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SUPPORT FOR PUBLIC ORDER AND STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY IN HAITI

THE PERMANENT COUNCIL OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES,

HAVING HEARD the remarks of the Permanent Representative of Haiti about the events that have occurred since February 5, 2004, which have disrupted public order in many regions of the country, in particular the city of Gonaïves, and resulted in the loss of numerous human lives;

DEEPLY CONCERNED by the gravity of the current situation, the tenacity of the political crisis, the enormous socioeconomic challenges, particularly extreme poverty and its devastating effects on the Haitian people and the polarization that characterizes the political situation in Haiti;

CONCERNED ALSO by the growing humanitarian crisis and the plight of the civilian population affected by the current violence;

RECOGNIZING that violence and armed gangs constitute a major obstacle to governability and progress toward a peaceful, negotiated, democratic, and constitutional resolution to the political crisis in Haiti;

CONSIDERING that the Charter of the Organization of American States recognizes that representative democracy is an indispensable condition for the stability, peace, and development of the region, and that one of the main purposes of the OAS is to promote and consolidate it, with due respect for the principle of nonintervention;

REAFFIRMING that the Inter-American Democratic Charter proclaims that "the peoples of the Americas have a right to democracy and their governments have an obligation to promote and defend it" and that "essential elements of representative democracy include, *inter alia*, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, access to and the exercise of power in accordance with the rule of law, the holding of periodic, free, and fair elections based on secret balloting and universal suffrage as an expression of the sovereignty of the people, the pluralistic system of political parties and organizations, and the separation of powers and independence of the branches of government";

REAFFIRMING the spirit of resolution AG/DEC. 31 (XXXIII-O/03), which states that democratic governance requires the responsible participation of all social actors in building the necessary consensus to strengthen its democracies;

REAFFIRMING the importance of resolutions CP/RES. 822 (1331/02), "Support for Strengthening Democracy in Haiti"; CP/RES. 806 (1303/02) corr. 1, "The Situation in Haiti"; and CP/RES. 786 (1267/01), "Support for Democracy in Haiti";

REAFFIRMING ALSO the importance of resolutions AG/RES. 1959 (XXXIII-O/03), "Support for Strengthening Democracy in Haiti"; AG/RES. 1841 (XXXII-O/02), "The Situation in Haiti"; and AG/RES. 1831 (XXXI-O/01), "Support for Democracy in Haiti," adopted by the General Assembly;

RECOGNIZING the important role of the OAS Special Mission for Strengthening Democracy in Haiti; and

WELCOMING the important initiative of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) to help to resolve the current crisis,

RESOLVES:

1. To condemn vehemently, and call for an immediate end to, the violence in several regions of Haiti, to deplore the loss of lives and physical damage which have resulted from the current crisis, and to condemn criminal elements and activities that defy the rule of law and established government institutions.

2. To express its support for constitutional order in Haiti and its firm support to the CARICOM initiative aimed at promoting a peaceful resolution of the situation in Haiti.

3. To call on all relevant Haitian actors to comply with the confidence-building measures proposed in the CARICOM Prior Action Plan produced at the meeting on Haiti in Kingston, Jamaica, in January 2004, *inter alia*:

- Compliance with relevant OAS resolutions
- Need to negotiate rules for demonstrations
- Release of detainees
- Disarmament of armed gangs
- Establishment of a broad-based advisory council
- Appointment of a new government through the identification of a neutral and independent Prime Minister who enjoys the public trust
- Implementation of the CARICOM Charter of Civil Society.

4. To express its firm support for the Government of the President of Haiti, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, in its efforts to restore public order by constitutional means and to call upon it to

fulfill all commitments and adhere to the timeframes outlined in the CARICOM initiative, including commitments arising from relevant resolutions of the OAS.

5. To call specifically on the democratic political opposition and civil society to act responsibly, denounce the use of violence, and fulfill their responsibilities and engage in the democratic process in accordance with the CARICOM proposal.

6. To call upon all parties involved in the current crisis to ensure the full, safe, and unhindered access of humanitarian personnel and assistance to all civilians who need it.

7. To call upon the Government of Haiti to respect the rights, especially the human rights, of all citizens and residents of Haiti, and to call upon all Haitians to respect the rule of law.

8. To call upon the Government to take all appropriate measures to strengthen its support for the effective implementation of the mandate of the OAS Special Mission.

9. To reiterate its firm support for the efforts of the OAS Special Mission to contribute to strengthening Haiti's democratic institutions and to call on the member states and other members and organizations of the international community to bolster the Special Mission's efforts, through the provision of financial and personnel support.

10. To request the OAS Special Mission to support the CARICOM initiative in meeting its objectives and to instruct the Secretary General to continue to cooperate with CARICOM in seeking a solution to the crisis in Haiti.

11. To launch an appeal for international solidarity to support the efforts of the Haitian Government and people to find a peaceful resolution to the current crisis and to prevent a further deterioration of the humanitarian and socioeconomic situation.