MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

DEAR FRIENDS,

Thank you for joining us at the second annual Leadership for the Americas Awards Gala. As an organization founded and inspired by leaders from Latin America, the Caribbean, Canada, and the United States, we gather here this evening to celebrate and recognize outstanding leadership contributions in our hemisphere.

Our remarkable honorees, together with the Dialogue’s Board of Directors and membership in attendance tonight, represent our longstanding commitment to democratic governance, prosperity, and social equity.

The selection of this year’s awardees and speakers underscores how critical it is for global leaders from different sectors and diverse perspectives to come together to address hemispheric challenges that demand fresh ideas and collaborative approaches.

All of you help inform and move forward our agenda and programs in areas that cut across issues fundamental for the future of the Americas: education policies and social reform; energy, natural resources, and climate change; migration and development; rule of law; and the region’s dynamic relationship with the rest of the world, including Asia, Europe, and Africa.

We could not do this work without your generous and ongoing financial support for which we are tremendously grateful. We will continue to work together with you to advance our mission to help make relations between the nations of Latin America and the Caribbean, the United States, Canada and the rest of the world more constructive and mutually beneficial.

We are particularly enthusiastic about tackling such an exciting agenda from our brand new headquarters in Washington, as well as from our new office in Guatemala – together with all of you, our members and friends, representing the entire Americas.

Thank you again and enjoy the evening!

Michael Shifter
President
DEAR FRIENDS,

We are delighted and honored to welcome you to this special celebration of the Inter-American Dialogue’s second annual Leadership for the Americas Awards Gala.

This is a time of transition for the Dialogue – and a critical moment in hemispheric affairs. It is fitting, as we open the next chapter in our history with the launch of our new Washington headquarters, that we come together to recognize leaders who embody the Dialogue’s core values and who have effectively fostered the central aims that make up our mission – democratic governance, economic prosperity and social equity in the Americas.

We are particularly grateful to tonight’s remarkable honorees. To our honored guests, CAF President Enrique García; BMW Group Chief Executive for the Americas Ludwig Willisch; pediatric neurologist Dr. Vanessa Van Der Linden Mota of Recife, Brazil; US Under Secretary of State Thomas Shannon; and our emcee, Maria Elena Salinas of Univision, we thank you for being here.

We also wish to express our heartfelt appreciation to the generous business and philanthropic sponsors of this evening’s gala celebration, and the many of you who, by being here tonight, are showing support for our work and are helping strengthen the financial foundation for the Dialogue’s continued success.

Members of the Dialogue’s Gala Committee, named later in this program, deserve special recognition for their extraordinary efforts to make tonight’s event such a success.

The Inter-American Dialogue was created to provide a neutral and inclusive venue for world leaders to come together, analyze critical issues facing the hemisphere, probe their differences, and reach consensus solutions to complex, often unforeseen, challenges. Recent developments, globally and in our own hemisphere, make clear that what the Dialogue offers – a place for respectful exchange among leaders from diverse perspectives – is as crucial now as it was at the first meeting in 1982. Your continued engagement is vital to the Dialogue’s ability to fulfill its mission and achieve sustained progress. We are so pleased you have chosen to accompany us in this important endeavor by your presence here tonight.

With appreciation,

Ernesto Zedillo
Co-Chair
Gala Committee

Carla A. Hills
Co-Chair
Gala Committee

Pierre Pettigrew
Co-Chair
Gala Committee

HONORARY CO-CHAIRS
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Brazil

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Chile

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Peru

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Argentina

Earl Jarrett
Jamaica

Arturo Sarukhan
Mexico

Abraham E Lowenthal
United States
Distinguished Leadership Award for Social Equity

TO
Dr. Vanessa Van Der Linden Mota
Pediatric Neurologist
Recife, Brazil

BY
The Honorable Eliot L. Engel
US House of Representatives (NY-16)

Distinguished Leadership Award for Corporate Social Responsibility

TO
BMW Group
 accepted by Mr. Ludwig Willisch
President and CEO, BMW North America

BY
His Excellency Ernesto Zedillo
Co-Chair, Inter-American Dialogue
Former President of Mexico

