

CONSEJO PERMANENTE



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ACTA
DE LA SESIÓN EXTRAORDINARIA
CELEBRADA
EL 21 DE JUNIO DE 2004

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CONSEJO PERMANENTE DE LA ORGANIZACIÓN DE LOS ESTADOS AMERICANOS

ACTA DE LA SESIÓN EXTRAORDINARIA CELEBRADA EL 21 DE JUNIO DE 2004

En la ciudad de Washington, a las tres y diez de la tarde del lunes 21 de junio de 2004, celebró sesión extraordinaria el Consejo Permanente de la Organización de los Estados Americanos para recibir al Senador Richard G. Lugar, Presidente de la Comisión de Relaciones Exteriores del Senado de los Estados Unidos. Presidió la sesión el Embajador Miguel Ruíz Cabañas, Representante Permanente de México y Presidente del Consejo Permanente. Asistieron los siguientes miembros:

Embajadora María Tamayo Arnal, Representante Permanente de Bolivia y
Vicepresidenta del Consejo Permanente
Embajador Joshua Sears, Representante Permanente del Commonwealth de las Bahamas
Embajador Valter Pecly Moreira, Representante Permanente del Brasil
Embajador Esteban Tomic, Representante Permanente de Chile
Embajador Juan Enrique Fischer, Representante Permanente del Uruguay
Embajadora Lisa Shoman, Representante Permanente de Belice
Embajador Juan Manuel Castulovich, Representante Permanente de Panamá
Embajador Michael I. King, Representante Permanente de Barbados
Embajador Jorge Valero Briceño, Representante Permanente de Venezuela
Embajador Izben C. Williams, Representante Permanente de Saint Kitts y Nevis
Embajador Paul D. Durand, Representante Permanente del Canadá
Embajador Rodolfo Hugo Gil, Representante Permanente de la Argentina
Embajador Luis Enrique Chase Plate, Representante Permanente del Paraguay
Embajador Salvador E. Rodezno Fuentes, Representante Permanente de Honduras
Embajador Walter Niehaus Bonilla, Representante Permanente de Costa Rica
Embajadora Marina Annette Valère, Representante Permanente de Trinidad y Tobago
Embajadora Carmen Marina Gutiérrez Salazar, Representante Permanente de Nicaragua
Embajadora Sofía Leonor Sánchez Baret, Representante Permanente de la República Dominicana
Embajador John F. Maisto, Representante Permanente de los Estados Unidos
Embajador Bayney R. Karran, Representante Permanente de Guyana
Embajador Alberto Borea Odría, Representante Permanente del Perú
Ministra Delrose E. Montague, Representante Interina de Jamaica
Embajador Duly Brutus, Representante Interino de Haití
Ministra Consejera Deborah-Mae Lovell, Representante Interina de Antigua y Barbuda
Ministro Consejero Luis Menéndez-Leal Castro, Representante Interino de El Salvador
Ministro Jaime Augusto Barberis Martínez, Representante Interino del Ecuador
Ministro Ernesto Campos Tenorio, Representante Alterno de México
Ministro Consejero Peter Lansiquot, Representante Alterno de Santa Lucía
Ministra María Clara Isaza Merchán, Representante Alterna de Colombia
Embajador Juan León, Representante Alterno de Guatemala

También estuvieron presentes el Secretario General de la Organización, doctor César Gaviria, y el Secretario General Adjunto, Embajador Luigi R. Einaudi, Secretario del Consejo Permanente.

El PRESIDENTE: Declaro abierta la presente sesión extraordinaria del Consejo Permanente, que ha sido convocada para recibir al Senador Richard G. Lugar, Presidente de la Comisión de Relaciones Exteriores del Senado de los Estados Unidos y representante del estado de Indiana en el Senado de su país.

