3 Risk Considerations:** Hopelessness, strife, and instability threaten to take root where countries see prolonged economic contractions or where a privileged few capture benefits from economic growth. Latin America and the Caribbean exhibit greater income inequality than any other region in the world, and the pandemic widened the gap. Corruption, tax evasion, and monopolistic practices of entrenched elites could stymie efforts to promote broader access to the benefits of growth for historically excluded groups. A focus on economic recovery after the pandemic could deprioritize inclusive growth if policymakers do not intentionally address inclusion in recovery efforts. By promoting economic opportunity for women and marginalized groups, we can help them realize their potential, while boosting economic growth. Diplomatic engagement and technical assistance can help overcome risks related to a lack of willingness in partner countries to address challenges to inclusion. Furthermore, programming across other objectives will help address additional key risks that can hamper economic inclusion, such as shocks related to climate change or future health crises.

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**Bureau Objective 4.4:** Strengthen health and education systems and improve inclusive access

- **Bureau Objective 4.4 Justification and Linkages:** The disproportionate impact that COVID-19 wrought on the Americas presages the potential impact of future health threats if our partners do not strengthen health system resilience and regional health security. COVID-19 has exacerbated inequities, increasing the risks for marginalized communities. COVID-19 has revealed critical weaknesses and gaps in health and education systems throughout the region that severely limit the ability of countries to detect, plan for, and mitigate health shocks and respond with flexible learning modalities. Primary and secondary impacts of the pandemic, coupled with ongoing political and economic instability and health systems already overburdened by massive migration flows, have driven back many of the health and education gains achieved in the past twenty years, most notably in childhood immunization and primary school enrollment. Climate risk assessments indicate serious risks for a rise in infectious diseases in the Hemisphere. In this context, we will equip countries with a greater capacity for reducing the risk and impact of major endemic, emerging, and re-emerging infectious disease threats and outbreaks, including the promotion of risk assessment and risk mitigation, more robust facility and community-based surveillance programs, and support for multi-sectoral outbreak response. We will strengthen regional health system capacity to deliver universal health coverage by extending equitable and quality health services and social health protection for all. Efforts to strengthen health systems will leverage and build on other priorities, such as climate change adaptation and inclusive governance to strengthen the broader resilience of the region. In education, USAID programs will build resilience through flexible learning modalities (including hybrid and remote learning options) as well as increase coverage for disadvantaged communities. Strengthening health systems links to Objective 1.1 of the JSP. This objective also addresses JSP Objective 3.5 by improving health and education services, especially for women, youth, and marginalized groups.

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- **Bureau Objective 4.4 Risk Considerations:** Recovery from COVID-19 will likely require new approaches to address the backsliding in health and education statuses, including re-establishment of trust in both the public health and education systems. The pressures of economic recovery may mean shrinking of national health and education budgets due to other priorities. Finally, another pandemic or other shocks may follow on the heels of COVID-19. In order to mitigate those risks, the Department of State and USAID will strengthen and empower communities to become more engaged in both health and education systems; rebuild and foster accountability mechanisms for civil society; promote multisectoral advocacy channels for mobilizing continued domestic resources for health and education; and rapidly improve regional health security through government partnerships and the provision of targeted technical assistance to advance country capacity across the continuum of prevention, detection, and response. Programming in other sectors, such as inclusive economic development, will alleviate some of the pressures on national budgets and allow countries to dedicate appropriate resources to health system strengthening. Piloting conditional cash transfer programs in certain countries, including northern Central America, will help address demand in both sectors.

