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U.S.- MEXICO BORDER BUSINESS LEADERS JOIN TO SUPPORT ECONOMIC VITALITY OF BORDER REGION

First meeting for international representatives of business, trade and economic development organizations to address unique promise of border region

LAS VEGAS, Nevada - Today, business, trade and economic development organizations along the U.S. - Mexico Border held the first private sector-led meeting with the mission of strengthening border ties and addressing the unique economic promise of the border region. More than a dozen organizations convened in Las Vegas, Nevada, to discuss collaboration among border organizations and identify the current challenges affecting cross-border commerce as well as opportunities to enhance the region's global competitiveness.

"Deliberate and sustained regional collaboration will allow us to take advantage of the diverse assets our areas offer and put the border on the map for investors in a way that our individual regions cannot do alone," stated Rolando Pablos, Chief Executive Officer of The Borderplex Alliance. "In order to secure our place at the top of the world's list of best investments, the U.S. - Mexico border needs united leadership, working together to address the unique needs of our region in order to attract high-quality investments that bring more jobs to our communities. Our collaboration will strengthen our global competitiveness."

"While individual border communities have distinct needs and priorities, we have a great deal more in common. Working together will allow for more collective advocacy on border-wide

priorities,” said Jerry Sanders, President and CEO of the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce. “We will all benefit from the sharing of best practices with respect to economic development, strengthening cross-border relationships, and common efforts to attract private and public investment to the border that brings quality, high-paying jobs to our regions.”

Cross-border commerce is vital to the economies of the United States and Mexico. In [2015 alone](#), the total trade of goods by the United States with the rest of the globe was USD \$3.7 trillion, of which 14.2 percent (USD \$531.1 billion) was with Mexico. Despite the incredible connection between the two nations, the economic strengths, contributions and needs of the border communities are not well understood in Washington, Mexico City or even in key parts of the private sector.

Just last month, U.S. Vice President Biden and Mexican Secretary Videgaray co-chaired the third Cabinet-level meeting of the U.S.-Mexico High-Level Economic Dialogue (HLED), where they discussed goals for 2016 and beyond. HLED is the premier forum for bilateral economic cooperation, promoting mutual economic growth and prosperity, job creation, and global competitiveness for Mexico and the United States. One key commitment that resulted from that meeting was that Mexico and the United States would continue improving their engagement with relevant stakeholders (private sector, academia, and civil society), in order to receive their feedback and those initiatives that contribute to the objectives of HLED. Thus, any resulting policy goals and economic development objectives defined by the new border coalition will be used by the participants to advocate for domestic and international policies at each level of government in both Mexico and the U.S.

“We brought together leaders from both sides of the border with one common goal: mutual advocacy to improve the understanding of the needs of these communities. Our work will strengthen the cross-border business voice as a united front with a coordinated message advocating for improvements along the entire US-Mexico border region,” said Michael Camuñez, President and CEO, Manatt Jones Global Strategies.

The meeting was organized by Manatt Jones Global Strategies, The Borderplex Alliance, and the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce.