

YOUR EXCELLENCIES, MEMBERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS... DISTINGUISHED GUESTS AND FRIENDS...

IT IS MY HONOR TO WELCOME YOU TO MIAMI THIS MONDAY MORNING.

WHAT BETTER WAY TO “EXPERIENCE AMERICA” THAN TO VISIT MIAMI?

OURS IS A “MAGIC CITY” BUILT BY THE DREAMS AND ASPIRATIONS OF PEOPLE FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD WHO CALL MIAMI HOME.

THIS IS A PLACE THAT REFLECTS OUR NATIONAL MOTTO: OUT OF MANY, WE BECOME ONE.

IT WAS ONE OF OUR NATION’S FOUNDING FATHERS, BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, HIMSELF A DIPLOMAT AND AMBASSADOR, WHO ONCE SAID THAT “NO NATION WAS EVER RUINED BY TRADE.”

MISTER FRANKLIN’S WISDOM IS ON FULL DISPLAY HERE.

NOT ONLY HAVE WE NOT BEEN RUINED BY TRADE, BUT QUITE THE CONTRARY. WE ARE WHO WE ARE TODAY BECAUSE OF IT.

OUR GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION HAS MADE US THE GATEWAY NOT ONLY TO LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN, BUT INCREASINGLY TO AFRICA, THE MIDDLE EAST AND BEYOND.

THIS POSITIONING MAKES US THE LOGICAL DEPARTURE AND ARRIVAL POINT FOR GOODS FLOWING THROUGH ALL THESE REGIONS TO AND FROM THE REST OF THE UNITED STATES.

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING:

FOR THE LAST YEAR ON RECORD, THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND LOGISTICS INDUSTRY CLUSTER DIRECTLY EMPLOYED APPROXIMATELY 30,000 WORKERS HERE IN MIAMI-DADE.

AND, AN ADDITIONAL 41,600 JOBS ACROSS THE COUNTY RESULT FROM INTERNATIONAL TRADE, WITH A CONTRIBUTION OF APPROXIMATELY \$6.4 BILLION TO OUR COUNTY GDP.

FOR THE FIRST 6 MONTHS OF LAST YEAR, THE VALUE OF TOTAL TRADE THROUGH REACHED \$47 BILLION.

MIAMI-DADE’S TWO LARGEST ECONOMIC ENGINES ARE OUR AIR AND SEA PORTS.

THE IMPROVEMENTS TO OUR SEAPORT THAT YOU ARE SEEING WILL MAKE IT ONE OF THE FEW PORTS ON THE EASTERN SEABOARD AND THE CLOSEST U.S. PORT TO PANAMA CAPABLE OF SERVICING THE NEW LARGER SHIPS THAT WILL NOW CROSS THE WIDENED PANAMA CANAL.

AND I ALSO HOPE THAT THE MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR IMPROVEMENTS WE'VE MADE TO OUR AIRPORT MADE IT EASIER FOR ALL OF YOU TO TRAVEL IN AND OUT OF MIAMI.

WE ALSO POSSESS THE HUMAN CAPITAL, RELATIONSHIPS, LINES OF COMMUNICATION, AND VITAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS THAT FACILITATE THE FLOW OF INTERNATIONAL COMMERCE.

MIAMI HAS THE LARGEST CONCENTRATION OF FOREIGN BANKS OUTSIDE NEW YORK. WE ALSO HAVE MUCH BETTER WEATHER.

OUR PROFESSIONAL AND LEGAL SERVICE SECTORS ALL CATER TO A WIDE ARRAY OF INTERNATIONAL CLIENTS AND DEMANDS. AND MOST MAJOR COMPANIES HAVE THEIR LATIN AMERICAN OR INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS HERE.

THIS CONCENTRATION OF TRADE AND COMMERCE HAS ALLOWED US TO EXPAND INTO OTHER AREAS, SUCH AS TECHNOLOGY AND HEALTH CARE THAT YOU WILL SEE DURING YOUR SITE VISITS.

OUR URBAN CORE AND DOWNTOWN HAVE BECOME ONE OF THE HOTTEST REAL ESTATE MARKETS IN THE WORLD.

MOST OF THE BUILDINGS YOU SEE AROUND YOU WERE NOT HERE 10 YEARS AGO.

AND TO FURTHER SOLIDIFY OUR POSITION AS A CULTURAL DESTINATION, JUST A FEW BLOCKS FROM HERE, WE HAVE TWO BRAND NEW MUSEUMS –

A SCIENCE MUSEUM THAT IS SOON TO OPEN –

AND AN ARTS MUSEUM THAT WAS UNVEILED JUST LAST MONTH TO COINCIDE WITH OUR HOSTING ART BASEL, THE MOST IMPORTANT ARTS FAIR OF THE AMERICAS.

ALL OF THESE PROJECTS TOGETHER WITH NEW INVESTMENTS IN SHARED CIVIC SPACES ALL CONTINUE TO ENHANCE OUR WATERFRONT AND THE URBAN EXPERIENCE.

MOST IMPORTANTLY, OUR STATUS AS A “CROSSROADS” HAS HELPED US EMERGE AS ONE OF THE MOST DIVERSE PLACES IN THE WORLD.

IT'S A PLACE WHERE DIVERSITY IS NOT A DISADVANTAGE, BUT A POSITIVE, A WAY OF LIFE.

IT'S OUR CULTURE, THE LANGUAGES WE SPEAK, THE FOODS WE EAT.

IN MIAMI, WE CELEBRATE AND RELISH OUR DIFFERENCES.

MIAMI HAS BEEN ALWAYS BEEN BLESSED BY GREAT WEATHER AND BY OUR BEAUTIFUL NATURAL RESOURCES, INCLUDING SOME OF THE BEST OCEANFRONT PROPERTY IN THE WORLD.

BUT OUR GREATEST RESOURCE IS THE QUALITY OF OUR PEOPLE.

WE HAVE LEARNED TO LIVE AND WORK TOGETHER TO CREATE WHAT YOU SEE ALL AROUND YOU TODAY.

I AM TOLD THAT BETWEEN ALL OF YOU TODAY, YOU REPRESENT A COLLECTIVE HALF BILLION PEOPLE FROM ALL CONTINENTS ON THE GLOBE. WE ARE A MICRO-COSM OF THAT COLLECTIVE HUMAN EXPERIENCE.

YOUR EXCELLENCIES:

MIAMI WELCOMES AND OPENS ITS ARMS TO ALL OF YOU.

AND HERE, EACH ONE OF YOU WILL ALWAYS HAVE A HOME.