PALABRAS DEL PRESIDENTE DEL CONSEJO PERMANENTE

El PRESIDENTE: Señor Senador, señor Secretario General, señor Secretario General Adjunto, distinguidos miembros del Consejo Permanente, señoras y señores:

Para mí y para los miembros de este Consejo es un señalado honor brindar al Senador Lugar una muy cordial bienvenida a esta Casa de las Américas. Es la primera vez en la historia de la Organización que el Presidente de la Comisión de Relaciones Exteriores del Senado de los Estados Unidos nos honra con su presencia en una sesión del Consejo Permanente. Quiero destacar que la solicitud proviene del propio Senador Lugar. Sea usted bienvenido, Senador.

Su presencia esta tarde tiene especial significado para los esfuerzos que la Organización realiza para integrar la diplomacia parlamentaria en el diálogo que nuestros países sostienen sobre muy diversos temas a través de la OEA.

Permítanme todos ustedes subrayar algunos aspectos de la trayectoria del Senador Lugar. Fue elegido por primera vez senador de su país en 1976 y fue reelegido para un quinto período en el año 2000. En el Senado, además de ser Presidente de la Comisión de Relaciones Exteriores, es miembro de la Comisión de Agricultura, Nutrición y Silvicultura, de la cual también fue Presidente.

El Senador Lugar ha sido reconocido como un legislador infatigable, autor de una amplia gama de iniciativas legislativas, entre ellas varias leyes para reducir la amenaza de las armas nucleares, químicas o biológicas. Como Presidente de la Comisión de Agricultura del Senado, el Senador Lugar logró apoyo para programas agrícolas federales y, entre otras actividades, inició un programa de investigación de biocombustibles. Ha promovido políticas para estimular el crecimiento económico, reducir los impuestos, generar empleo, eliminar el gasto público excesivo y reducir la burocracia para las empresas estadounidenses, pero lo más importante es que el Senador Lugar, en la Comisión que encabeza en el Senado de su país, ha demostrado un interés genuino en nuestro Hemisferio.

Senador, su visita el día de hoy es particularmente oportuna. El Consejo se encuentra abocado precisamente el día de hoy al estudio de la modernización de la Secretaría General de la OEA mediante un intercambio de puntos de vista sobre el papel que nuestra Organización debe desempeñar en el Hemisferio y la forma en que se debe organizar a la Secretaría General para apoyar ese papel. En este ejercicio se han realizado diversas propuestas para fortalecer a la OEA y para que esta sea capaz de enfrentar sus retos en nuestro Hemisferio. Ha quedado de manifiesto, sin embargo, que para su fortalecimiento se requiere la voluntad política de los Estados Miembros y, en este sentido, considero que el papel de los parlamentos de nuestros países es fundamental.

La OEA se ha convertido en un instrumento de promoción de la diplomacia parlamentaria a través del apoyo a las reuniones del Foro Interparlamentario de las Américas. Este Foro, y su visita hoy, Senador, así lo demuestra, puede y debe ser fortalecido para que los legisladores del Continente conozcan aún mejor la agenda de nuestra Organización y la forma en que pueden influir en la conformación de esta agenda a través de un trabajo político al interior de sus propios congresos. La OEA requiere el apoyo de nuestros parlamentos para lograr mayor impacto y eficiencia en su labor de promoción de la democracia, solución pacífica de controversias, seguridad, paz y desarrollo en todo el Hemisferio.

En el mundo de la posguerra fría, caracterizado por los rigores que impone la globalización, la labor de los congresos en cada uno de nuestros países es fundamental para el mantenimiento de la paz, la estabilidad, la protección efectiva de los derechos humanos y la lucha contra flagelos como el terrorismo, el tráfico ilícito de armas, la corrupción y las drogas ilícitas. Para responder con mayor eficiencia a estos retos, se requiere la participación de todos los países del Hemisferio en la conformación y aplicación de marcos normativos comunes que guíen nuestra actividad colectiva a través de la cooperación. Estos marcos normativos son las convenciones, los tratados y las declaraciones que elaboramos en esta Casa.

En nombre del Consejo Permanente, quiero aprovechar su visita, señor Senador, para hacer un llamado respetuoso a todos los Estados Miembros y en particular a los congresos de nuestros países para que consideren la posibilidad de ratificar las convenciones de la OEA, especialmente en el campo de los derechos humanos, el terrorismo y el tráfico ilícito de armas.

