

GOOD EVENING EVERYONE! THANK YOU JEFF FOR THE INTRODUCTION!

IT IS MY PLEASURE TO WELCOME ALL OF YOU TO MIAMI-DADE COUNTY!

I WANT TO BEGIN BY THANKING FOUNDING CHAIRMAN GIL RÉMILLARD, AND NICHOLAS RÉMILLARD, PRESIDENT AND CEO OF THE INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC FORUM OF THE AMERICAS, FOR CHOOSING MIAMI-DADE TO CONDUCT THIS IMPORTANT FORUM.

I WANT TO THANK ALL OF THE SPEAKERS, PARTNERS, AND PARTICIPANTS OF THIS 5TH EDITION OF THE INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC FORUM.

I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO THANK LT. GOVERNOR CARLOS LOPEZ-CANTERA FOR ACCOMPANYING US HERE TONIGHT!

THANK YOU ALL AND WELCOME TO MIAMI-DADE COUNTY!

I'M TOLD THIS IS THE FIRST TIME YOU ARE HOLDING THE FORUM HERE IN MIAMI-DADE...

I CAN ASSURE YOU, YOU COULDN'T HAVE CHOSEN A BETTER PLACE TO CONDUCT THIS FORUM:

NOT ONLY IS MIAMI-DADE COUNTY A WORLD-CLASS COMMUNITY WITH GREAT WEATHER, ENDLESS CULTURAL AND ENTERTAINMENT OFFERINGS...

BUT WE ALSO HAPPEN TO BE THE UNDISPUTED “GATEWAY TO THE AMERICAS.”

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY COMPETES NOT ONLY WITH CITIES ACROSS THE UNITED STATES, BUT WITH PLACES FROM THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

ALL OF US KNOW THAT WE LIVE IN A WORLD OF MOBILE CAPITAL AND RESOURCES – QUITE FRANKLY, PEOPLE CAN LIVE, INVEST, AND WORK ANYWHERE NOWADAYS.

WHAT SEPARATES ONE PLACE FROM ANOTHER IS THE WILLINGNESS OF THOSE IN GOVERNMENT, BUSINESS, AND OTHER SECTORS TO MAKE THE COMMITMENTS NECESSARY TO CREATE THE ECONOMIC CLIMATE THAT WILL ATTRACT PEOPLE TO LIVE, WORK, AND PLAY IN YOUR COMMUNITY.

HERE IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, WE HAVE WORKED TOGETHER TO CREATE A WORLD-CLASS ECONOMIC CLIMATE BY INVESTING IN THE THINGS THAT ADD VALUE TO THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF OUR PEOPLE: EDUCATION, PUBLIC SAFETY, PARKS AND GREEN

SPACES, ARTS AND CULTURE, AND OUR NEIGHBORHOODS.

WE ARE MAKING UNPRECEDENTED INVESTMENTS IN OUR INFRASTRUCTURE – AND ARE ALWAYS WORKING DILIGENTLY TO IMPROVE OUR TRANSIT MOBILITY.

WE ARE COMPLETING IMPROVEMENTS TO PORTMIAMI THAT WILL MAKE IT ONE OF THE FEW PORTS ON THE EASTERN SEABOARD CAPABLE OF SERVICING THE NEWER LARGER SHIPS THAT WILL NOW CROSS THE WIDENED PANAMA CANAL.

VERY SOON WE’LL BE READY TO WELCOME THE LARGEST CARGO SHIPS IN THE WORLD TO OUR PORT WHEN THE NEWLY-EXPANDED PANAMA CANAL OPENS FOR BUSINESS.

THAT MEANS MORE TRADE & LOGISTICS JOBS FOR OUR RESIDENTS AND MORE PROSPERITY FOR OUR COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE.

WE ARE ALSO UNLEASHING THE ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT OF OUR COMMUNITY BY SUPPORTING START-UP INCUBATORS AND OTHER TECHNOLOGY BASED BUSINESSES.

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

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

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

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

MIAMI HAS ALWAYS BEEN BLESSED BY GREAT WEATHER AND BY OUR BEAUTIFUL NATURAL RESOURCES, INCLUDING SOME OF THE BEST OCEANFRONT PROPERTY IN THE WORLD, SANDWICHED IN BETWEEN TWO NATIONAL PARKS: THE EVERGLADES AND KEY BISCAYNE.

BUT OUR GREATEST RESOURCE IS THE QUALITY OF OUR PEOPLE.

PEOPLE FROM AROUND THE WORLD COME HERE – WE HAVE LEARNED TO LIVE AND WORK TOGETHER

TO CREATE WHAT YOU SEE ALL AROUND YOU TODAY.

WE'RE ALSO A PLACE WHERE NEW IDEAS ARE ALWAYS WELCOMED. WE HAVE A CONTINUOUS POTENTIAL FOR CHANGE, AND FULL OF OPPORTUNITIES.

AS MAYOR OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, ON BEHALF OF OUR 2.6 MILLION RESIDENTS, IT'S MY PLEASURE TO WELCOME YOU TO OUR DYNAMIC AND MULTICULTURAL COMMUNITY!

WE ARE TRULY HONORED TO HOST YOU, AND WE ARE PLEASED THAT YOU CHOSE OUR COMMUNITY TO HOLD THIS IMPORTANT FORUM.

THANK YOU FOR JOINING US HERE IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY!

IT'S MY SINCERE HOPE THAT YOUR TIME TOGETHER IS PRODUCTIVE, AND THAT YOU HAVE A CHANCE TO EXPLORE OUR BEAUTIFUL, WORLD-CLASS COMMUNITY WHILE YOU'RE HERE WITH US.

TOMORROW, I WILL BE GLAD TO SHARE WITH YOU HOW HERE IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE MANY

**ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES WE HAVE ENCOUNTER
IN RECENT YEARS, AS WELL AS THE CHALLENGES
WE FACE EVERYDAY IN OUR GLOBAL ECONOMY.**

**THANK YOU ALL VERY MUCH AND WELCOME
AGAIN!**

**ENJOY YOUR STAY AND WE WILL SEE EACH OTHER
TOMORROW MORNING!**

