



THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES OF AMERICAN STATES

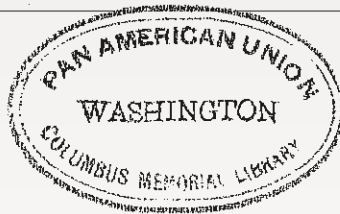
1889-1928

A Collection of the Conventions, Recommendations, Resolutions, Reports, and Motions adopted by the First Six International Conferences of the American States, and Documents relating to the Organization of the Conferences

EDITED WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

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REPLY OF COLOMBIA TO BOLÍVAR'S INVITATION TO THE CONGRESS OF PANAMA,
FEBRUARY 6, 1825¹

His Excellency General SIMÓN BOLÍVAR, etc.

GREAT AND GOOD FRIEND AND FAITHFUL ALLY: I have read with the greatest pleasure your very estimable note dated at the city of Lima on the 7th of December ultimo, setting forth

¹ International American Conference. *Reports of Committees and Discussions Thereon*, vol. iv, p. 161.

your earnest desire to see the States of America, which were Spanish, meeting in an assembly within six months, if possible.

It is for me extremely satisfactory to assure you that I, being animated by the same sentiments, have taken at once all the necessary measures to hasten the accomplishment of an event of such great importance for our safety and future happiness. The necessities of the new American States, their position with regard to Europe, and the stubbornness of the King of Spain in not recognizing them as sovereign powers, demand from us, and from our dear allies, now more than ever, the adoption of a system of political combinations, which shall nip in the bud any attempt however to involve us in new calamities. The dangerous principle of intervention that some cabinets of the Old World have adopted, and carried on so earnestly in our own days, demands on our part serious consideration, not only because of its tendency to encourage the almost extinguished hopes of our obstinate enemies, but also on account of the obnoxious consequences which the introduction in America of a rule, so subversive to the sovereign rights of the people, will necessarily produce. It seems to me, nevertheless, that however great our desire may be to lay, at least, the foundations of this work, the most wonderful ever undertaken and witnessed after the fall of the Roman Empire, our common interest requires the assembly of plenipotentiaries herein referred to to meet at the Isthmus of Panama, with the concurrence of all or at least the greatest part of the American governments, whether belligerents or neutral, as they all are interested in resisting the alleged right of intervention, of which some powers of the south of Europe have already been made the victims.

In order to secure this concurrence, instructions have been sent, under date of the 15th of July último, to our chargé d'affaires at Buenos Ayres, directing him to make efforts to persuade that Government to send plenipotentiaries to the assembly at Panama, although the steps taken in that direction in 1822 proved unsuccessful. We have also waited with the greatest anxiety for the ratification of our treaty of alliance and perpetual federation with the State of Chili, of which no information whatever has been yet received. And it is probable that the sessions of the present legislature will be closed without completing a similar compact with the Provinces of Guatemala, which are represented at this Capital by a minister, and whose recognition we have withheld through considerations of respect to our faithful ally, the Republic of Mexico. I therefore entertain the hope that the assembly of the American nations will consist of representatives of the Republics of Colombia, Mexico, Guatemala, Peru, and even Chili and Buenos Ayres, if, as it is probable, the policy of the latter country becomes more in harmony with ours, after the installation of the Congress of the United Provinces of the River Plata.

In regard to the United States I have thought it advisable to invite them to join us in the august assembly of Panama, as I am firmly persuaded that none among the allies will fail to see with satisfaction those sincere and enlightened friends take part in our deliberations upon subjects referring to our common interest. The instructions which on this matter have been transmitted to our envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary in Washington, will make you acquainted in full with the reasons which induced me to take this step.

The Government of Colombia, will with great pleasure, within four months to be counted from the present day, appoint two plenipotentiaries, who shall represent it at the Isthmus of Panama; and will give them instructions to meet the plenipotentiaries of Peru, and enter with them immediately into such preliminary arrangements as may be required for the opening of the General Assembly, which perhaps may take place on the 1st of October of the present year. For the purpose of facilitating this result, I dare to venture the following suggestions: First, that the Governments of Colombia and Peru empower their plenipotentiaries to hold preparatory conferences at the Isthmus of Panama, and enter into direct correspondence with the secretaries of foreign relations, of Mexico, Guatemala, Chili and Buenos Ayres and urge them to send without any loss of time, plenipotentiaries of those Republics to the General Assembly. Second, that the plenipotentiaries of Colombia and Peru be given



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full liberty to select in the Isthmus of Panama such locality as they may deem to be the best, owing to its sanitary conditions, for the holding of the preparatory conferences. Third, that upon the meeting at the Isthmus of Panama of the plenipotentiaries of Colombia, Peru, Mexico and Guatemala, or at least of three of the said Republics, power be given to them to appoint, by agreement, the day of the opening of the General Assembly. Fourth, that the General Assembly of the Confederate States be given, in the same way, full liberty to select within the Isthmus of Panama the place most suitable, on account of its sanitary conditions, for the holding of its sessions. Fifth, that the plenipotentiaries of Colombia and Peru be instructed not to leave the Isthmus of Panama for any reason whatever, after the opening of the preparatory conferences, but remain there until the General Assembly of the Confederate States is open, and its sessions are terminated.

I hope that these suggestions will show you how vivid is the interest that the Republic of Colombia feels toward seeing the great designs of Divine Providence accomplished in our beautiful hemisphere. I ask God fervently to keep you in His holy guard.

Given, signed by my hand, and countersigned in the City of Bogotá, on the 6th of February of 1825, and the 15th of the Independence of Colombia.

F. DE P. SANTANDER.