Senador Lugar, reitero a usted nuestra más cordial bienvenida al Consejo Permanente de la OEA.

PALABRAS DEL SECRETARIO GENERAL

El PRESIDENTE: En este momento me es grato ofrecer la palabra al doctor César Gaviria, Secretario General de la Organización.

El SECRETARIO GENERAL: It is with great pleasure that we welcome the Chair of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Senator Richard G. Lugar, to the Organization of American States. This is truly a special occasion for our organization as it marks, as the Chairman of the Council said, the first time that the Chair of the Foreign Relations Committee has addressed our Permanent Council. Indeed, this is the first time that a member of the U.S. Congress has addressed this Council.

Senator Lugar, we live in a historic moment in which it seems that the entire focus of the world's attention is on the Middle East and the war on terrorism. This single-minded concern has, unfortunately, been to the detriment of many other regions of the world that undoubtedly merit significant consideration.

To have the most senior foreign policy member of the legislative branch of the U.S. Government visit the OAS is a clear demonstration of your commitment to the region and your

determination to promote positive relations among the peoples of the Americas. This, of course, comes as no surprise, as it is fully in keeping with both your personal and professional records.

At a time when the world seems more divided than united, it is a particular honor for us to have here in the House of the Americas a legislator who, in his long and fruitful career, has distinguished himself as a builder of bridges; as someone who tirelessly looks for and builds on agreement; someone who, even in challenging times, has always remained a statesman.

Senator Lugar, who was first elected in 1976, is the longest-serving U.S. Senator in Indiana history. He has served as Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee since January 2003, regaining a chairmanship he originally held between 1985 and 1986. Senator Lugar has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize and was a staunch opponent of apartheid in South Africa, spearheading efforts to secure passage of the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986. Perhaps his greatest achievement in the Senate was his sponsorship, along with Georgia Senator Sam Nunn, of the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Program, which became law in 1991. This innovative program to decommission nuclear warheads in the former Soviet Union has resulted in the destruction of more than 6,000 warheads to date. Senator Lugar holds 38 honorary doctorate degrees and has been named "Outstanding Legislator" by the American Political Science Association.

Senator Lugar's support for democracy around the world has been marked by deeds and not just words. He has observed elections in Central America and has been involved with Guatemala, El Salvador, and Nicaragua. He was co-leader of the official U.S. election observer delegation to the Philippines in 1986. In the Philippines, Senator Lugar highlighted the systematic electoral fraud committed by the Marcos regime and convinced the U.S. Government to recognize Mrs. Aquino as the rightful winner of the elections.

Senator Lugar understands that democracy means more than just holding elections. He understands too that in the Americas, we cannot hope to have fully consolidated democracies until we address the problems of corruption, inadequate social safety nets, inefficient states, and widespread poverty.

He has been a vocal advocate of sensible U.S. engagement and leadership in the world and a steadfast champion of the benefits of free trade, seeing it as an antidote to the poverty that threatens so many of the citizens of our hemisphere. He has backed bilateral free trade agreements with Chile and Uruguay and has supported the Andean Trade Preference Act (ATPA) and the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI). From our privileged vantage point here in Washington, we at the Organization have admired his tireless work and deep commitment to fostering cooperation and promoting democracy throughout the Hemisphere. His leadership has both impressed and inspired all of us.

Senator Lugar, we are delighted to have you here at this House of the Americas.

El PRESIDENTE: Gracias, señor Secretario General.

PALABRAS DEL PRESIDENTE DE LA
COMISIÓN DE RELACIONES EXTERIORES DEL SENADO DE LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS

El PRESIDENTE: Concedo ahora la palabra al Senador Lugar, Presidente de la Comisión de Relaciones Exteriores del Senado de los Estados Unidos.

El PRESIDENTE DE LA COMISIÓN DE RELACIONES EXTERIORES DEL SENADO DE LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS: I would like to express first of all my appreciation for the very generous remarks made by the Chairman of the Permanent Council, Ambassador Miguel Ruíz Cabañas of Mexico. I would like to thank OAS Secretary General César Gaviria, who will be concluding his term in September. Secretary General, you've led the Organization of American States with intelligence and vision during the last ten years. All of us in the Hemisphere are very grateful for your service.

