

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 472

Reaffirming the partnership between the United States and the Dominican Republic and advancing opportunities to deepen diplomatic, economic, and security cooperation between the two nations.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

DECEMBER 7, 2021

Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. CARDIN, and Mr. CASSIDY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

RESOLUTION

Reaffirming the partnership between the United States and the Dominican Republic and advancing opportunities to deepen diplomatic, economic, and security cooperation between the two nations.

Whereas the United States and the Dominican Republic share extensive economic, security, and cultural ties and a mutual commitment to the promotion of internationally recognized human rights, democratic values, and the rule of law;

Whereas the bilateral relationship between the United States and the Dominican Republic has contributed to the economic prosperity and national security of both countries, including through the Dominican Republic-Central Amer-

ica-United States Free Trade Agreement and the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative;

Whereas under the leadership of President Luis Abinader, who took office on August 16, 2020, the Government of the Dominican Republic has taken steps to effectively address the COVID–19 pandemic, fully vaccinating over 60 percent of its adult population, one of the highest vaccination rates in Latin America and the Caribbean, and acquiring sufficient surplus vaccines to provide donations to other countries in the region;

Whereas in response to the COVID–19 pandemic, the Government of the Dominican Republic has committed to working with the United States, other Group of 7 countries, the International Monetary Fund, and the Inter-American Development Bank to advance global and regional post-pandemic economic recovery efforts;

Whereas in 2020, United States foreign direct investment in the Dominican Republic totaled \$274,500,000, and remittances from the United States accounted for approximately 78 percent of the over \$8,000,000,000 in remittances sent to the Dominican Republic, according to data from the Congressional Research Service and World Bank, respectively;

Whereas, on September 30, 2021, President Abinader signed presidential decree 612–21, creating a ministerial task force to advance nearshoring initiatives and strengthen the Dominican Republic’s participation in international supply chains and role as an industrial, manufacturing, and logistical hub, including by expanding the country’s network of free trade zones;

Whereas the United States and the Dominican Republic would benefit from a coordinated plan of action to bolster economic relations, realign supply chains, and expand ties between the private sectors in both countries;

Whereas the Government of the United States has engaged with the Dominican Republic and other regional partners to address the United States serious concerns over the security, human rights, and data privacy risks associated with investments by the People's Republic of China in telecommunication networks and other critical infrastructure;

Whereas the Government of the Dominican Republic has committed to strengthening security cooperation with the United States to address the threats posed by transnational criminal organizations and human trafficking, drug trafficking, and money laundering networks;

Whereas a humanitarian crisis, rampant crime, gang violence, and instability in neighboring Haiti, a situation exacerbated by the July 7, 2021, assassination of President Jovenel Moise, has deepened the suffering of the Haitian people, increased risks to the Dominican Republic posed by organized criminal groups along its borders, and strained the economic capacity of the Government of the Dominican Republic to address the humanitarian needs of Haitian migrants;

Whereas President Abinader has taken significant steps to make the Government of the Dominican Republic more accountable and effective, including by addressing corruption and impunity, appointing an independent Public Prosecutor, requiring additional transparency in public procurement, and proposing legislation to modernize asset forfeiture laws;

Whereas, on October 20, 2021, the Governments of the Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, and Panama signed a joint declaration expressing concern about irregular migration flows, climate change, post-COVID–19 economic recovery, the deteriorating human rights situation in Nicaragua, and the humanitarian crisis in Haiti, and called for stronger cooperation on these issues from the United States, regional partners, and the international community;

Whereas the Government of the Dominican Republic, as host of the Latin America and Caribbean Climate Week 2021, has called for greater regional coordination to address the effects of climate change, including more extreme weather events, biodiversity loss, environmental displacement, and adverse health effects, which Small Island Developing States in the Caribbean are disproportionately vulnerable to;

Whereas the Government of the Dominican Republic has called for the peaceful restoration of democracy and rule of law in Venezuela and is hosting approximately 114,000 Venezuelan refugees; and

Whereas approximately 2,000,000 people of Dominican origin currently reside in the United States, and over 2,000,000 United States tourists visit the Dominican Republic annually, accounting for the largest number of foreign tourists to the country and bolstering its economically critical tourism sector: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) reaffirms its commitment to strengthening
3 the historic partnership between the United States
4 and the Dominican Republic based on shared demo-

1 cratic values and efforts to advance economic pros-
2 perity and national security;

3 (2) encourages continued actions by the Gov-
4 ernment of the Dominican Republic to assume a re-
5 gional leadership role in promoting human rights,
6 democratic values, and humanitarian assistance;

7 (3) calls for further steps to strengthen co-
8 operation between the Governments of the United
9 States and the Dominican Republic on issues of
10 shared strategic interest, including—

11 (A) by assisting the Dominican Republic in
12 its post-COVID–19 economic recovery, includ-
13 ing through support for United States and glob-
14 al initiatives that help developing countries re-
15 cover financial sustainability and attain equi-
16 table access to international financial markets;

17 (B) by developing and implementing
18 nearshoring initiatives in the Caribbean Basin
19 to realign international supply chains and
20 strengthen the Dominican Republic’s standing
21 as a significant industrial, manufacturing, and
22 logistical hub, including through cooperation on
23 infrastructure development such as ports, power
24 grids, and at free trade zones;

(C) facilitating the expansion of economic and commercial ties, including by prioritizing bilateral development project financing and the formation of a United States-Dominican Republic Business Council;

(D) by supporting and developing collaborative efforts to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change, including promoting development and strengthening the U.S.-Caribbean Resilience Partnership and similar initiatives;

(E) by improving security cooperation between the two countries, including in addressing narcotics and human trafficking, dismantling money laundering networks, and strengthening professional law enforcement and criminal justice institutions; and

(F) by increasing cooperation with the Dominican Republic and other international partners to promote stability in Haiti, address Haiti's humanitarian crisis, and facilitate political solutions supported by the Haitian people;

(4) urges the Government of the Dominican Republic to continue taking steps to address the inherent human rights, security, and data privacy risks

1 posed by reliance on technology from the People's
2 Republic of China, including Huawei components, in
3 telecommunication networks;

4 (5) commends efforts by President Abinader to
5 strengthen the political independence of the Attorney
6 General's Office and institutionalize anti-corruption
7 reforms; and

8 (6) calls on the Department of State and the
9 United States Agency for International Development
10 to continue to support the efforts of the Government
11 of the Dominican Republic to respond to the human-
12 itarian needs of Haitian migrants in the Dominican
13 Republic.

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