



OAS SECRETARY GENERAL HIGHLIGHTS THE STRENGTH AND POTENTIAL OF THE INTER-AMERICAN DEMOCRATIC CHARTER

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The Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS), José Miguel Insulza, today praised the strength demonstrated by the Inter-American Democratic Charter in preventing and solving regional conflicts in a lecture that ended the two-day XIII Annual Conference of the Andean Development Corporation (CAF), sponsored by the OAS and the foundation Inter-American Dialogue.

Secretary General Insulza also stressed that the Inter-American Democratic Charter has the potential to be even more effective with the expansion of a few normative aspects, particularly in what regards greater access to the Charter and a more precise definition of what constitutes “a grave threat or rupture of the democratic order,” to allow for preventive action by the OAS.

He recalled that these two subjects were included in a report presented before the Permanent Council of the OAS for the fifth anniversary of the signing of the Charter.

For the Secretary General, that would mean the “possibility of raising the means of protection and prevention” at the disposal of the Inter-American System, which would constitute a “great step forward.” “If we look at the problems in the region in the last few years, a great majority of them were resolved based on the Charter or could have been if the Charter had contained some elements that it doesn’t have.”

Nevertheless, Secretary General Insulza said, in no instance should the expansion of the Inter-American Democratic Charter lead to the creation of “a supranational system of control of democracy” in the form of an internal OAS branch. “We will not have that,” he stated.

The current situation in Honduras is, according to Secretary General Insulza, a good example of how the Inter-American Democratic Charter could improve its efficiency. “Having instruments such as the aforementioned would have allowed for a solution to the Honduran case before there was even a Honduran case.”

“The OAS was aware of the problems arisen in Honduras, and even though it did not foresee the coup, it gave them enough importance to form an urgent mission headed by the Secretary General and made up of ambassadors of the various member countries, that was to visit the country on Monday, June 29. But that decision, which was not able to prevent the coup, was only possible when President José Manuel Zelaya requested it; otherwise, we did not have the tools to get there,” explained the Secretary General Insulza. “What is needed, therefore, is greater capacity for prevention to be bestowed by the light of the Democratic Charter.”

The lecture delivered by Secretary General Insulza was introduced by Dr. Rodrigo Pardo, former minister of Foreign Relations of Colombia and current editor of “Cambio” magazine.