

STATEMENT OF HON. DEAN RUSK, SECRETARY OF STATE

Secretary RUSK. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. I am delighted to be here this morning and to be accompanied by my two distinguished colleagues, Ambassador Linowitz and Assistant Secretary Solomon.

I welcome this opportunity to consult with you on the forthcoming meeting of the American chiefs of state, scheduled for April 12 to 14, in Punta del Este, Uruguay.

This is only the second such meeting of Presidents in the history of the hemisphere, and the rarity of the occasion is matched by the scale of the opportunity that now presents itself. This opportunity arose from a proposal made in March 1966 by Dr. Arturo Illia, then President of Argentina. His proposal rapidly gained the endorsement of other Latin American countries. Subsequent discussions, including those in which I recently participated in Buenos Aires, made it increasingly evident that our Latin American neighbors are prepared to make new decisions and to take new actions, some of them of the most momentous significance. These require some indication of what we, the United States, will do.

The President might, of course, go to this meeting without consulting the Congress and present his own views on what our response would be, subject to subsequent action by the Congress. But he would much prefer to be able to set forth the intentions of the Government of the United States—of the Congress as well as of the President. This does not mean, Mr. Chairman, that the resolution before you is intended to supplant the normal procedures for authorization and appropriation by the Congress. But the President wants to be able to say that if other nations of the hemisphere take the steps that they themselves have proposed, the United States will be prepared to work with them in partnership. In proportion to what we expect the Latin American nations to undertake our contribution would be small—but it would be of crucial importance.

We are all keenly aware of the close and special relationship we have with our neighbors in this hemisphere. It is a relationship shaped from a common heritage in revolution, from a shared belief in social justice, and from a deep respect for personal dignity. These traditions and beliefs are common to the hemisphere. But we have come to realize that even the soundest social traditions are vulnerable to the threat of material want. Poverty is no friend of justice; hunger no ally of democracy. And it was out of our keen awareness of the inevitable interaction between social and material conditions that the Alliance for Progress was forged 6 years ago.

During that time our Latin American neighbors have dramatically demonstrated their commitment to the process of social and economic progress. Largely with their own resources—during the period 1961-66 they invested over \$91 billion in their own development—our neighbors have begun the task. The U.S. role in this great enterprise, has been to provide the small but highly critical margin of additional resources, both in capital and knowledge, that helps to accelerate the process and keep it moving in productive directions. Our material contribution over this same 6-year period has been \$6.5 billion, small by comparison with that of Latin America itself, but its importance is inestimable.