In addition, I would like to recognize Assistant Secretary General Luigi Einaudi and Ambassador John Maisto who was with me, I might add parenthetically, in the Philippines in 1986. Both of these talented American diplomats have provided decades of service to the Hemisphere.

It's really an honor and a special privilege to address this special meeting of the Permanent Council of the OAS. I'm honored by the presence of so many ambassadors and other friends, including Secretary General-elect Rodríguez. I look forward to visiting with each one of you at the reception following this meeting.

The end of many military dictatorships in the Western Hemisphere during the 1970s and the 1980s was one of the most important developments of the late 20th century. The generals no longer rule in Latin America. The Organization of American States deserves our gratitude for being a key participant in fostering the wave of democracy that swept over the Hemisphere.

I would mention parenthetically that I represented President Reagan in the 1985 presidential election in Guatemala and visited with the military people prior to that time to make certain that an election was going to be held. Likewise, I observed an election in El Salvador the following year, and I participated with then Vice President George Bush in presidential inaugurations in Costa Rica, Honduras, and Nicaragua, and finally, when Vice President Bush became President, in El Salvador.

I mention these events because they were times of intense participation by our presidents, our vice presidents, and members of Congress who were appointed by the Administration to take part personally. On those occasions, I had the opportunity to meet some of you. I look forward to renewing some of those ties today.

But here at the dawn of the 21st century, we should be candid today. Democracy is being tested in the Hemisphere. Lately in Latin America and the Caribbean, we have even heard voices asking whether democracy makes sense any more.

We in the United States have been working for more than 200 years to understand and to perfect our democracy. In our history, we have suffered the horrors and injustices of slavery and segregation. Our society struggled for decades to achieve voting rights for women and minorities. Even today, protecting the sanctity of the ballot box requires constant vigilance in our country. Our

experience and that of many of our friends around the world, including Latin America, has taught us that democracy is both difficult to establish and very hard to maintain, but it is clearly worth the sacrifice.

We have seen in the Middle East the instability and the conflict that are born in a region where, thus far, democracy has failed to gain a broad foothold. We have seen the violent frustrations of generations of people who do not have a true voice in their governance and who do not have promising economic prospects.

In our neighborhood of countries, democracy's friends have been worried by developments in Venezuela, where political conflict threatens democracy and the rule of law. In May, Venezuelans validated the necessary signatures to trigger a recall referendum on President Chávez. It is important that the democratic mechanisms in the Venezuelan Constitution be followed. I was pleased to learn that the Organization of American States and the Atlanta-based Carter Center plan to continue work in Venezuela until the recall referendum is held.

But Venezuela is not the only place in the region where democracy is being tested. Earlier this year, Haiti's toxic mix of abject poverty and political violence created a climate of fear and near anarchy that led to President Aristide's departure. Last fall in Bolivia, months of street protests by indigenous groups drove President Sánchez de Lozada from office, and more than two years ago in Argentina, deadly riots amid the financial crisis forced out President de la Rúa. And, in January 2000, a group of disgruntled army officers and indigenous protestors forced Ecuadorian President Mahuad from office before he could finish his term.

There are, of course, many examples of places where democracy is flourishing. Costa Rica has maintained a commitment to democracy that has spanned several generations. It has built a strong foundation of education that undergirds its current prosperity. Chile has managed to reduce poverty significantly while enhancing democracy. Mexico peacefully ended a one-party system while maintaining stable development. The English-speaking Caribbean has resisted totalitarian temptations and strengthened democratic institutions.

But for the Hemisphere as a whole, several years of steady progress were not enough to totally solidify democratic institutions. In some countries, factions are still willing to short-circuit the democratic process in pursuit of a political outcome favorable to their interests.

The sources of this regional turmoil are related to the boom years of the 1990s, which benefited many but left many behind. Fiscal and monetary policies did not adequately spread economic gains. The increased number of poor citizens, who in some countries were concentrated within the indigenous communities, led to a rise in populist politics that look for quick political gains, sometimes without reference to democratic procedures.