Distinguished Lifetime Achievement Award

TO
His Excellency Enrique García
Co-Vice Chair, Inter-American Dialogue
President, CAF - Development Bank of Latin America

BY
His Excellency Enrique V. Iglesias
Vice-Chair Emeritus, Inter-American Dialogue
Former President, Inter-American Development Bank
Former Secretary General, Ibero-American General Secretariat
FIRST COURSE
Jicama, Watercress, Avocado, Watermelon Radish
Spicy Citrus Vinaigrette
House Baked Artisanal Rolls, Sweet Butter

ENTRÉE COURSE
Roasted Beef Tenderloin
Twice Baked Mustard & Cheddar Potato Gratin
Jumbo Asparagus, Soy Glazed Cremini Caps
Cabernet Infusion
Seasonal Vegetarian Entrée

DESSERT COURSE
Berry Crunch
Whole Grain Shortbread, Citrus Compressed Berries, Vanilla Chantilly, Sour Cream Sorbet

DINNER WINES
Trinity Oaks Chardonnay, California
Maggio Family Vineyards Cabernet Sauvignon, California

SPECIALTY COCKTAILS
North Sea Oils
Aquavit, Golden Beat Shrub, Lillet Blanc, Coriander Syrup
Se me fue la paloma
Feijo & Pineapple Infused Rum, Mate Simple Syrup, Guava Juice
María Elena Salinas
Co-Anchor, Noticiero Univision and Aquí y Ahora

Widely recognized as the “voice of Hispanic America,” María Elena Salinas is the award-winning co-anchor of Univision’s Noticiero Univision and co-host of Aquí y Ahora. Salinas’ reputation as an objective and trustworthy journalist has earned her interviews with every US president since Jimmy Carter as well as Latin American heads of state, influential newsmakers, and prominent media personalities. She has made history multiple times, moderating the first bilingual Presidential Democratic Debate in 2003, then co-hosting both the first-ever Democratic and Republican candidate presidential forums in Spanish in 2007. She also moderated the eighth Presidential Democratic Debate in Spanish and English in 2016.

An iconic presence in Hispanic media with an international following of millions of viewers, Salinas has used her visibility to advocate for and empower the Latino community. She is the official spokesperson for Ya es hora, a national civic engagement campaign which has been recognized with a Peabody Award for helping motivate Hispanics to participate in US political dialogue. Her most recent prime-time special, Entre el abandono y el rechazo, explored the dramatic exodus of Central American children to the US and received numerous prestigious journalistic accolades, including a Peabody Award, a Walter Cronkite Award, and a Gracie Award. In 2000, Salinas launched a scholarship in her name to be awarded to a Hispanic journalism student interested in pursuing a career in Spanish-language media. She is one of the founding members of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists and sits on the board of the Hispanic Scholarship Fund and the International Women’s Media Foundation.

Salinas has been featured as one of the most influential Hispanics in the United States in several publications including Hispanic Magazine, People En Español, and PODER, and was named one of the “Top 15 Most Influential Hispanics” among Latino voters in a poll conducted by Hispanic Voter Trends.

OPENING REMARKS

Michael Shifter
President, Inter-American Dialogue

Michael Shifter was named president of the Inter-American Dialogue in April 2010. He was previously vice president for policy. Since 1993, he has also been adjunct professor at Georgetown University’s School of Foreign Service. Shifter writes and talks widely on US-Latin American relations and hemispheric affairs. His recent articles have appeared in the New York Times, Foreign Affairs, Foreign Policy, Washington Post, Los Angeles Times, and Miami Herald, among other publications. Shifter is regularly called on to testify before the US Congress and is frequently interviewed by media outlets around the world.

INTRODUCTION

Carla A. Hills
Co-Chair, Inter-American Dialogue
Chair, Hills & Company
Former US Trade Representative

Carla A. Hills is chair and CEO of Hills & Company and co-chair of the Inter-American Dialogue. She served as US trade representative from 1989 to 1993 during the administration of President George H.W. Bush and as US secretary of housing and urban development from 1975 to 1977 during the administration of President Gerald Ford. Over the years, Hills has served on a number of corporate and nonprofit boards. She is currently chair of the National Committee on US-China Relations, co-chair of the Council on Foreign Relations, member of the Executive Committee for the Peterson Institute for International Economics and the Trilateral Commission, co-chair of the Advisory Board of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, and member of the board of International Crisis Group.
Tom Shannon has been a strong advocate for policies that advance democratic governance and economic development in the region. His respectful and cooperative style of diplomacy has contributed to defusing tensions in hemispheric relations during particularly challenging times.”