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**Bureau Goal 5: A Climate-Resilient Hemisphere**

- **Bureau Goal 5 Description:** Through collaborative planning and action with local and regional partners, the Department of State and USAID will support the protection of critical biodiversity within the region as well as promote climate change mitigation and adaptation initiatives. With its tropical forests and biodiversity, the region presents an unrivaled opportunity to pursue natural climate solutions in the global fight to limit warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius. We will help countries throughout the region reduce greenhouse gas emissions by promoting better agricultural practices, clean energy and energy efficiency, and by reducing deforestation and carbon sink loss. We will support the enhancement of carbon sinks through reforestation and ecosystem restoration activities, which can also provide additional economic support to communities through intensified production approaches and the sale of carbon credits in local and global markets. Because countries cannot avoid some effects of climate change, such as extreme weather events, we also will help ready systems and communities to prepare for and adapt to extreme events. These preparations will help to ensure food security, supply chain resiliency, and energy sector resilience, among others, and the protection and enhancement of natural ecosystems will help to reduce the impacts of such events.

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**Bureau Objective 5.1:** Promote a clean, resilient, and secure energy future

- **Bureau Objective 5.1 Justification and Linkages:** The Administration prioritizes climate change globally and in its bilateral relationships in the region. Promoting clean, non-hydropower, renewable energy will help Western Hemisphere economies transition from hydrocarbon-based and less reliable hydropower energy sources and will support the Administration's goal of reducing carbon emissions. Given the scale and urgency of this effort, many smaller nations lack the resources to achieve substantial renewable energy access alone and must rely on regional cooperation. Countries in the Western Hemisphere must have secure access to the raw materials needed to transition to renewable-based energy systems successfully and economically. Several challenges in the region have placed stress on local energy systems and have highlighted the need for more sustainable energy production. Approximately 65 percent of the electricity generation in the region comes from hydroelectric dams, but large rainfall variations due to climate change threaten the water volumes needed to operate the dams at planned capacity. Countries such as Colombia and Brazil increasingly turn to "non-conventional renewables" (NCRE), such as solar and wind power, without relying on costly, imported fossil fuels. In addition, the region's high electricity prices provide a strong incentive to invest in cost-effective renewable resources such as wind and solar, as well as in energy efficiency. Extreme weather events have demonstrated the advantages of having more decentralized, solar and wind-powered generation points (micro-grids), to allow for quicker recovery from hurricane or flood damage to power lines or generation plants. Renewable energy technologies rely on strategic minerals, such as lithium. Countries in the Western Hemisphere must have secure access to the raw materials needed to transition to renewable-based energy systems successfully and economically. The WHA/LAC goal to create a climate-resilient hemisphere links to Objective 1.2 of the JSP.

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- **Bureau Objective 5.1 Risk Considerations:** Governments may lack the economic resources and technical knowhow to transition to renewable energy. Regional rivalries could derail closer collaboration and strategic competitors' demand may threaten raw material access, particularly in cash strapped counties in need of external investment. Throughout the region, the Department of State and USAID will focus on investments in modern, resilient energy sectors through three key lines of action. The first line of work will focus on updating energy laws, regulations, and planning processes, to open energy markets to the benefits of more modern, lower-cost power generation, including through foreign investment. A second, complementary line of action will emphasize strengthening utilities' ability to integrate renewable energy systems while maintaining cost-reflective tariffs, lowering commercial and technical losses, and extending and improving distribution systems. Thirdly, we will work to facilitate financing flows and business development support that combine with modern policy and regulatory approaches to encourage private investment in partner country power sectors.

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**Bureau Objective 5.2:** Build resilience to climate change and ensure food and water security