Although recent setbacks are troubling, we must take the long view, and I believe that stable democracy and abundant prosperity will become the norm in the Western Hemisphere because we enjoy so many advantages. Much of our hemisphere is rich in natural resources. We benefit from two oceans that give us access to the sea lanes of the world. We face fewer language barriers than many regions, and while conflict has certainly occurred, our modern history has not been dominated by war within our own hemisphere. We face fewer non-negotiable issues and less reflexive hatred

than many regions, but most of all, our peoples always believe in progress and we are capable of greatness. As a region, we can succeed together.

Now, to achieve that success, we must recommit ourselves to the principles and the hard work of democracy. I offer five steps that we must undertake to strengthen democratic institutions and reinvigorate the enthusiasm of our people for the challenges that confront democratic societies.

First, in the spirit of partnership, we need to address poverty and economic dislocation in Latin America and the Caribbean. A recent United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) survey found that democracies lose citizens' support because of inequality and extreme poverty. Today, 44 percent of Latin Americans live below the poverty line, and they often believe that free market policies and liberal democracy are at least partially responsible for their problems. By helping to improve basic living conditions, we will be creating the building blocks upon which democracy can flourish.

I would like to highlight Brazil's Zero Hunger Program as an excellent concept for fighting poverty that should be promoted in other countries in the Hemisphere. The Zero Hunger Program aims to tackle poverty by providing additional income through an electronic debit card that enables people to buy basic food items. The additional demand for these basic foods should, it is hoped, stimulate their production by small-scale farmers, who represent a large portion of the country's poor and hungry.

Brazil is expanding the program beyond hunger abatement to include other aspects of social policy, especially education. This program demonstrates the willingness of the Brazilian Government to address poverty in creative ways. Brazil is allocating human and financial resources with a view to granting millions of marginalized Brazilians the basic benefits and rights of full-fledged citizenship.

Second, democracy in Latin American and the Caribbean will be strengthened by broadening property rights. I believe we should promote the concepts of Peruvian economist Hernando de Soto, whose Institute for Liberty and Democracy (ILD) is working to establish clear property rights for the poor in Latin America and the Caribbean. Outdated and bureaucratic laws currently prevent most in the Hemisphere from using assets, such as shops, land, and livestock for loans to finance their crops or start new businesses. Changes could unlock billions of investment dollars for the poor and give them a stake in their economies through their own empowerment.

El Salvador, for example, has employed de Soto's concepts with good results. Between 1992 and 2002, this program legalized more than 250,000 plots of land that were previously settled without legal title. According to the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), small Salvadorian landowners have been able to borrow \$800 million in mortgages annually. Before the legal reforms in El Salvador, it took an ambitious entrepreneur an average of 115 days to open a new business. Now, thanks to the reforms, it takes an average of only 60 days. Upward mobility from poverty to the middle class is greatly enhanced when poor citizens are not constrained by bureaucracy from fully employing their own property.

Third, even as we embrace trade as a tool of development, we must pay closer attention to preparing nations to trade successfully. Concluding trade agreements that lower trade barriers can provide a necessary foundation for economic growth, but other ingredients are needed as well.

Successful trade, like successful democracy, requires hard work to establish and even harder work to maintain.

Specifically, the United States needs to increase cooperation with Latin and Caribbean governments and the private sector to maximize trade capacity-building programs that create current jobs and train young people for the jobs of the future.

Some nations require assistance to reach a position in which trade can be an engine of economic growth. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is helping several Caribbean Community (CARICOM) member states develop national trade capacity-building strategies. This will help them to participate more effectively in negotiations on the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) and to implement the terms of such an agreement.

During 2003, USAID programs provided more than \$50 million in assistance directly related to the needs and priorities of the U.S.-Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) and an additional \$5 million in assistance indirectly related to CAFTA. This assistance makes a difference. I will advocate to the Administration of my country and my colleagues in the Senate that much more should be provided.

