

News from

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ENGEL OFFERS STRONG SUPPORT FOR

ENERGY AND CLIMATE PARTNERSHIP OF THE AMERICAS

Washington, DC--Congressman Eliot Engel, Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, issued the following statement today to recognize the Energy and Climate Ministerial of the Americas, held on April 15-16 in Washington DC.

"I would like to offer my strong support for the Energy and Climate Ministerial of the Americas being held today at the Inter-American Development Bank and at the Organization for American States on April 16. I attended the Summit of the Americas in Trinidad and Tobago in April 2009 when President Obama announced the Energy and Climate Partnership of the Americas (ECPA) to address the energy and climate change challenges facing the region. The challenges are many as seen in frequent blackouts in major cities in the region and the lack of access to electricity in the rural countryside. Energy poverty, energy inefficiency and poor infrastructure have a direct impact on economic growth and development in many countries.

"The Energy and Climate Partnership of the Americas is an effort to address these issues head on. But it's not an initiative that places the United States in a role in which it provides all the assistance or direction. It's innovative since it sets up a voluntary and flexible framework that is open to governments, private industry, and civil society to lead or participate in initiatives that reflect their priorities. Many countries in the Western Hemisphere such as Brazil, Mexico, Colombia, and Canada plan on leading initiatives under ECPA. El Salvador, Chile, Costa Rica and Trinidad and Tobago will set up Clean Energy Technology Centers to serve as sources of expertise on renewable energy technologies.

"I applaud the efforts of the representatives of the 32 countries and over 200 businesses and civil society organizations attending the Energy and Climate Ministerial of the Americas. Many initiatives will be announced during the Ministerial. It's impressive to see the fast progress on ECPA since President Obama announced it last year. This is clearly a sign of the new relationship that the Obama Administration would like with the countries of the Western Hemisphere - an inclusive one based on partnership and focused on pragmatic problem solving and not political posturing. I plan on working with President Obama, Secretary of State Clinton, and Energy Secretary Steven Chu to make sure the goals and priorities of the Energy and Climate Partnership of the Americas are met."

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