- **Bureau Objective 5.2 Justification and Linkages:** Climate-change related events in the Western Hemisphere, such as rapid glacial melt, rising temperatures and sea levels, variable and erratic rainfall, and the increasing frequency and severity of extreme weather events, forest fires, and droughts have drastically increased the vulnerability of people, places, and livelihoods. These events result in long and short-term food and water scarcity, air pollution, loss of livelihoods and homes, and energy blackouts. Resilience programs will seek creative ways to encourage governments and civil societies to develop more effective natural resource policies and empower local communities and Indigenous groups to manage and maintain control over their natural resources. We will support countries in the Caribbean to improve energy efficiency and the use of renewables to help lower the region's high reliance on imported oil. Programs will support the acquisition of weather and climate data to improve disaster risk planning and early warning systems. Food security programming will increase household income and improve nutrition through interventions such as linking producers to markets, helping producers diversify income sources, and promoting sustainable production techniques. Taken together, this assistance will help the region reduce vulnerability to climate change and help ensure its long-term stability and continued, sustainable economic growth. The WHA/LAC goal to create a climate-resilient hemisphere links to Objective 1.2 of the JSP. This objective also addresses JSP Objective 2.4 on strengthening resilience to systemic shocks and JSP Objective 3.5 by improving food and water security, especially for women, youth, and marginalized groups.
- **Bureau Objective 5.2 Risk Considerations:** Climate change-related extreme weather events and weather patterns produce often unforeseen immediate external shocks that hit vulnerable populations hardest, causing humanitarian crises and contributing to instability and irregular migration. We will work to address disaster risks through targeted planning and early warning systems while simultaneously increasing capacity for better long-term resilience against climate change.

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**Bureau Objective 5.3:** Promote natural climate solutions

- **Bureau Objective 5.3 Justification and Linkages:** Throughout the Latin America and Caribbean region, agriculture, forestry, and other land use (AFOLU) accounts for approximately 40 percent of net greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Latin America and the Caribbean contain nearly half of the world's tropical forests and therefore host a significant amount of globally stored carbon. Reducing deforestation and improving land management practices, therefore, present the largest opportunities to reduce emissions from the sector. Throughout the region, the Department of State and USAID's work will focus on attracting investments in actions that prevent the destruction of valuable carbon sinks and the resulting emission of additional greenhouse gases. We will encourage employment of increased public and private financing to provide economic benefits to local communities and reduce or eliminate global environmental externalities, including through carbon markets, performance-based payments, sustainably produced commodities, and by reducing barriers to investment in low-emissions economic development. The WHA/LAC goal to create a climate-resilient hemisphere links to Objective 1.2 of the JSP.
- **Bureau Objective 5.3 Risk Considerations:** Nations may lack the fiscal resources, expertise, and/or political will to implement adaptation and resilience strategies, especially when deforestation or land use affects historically marginalized and vulnerable groups. The Department of State and USAID will work to strengthen the capacity, coordination, and local knowledge of natural climate solutions, working with relevant institutions, local communities, Indigenous Peoples, and vulnerable, underserved, and underrepresented communities, for the effective planning, policy development, and implementation of natural climate solutions. This will ensure not only proper management practices but also equitable access to benefits and collective action across all stakeholders for better economic resilience in the region.

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**Bureau Objective 5.4:** Conserve biodiversity and protect critical ecosystems in the Hemisphere

- **Bureau Objective 5.4 Justification and Linkages:** Deforestation, biodiversity loss, and impacts from climate change continue in the region, exacerbated by expansion of agricultural and livestock production, illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, population growth, and income loss, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. Intact and functional ecosystems support human development as we face increased landslides, hurricane damage, fishery collapse, flooding, and many other intensified effects of climate change. At the same time, climate change threatens critical ecosystems throughout the region, including the Amazonian and Central American forests, mangroves, and Caribbean coral reefs. We will encourage countries to increase efforts to conserve globally important terrestrial and aquatic biological resources, integrate biodiversity conservation concepts into national development plans, and promote sustainable natural resource planning. We will encourage stakeholders to conserve biodiversity through the reduction of net greenhouse gas emissions from the forest and land-use sector and build institutional and governance capacity at the national and sub-national level to manage forests' resources sustainably, working toward regional biodiversity conservation. The WHA/LAC goal to create a climate-resilient hemisphere links to Objective 1.2 of the JSP. This objective addresses JSP Objective 2.4 on strengthening resilience to systemic shocks through protection of biologically significant areas.

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- **Bureau Objective 5.4 Risk Considerations:** Weak rule of law could hamper efforts to conserve natural resources. Some nations may lack the fiscal resources, expertise, and/or political will to enforce more stringent natural resource conservation measures. In addition, assailants assassinate environmental defenders in Latin America at a rate higher than anywhere else in the world, leaving many ecosystems to the fate of illegal and detrimental extractive practices. To mitigate these risks, State and USAID will encourage partner countries in the region to accelerate legal protection and enforcement for biologically important lands and waters and will engage Indigenous and marginalized communities in equitable dialogues regarding the conservation of their lands.

#### **Bureau Goal 6: A Hemisphere Receptive to U.S. Leadership and Values**

- **Bureau Goal 6 Description:** The Western Hemisphere shares history, language, and culture and enjoys a rich web of person-to-person and city-to-city ties. Reinforcing these networks among diverse multi-sectoral partners, including civil society organizations, diaspora communities, educational institutions, and the private sector will shore up support for U.S. values and build a positive, nuanced understanding of U.S. policies. We will lead by the power of our example on diversity, equity, and inclusion, seeking to connect with and empower youth, African Descendants, Indigenous Peoples, women and girls, LGBTQI+ persons, persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable and marginalized communities. We will promote U.S. priorities with our partners in the region to build support for U.S. positions in multilateral forums, especially the United Nations and the Organization of American States. We will utilize U.S. leadership of the Summit of the Americas process to advance our goals and bring together governments, the private sector, and civil society to enact lasting advancements toward more democratic, equitable, prosperous, secure, and climate-resilient societies.

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**Bureau Objective 6.1:** Engage publics and influence opinion to build support for American values

- **Bureau Objective 6.1 Justification and Linkages:** We will use traditional and emerging tools of public diplomacy to promote diverse U.S. policies, values, and approaches to create an environment receptive to U.S. engagement. These tools include English language learning, regional education partnerships, youth engagement, exchange program alumni mobilization, and the promotion of entrepreneurship. Direct engagement through traditional and social media and inclusive exchanges advance strategic policy priorities, create broad-based mutual curiosity, and promote social inclusion. Inviting domestic-based audiences into our engagement on issues that affect our hemisphere expands understanding and support for U.S. priorities. We will monitor and evaluate effectiveness through direct reporting and evidence-based analysis of inclusive engagement, reactions, and media penetration on our key themes. The WHA/LAC goal to promote a hemisphere receptive to U.S. leadership and values links to JSP Objective 1.5.
- **Bureau Objective 6.1 Risk Considerations:** Misinformation, disinformation, misperceptions of credibility, and anger over U.S. domestic policies, particularly regarding immigration and racial justice, constrain our influence on foreign audiences and dampen the impact of our programs. If we fail to employ outreach inclusively, we risk further marginalizing communities and directly countering the credibility and progress we seek to obtain and model. We counter these risks by ensuring inclusivity in each outreach effort, by challenging disinformation, and by promoting media literacy and the inherent strength of democracy. We will highlight the mutual benefits of balanced engagement between neighbors and hemispheric partners.

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**Bureau Objective 6.2:** Build support for U.S. positions and leadership in multilateral and regional institutions

- **Bureau Objective 6.2 Justification and Linkages:** From the 1948 American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man to the 2001 Inter-American Democratic Charter, the founding documents of the Inter-American System resonate with U.S. principles, including a bedrock commitment to political liberty. We will rally the Hemisphere around those principles where countries do not uphold them, such as in Nicaragua, Venezuela, and Cuba, and achieve productive outcomes in multilateral forums that advance U.S. goals. We will engage regional institutions such as the OAS and CARICOM to build support for U.S. priorities such as promoting democracy, human rights, security, and sustainable development, and to strengthen the institutions themselves by encouraging like-minded states to share the financial burdens and take leadership roles. Within the United Nations organizations and bodies, we will continue to seek collaboration with like-minded WHA countries. We can use the Summit of the Americas and its process to secure the highest-level commitments to support U.S. priorities, as exemplified in April 2018 with the Lima Commitment. We will also work with our partners and within multilateral institutions to raise awareness about cyber security and establish capacities and best practices to keep our technology infrastructure and Internet open, interoperable, secure, and reliable. The WHA/LAC goal to promote a hemisphere receptive to U.S. leadership and values links to JSP Objective 1.5. This objective also furthers JSP Objective 2.3 on technological leadership and U.S. competitiveness.