Fourth, democracy in the Hemisphere would benefit greatly from the strengthening of the OAS itself. During the last ten years, the Summits of the Americas have expanded the number of OAS mandates. Since 1994, the leaders of our hemisphere have demonstrated their confidence in the OAS by making it a critical player in advancing the political, economic, and social commitments they have made. The Inter-American Democratic Charter, not even three years old, already has been pivotal in defending democracy throughout the Americas. These Summits have brought us closer as a community of nations.

Despite this success, the OAS still is an underutilized resource of tremendous potential. It possesses the trust and goodwill of most people of this hemisphere. This moral authority is a precious and rare commodity in international discourse that could be put to even greater use in solving conflicts, in promoting fair elections, in protecting the environment, and in developing strategies for development. For example, the OAS should continue to serve as an anchor for democracy and long-term development in Haiti. It is ideally placed to work with the Brazilian, Mexican, and Canadian election authorities to help Haiti organize its upcoming local and national elections.

Each member state should consider what more it can contribute to the overall operations of the OAS. In a few cases, these contributions may be financial, but in many cases the contributions may involve political support, information, expert personnel, or other commitments.

One function of the OAS that should be strengthened is its efforts to address poverty. The Inter-American Council for Integral Development (IACD) needs more resources to construct and highlight innovative development programs. I am committed to working with members of the OAS and my colleagues in Congress to expand resources for this function, and I would add that we will take from this meeting the Secretary General's mention of specific pieces of legislation or treaties and attempt to reflect action.

Finally, the cause of stable democracy in the Western Hemisphere would be immeasurably strengthened if the United States would examine and then improve its own inconsistent engagement with Latin America. This failure is not unique to any single presidential administration in our country. In fact, as I have spoken to President Bush and Secretary Powell, I am confident that they are committed to achieving closer ties to Latin America and the Caribbean. They have visited the region several times, and they have supported important initiatives in the Hemisphere. They recognize the tremendous potential of the region and the advancements in democracy that have occurred in the last two decades.

But the United States and our complex federal and state political procedures have neglected relationships with other nations in the Hemisphere. Latin America and the Caribbean are among our most important trading partners and the cultural homeland to a large and increasing number of productive Americans. The United States must treat its own hemisphere as a priority and not as an afterthought. Over the decades, the United States has failed to embrace opportunities throughout Latin America because our policy toward the Hemisphere was often unnecessarily constrained by partisan battles over Cold War policies. In recent years, Congress has spent an inordinate amount of time, in my judgment, on the question of Cuba. As important as this issue is for historical and cultural reasons, Cuba is a small corner of our hemisphere. Attention to Cuba must not come at the expense of more comprehensive policies toward a region of 540 million people.

For decades, the Latin American policies of the United States have suffered from a crisis mentality. We have tended to pay attention to specific Latin American and Caribbean countries only when we perceive a problem. Since September 11, 2001, understandably, the attention of the American people and its government has been focused beyond our own hemisphere, but we cannot make the mistake of adopting a “no nukes, no terrorists, no problem” approach to our own region. To do so would squander many important friendships and increase the chances that failed democracies would exist at our doorstep.

Therefore, my message to you today is that democracy, opportunity, and the rule of law will prevail in our hemisphere if we are faithful to these concepts. With patient investment in the building blocks of democracy, the Western Hemisphere has unlimited potential for economic and political growth. The people of the West have shown that they will respond to thoughtful leadership with sacrifice and commitment.

I am heartened by your devotion to this important work. I look forward to celebrating with you the triumphs of democracy in our hemisphere.

I thank you very much. [Aplausos.]

El PRESIDENTE: I thank Senator Lugar for his remarks. They will be registered in the proceedings of this meeting, Senator, and I'm sure they will serve truly as a basis for reflection by this Permanent Council.

Pido a las señoras y los señores Representantes permanecer en su respectivo sitio para aguardar el saludo protocolar del Senador Lugar. Posteriormente, los Representantes Permanentes y las delegaciones que así lo deseen pueden pasar al Salón Miranda para conversar con el Senador Lugar.

Se levanta la sesión.

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