— Fernando Henrique Cardoso
Chair Emeritus, Inter-American Dialogue
Former President of Brazil

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

Thomas A. Shannon, Jr.
US Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs

Thomas A. Shannon, Jr. was confirmed US under secretary of state for political affairs in February 2016, becoming one of the highest ranking Latin America experts in State Department history. He was previously counselor of the department, US ambassador to Brazil, assistant secretary of state for Western Hemisphere affairs, special assistant to the president, and senior director of the National Security Council. A career ambassador in the US Foreign Service, Shannon has lived and worked in Venezuela, South Africa, Cameroon, Gabon, São Tomé and Principe, and Guatemala. His crucial role in reshaping the bilateral relationship with Brazil, his active engagement with Venezuela, and his contributions to improving US-Cuba relations over three decades have paralleled the Inter-American Dialogue’s work to further democracy, prosperity, and social equity in the Americas.
Eliot Engel is the ranking member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and a senior member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee’s Health Subcommittee. He is also founder and co-chair of the House Oil and National Security Caucus and a member of the Gun Violence Prevention Task Force, the Bipartisan Task Force for Combatting Anti-Semitism, the HIV/AIDS Caucus, the Long Island Sound Caucus, and the Animal Protection Caucus, among others. Engel is a cosponsor of HR 5044, which would fully fund a federal response to Zika, and was one of the first members of Congress to address the threat of the virus. Prior to his election to Congress, he served for twelve years in the New York State Assembly.

Vanessa Van Der Linden Mota played a crucial role in identifying and raising awareness about the connection between the Zika virus and birth defects. She joined other physicians and health officials in sounding the alarm about the virus’ wide-ranging social and economic consequences thus accelerating a global response. Van Der Linden Mota accepts the Inter-American Dialogue’s award on behalf of innumerable innovators shedding new light on emerging health issues.

The Dialogue works to build cooperation on the most critical challenges facing the Americas, and to foster collaborative approaches to address them. In these ways, our honoree and her colleagues in the health community embody the spirit of the Dialogue. Our board has called upon Dialogue members and other global leaders to redouble efforts to coordinate new fact-based scientific research, identify innovative solutions to combat problems, and mobilize resources to address issues that cut across so many sections of society that are affected by shared health priorities.”

— Michael Shifter
President, Inter-American Dialogue
Ernesto Zedillo
Co-Chair, Inter-American Dialogue

Ernesto Zedillo served as president of Mexico from 1994 to 2000. He is presently director of the Yale Center for the Study of Globalization, professor in the field of international economics and politics, and co-chair of the Inter-American Dialogue. Prior to his election, Zedillo was secretary of economic planning and the budget from 1988 to 1992 and secretary of education in 1992. Zedillo has remained active in international affairs since leaving office. He is chair of the National Resource Governance Institute and the 21st Century Advisory Council of the Berggruen Institute. He also serves on the Global Commission on Drug Policy and is a member of the Elders, an independent group of global leaders using their collective experience and influence for peace, justice, and human rights worldwide.

“...The auto sector in Latin America has become a cutting-edge, fast-evolving industry that intersects with so many critical economic and social areas — from jobs and productivity to education, innovation, and technological advance. We are delighted to recognize the BMW Group for being in the vanguard as the auto industry prepares for a sea-change in the period ahead.”