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- **Bureau Objective 6.2 Risk Considerations:** Inconsistent coordination between capitals and their representatives in multilateral organizations could affect the efficacy of our attempts to communicate our position. We will address this by coordinating our messaging overseas from different agencies and in international organizations so that our partners hear the same U.S. priorities from a single voice. The United States does not participate as a member state nor observer of CARICOM and that may limit engagement. Both coordination with CARICOM as a single entity and bilateral engagement with member countries will help to maintain our influence.

**Bureau Objective 6.3:** Expand connections between U.S. and foreign institutions, organizations, businesses, and people, leveraging spheres of influence to achieve foreign policy goals

- **Bureau Objective 6.3 Justification and Linkages:** We will deepen links between educational institutions, civil society organizations, the private sector, and diaspora communities and amplify our economic and strategic influence in the hemisphere to advance our foreign policy goals. By leveraging programs such as the Young Leaders in the Americas (YLAI), the Academy for Women Entrepreneurs (AWE), the Fulbright programs, and the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP), as well as their affiliate networks, we will strengthen the density and complexity of the ties between U.S. and regional entrepreneurs while sharing American business models and values. We will expand linkages between U.S. and regional institutions of technical and higher learning through the public-private partnership model exemplified by the 100,000 Strong in the Americas Initiative. New approaches, such as virtual exchanges, will help us reach geographic areas that hinder in-person engagement. The WHA/LAC goal to promote a hemisphere receptive to U.S. leadership and values links to JSP Objective 1.5.

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- **Bureau Objective 6.3 Risk Considerations:** Institutional weaknesses, including corruption, social exclusion, lack of appropriate regulation, and an inability to provide security can dissuade U.S. organizations from engaging in exchanges in parts of Latin America and the Caribbean. This situation opens spaces for strategic competitors to expand their economic and cultural engagement in the region. Continued emphasis on new programs and the historical ties between host country and U.S. institutions will reinforce U.S. Partnership with the region. Additionally, promoting rule of law, transparency, and inclusive democracy help counter this risk.

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#### 4. Bureau Cross-Cutting Management Objective

**Bureau Cross-Cutting Management Objective 7.1:** Equip a diverse, inclusive, and dynamic workforce with modern and secure tools and infrastructure to support resilience and ingenuity in operations

- **Bureau Cross-Cutting Management Objective 7.1 Justification and Linkages:** To achieve the diplomatic and foreign assistance goals of the JRS, we dedicate our effort to the cross-cutting management objective of building a diverse, inclusive, and dynamic workforce equipped with secure tools and modernized infrastructure. Within an ever-changing budget environment, WHA and LAC must strengthen its workforce and provide new infrastructure that will continue to support expanding programs and the growing numbers of both domestic and overseas staff. Successful execution of WHA and LAC policy priorities and programs requires a strong management platform, augmented by new infrastructure and secure tools that will create a safe and secure environment. WHA and LAC will pursue the maintenance and modernization of secure diplomatic facilities; pursue staff development and training opportunities; modernize infrastructure and technology for efficient operations; promote diverse and inclusive workforces; and ensure the effective and efficient delivery of management support and programmatic services. The WHA/LAC cross-cutting management objective addresses JSP Objectives 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3.
- **Bureau Cross-Cutting Management Objective 7.1 Risk Considerations:** The COVID-19 pandemic, political instability, and other external shocks to operations present risks that we will mitigate through strong and agile platforms, creative and inclusive problem solving, and ensuring that workplace solutions benefit personnel inclusively.

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