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Opening Remarks

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*Jon Mills**

I wish to welcome each of you to our Second Annual Conference on Legal and Policy Issues in the Americas. We thank many of you for attending this year and last year when the law college began to demonstrate our continuing commitment to collaboration with our Latin American neighbors on issues related to our mutual concerns in policy and in legal issues of education. Since last year, we have expanded our collaborations. The law school is joined this year in sponsorship by the Center for International Business Education and Research, (CIBER), in the Warrington College of Business, and our own *Florida Journal of International Law*, which last year published the proceedings of the conference.

We can also report to you several developments in our collaborations since last year. We have directed a successful summer program with the University of Costa Rica, and our students are preparing to return there again this year in just a few weeks. We have hosted visiting professors from the Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro and the Escuela Libre de Derecho in Mexico City. We are continuing our discussions on strengthening our relationships with these and other institutions. We urge you to share your ideas for further collaborations throughout this meeting and throughout the day.

Before we begin, I would again like to recognize our distinguished honoree from last night who received a special recognition for his work in Latin America. We honored Governor Buddy Mackay for his outstanding career of public service from the State House in Florida, to the White House, to his commitment as Envoy to the Americas in the White House over the last several years, and we look forward to Buddy's presentation.

Our first panel is organized and moderated by one of our most distinguished international scholars and professors, Mike Gordon. Mike Gordon has been a member of our faculty for more than thirty years. He is a renowned expert in the fields of business law, comparative law, Mexican law and NAFTA. I could spend the rest of the morning reciting his extensive credentials, but instead I will turn the program over to Professor Mike Gordon.

* Dean of the Fredric G. Levin College of Law. Professor of Law and Founding Director of the Center for Governmental Responsibility at the Levin College of Law.