— Carla A. Hills
Co-Chair, Inter-American Dialogue
Chair and CEO, Hills & Co.
Former US Trade Representative

Ludwig Willisch
President and CEO, BMW North America

Ludwig Willisch was named president and CEO of BMW North America in October 2011 and has been head of the Americas for the BMW Group since 2012. As such, he is responsible for markets in the US, Canada, and Mexico and sales, marketing, and distribution in Latin America and the Caribbean. Willisch previously oversaw sales of BMW and MINI automobiles for 28 European markets outside of Germany. He began his career at the company in 1996 as manager of the BMW branch in Düsseldorf and went on to manage local sales subsidiaries in Germany, Japan, and Sweden, before being named CEO of BMW M GmbH, the specialized high performance division of BMW Group, based in Munich. Willisch is presently vice chair of the German American Chamber of Commerce and a member of the Manufacturing Council to the United States Secretary of Commerce.
Enrique V. Iglesias was the first secretary general of the Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB) and the third president of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), serving from 2005 to 2014 and 1988 to 2005, respectively. He has been a member of the Inter-American Dialogue since 1984 and is vice-chair emeritus of the Board of Directors. Prior to his election as president of the IDB, Iglesias was Uruguay’s minister of foreign relations, executive secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, secretary general of the UN Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy, and chairman of the conference that launched the Uruguay round of international trade negotiations in Punta del Este, Uruguay, the negotiations which led to the creation of the World Trade Organization. Iglesias served as president of Uruguay’s Central Bank from 1966 to 1968.

L. Enrique García has served four consecutive five-year terms as executive president and CEO of CAF – Development Bank of Latin America. Under his leadership, CAF has grown to become one of the most important and innovative multilateral institutions in the region and has gained world-wide recognition. García will conclude his fifth and final term as president of CAF in March 2017.

A native of Bolivia, García previously served as minister of planning and coordination and head of the economic and social cabinet from 1989 to 1991. He also served on the board of the Bolivian Central Bank and as an officer of the Inter-American Development Bank.

García is co-vice chair of the Inter-American Dialogue’s Board of Directors and is a member of the Advisory Council of the Center for Latin American Studies at Georgetown University, the Policy Council of the George Washington University, and the Advisory Council of the Center for Latin America and the Caribbean at Florida International University. His many honors include the Award for Latin American Integration from the Business Council of Latin America (CEAL) and the Award for Excellence in Regional Integration from América Economía magazine.

The lives of millions of people in Latin America and the Caribbean have improved as a result of his exemplary and transformational leadership. President García’s contribution has been immeasurable and enduring.”

— Enrique V. Iglesias
Vice Chair Emeritus, Inter-American Dialogue
Former President, Inter-American Development Bank
Former Secretary General, Ibero-American General Secretariat

L. Enrique García
Co-Vice Chair, Inter-American Dialogue
President, CAF - Development Bank of Latin America

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Juan Manuel Santos was elected president of Colombia in 2010. He has been a member of the Inter-American Dialogue since 1990 and served as co-vice chair of the Board of Directors. Santos entered public service in 1991 upon his appointment as minister of foreign trade by President César Gaviria. He served as minister of finance and public credit under President Andrés Pastrana from 2000 to 2002 and was named minister of defense by President Álvaro Uribe in 2006. Prior to entering government, Santos served as director of *El Tiempo* newspaper and was chief executive of the National Federation of Coffee Growers. In 2005, he co-founded and led Colombia’s Social Party of National Unity and the Foundation for Good Government. The Norwegian Nobel Committee named Santos recipient of the 2016 Nobel Peace Prize for his “resolute efforts to bring Colombia’s more than 50-year-long civil war to an end.”

“President García’s extraordinary leadership and experience in Bolivia’s government, the private sector, and the Inter-American Development Bank have enriched all of us who have had the pleasure of working with him and greatly strengthened the reach and influence of our work and that of CAF. We are eternally grateful for his wisdom and friendship, and look forward to celebrating his many accomplishments, past and yet to come.”

— Ernesto Zedillo
Co-Chair, Inter-American Dialogue
Former President of Mexico

THE INTER-AMERICAN DIALOGUE IS PLEASED TO PRESENT ITS

DISTINGUISHED LEADERSHIP AWARD FOR PEACE

Juan Manuel Santos
President of Colombia
Member, Inter-American Dialogue

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UnitedHealth Group - a diversified health benefits, services, and innovation company dedicated to helping people live healthier lives and making health systems work better for everyone - congratulates the Inter-American Dialogue and the individuals and organizations being honored for their outstanding leadership in the Americas.

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