

AG/RES. 2694 (XLI-O/11)

PROMOTION AND STRENGTHENING OF DEMOCRACY:
FOLLOW-UP TO THE INTER-AMERICAN DEMOCRATIC CHARTER

(Adopted at the fourth plenary session, held on June 7, 2011)

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY,

REAFFIRMING the provisions and essential purposes and principles identified in the Charter of the Organization of American States;

SHARING the conviction expressed in the Declaration of the Latin American and Caribbean Unity Summit that democracy is one of our region's most valued conquests and that the peaceful transmission of power through constitutional means and in strict compliance with the constitutional rules of each of our states is the product of a continuous and irreversible process in which the region admits no interruptions or setbacks;

AWARE that the Charter of the Organization of American States establishes in its preamble "that representative democracy is an indispensable condition for the stability, peace and development of the region" and that one of the essential purposes of the Organization is "[t]o promote and consolidate representative democracy, with due respect for the principle of non-intervention";

AWARE ALSO that the Charter of the Organization of American States establishes that "[e]very State has the right to choose, without external interference, its political, economic, and social system and to organize itself in the way best suited to it, and has the duty to abstain from intervening in the affairs of another State. Subject to the foregoing, the American States shall cooperate fully among themselves, independently of the nature of their political, economic, and social systems";

RECALLING that the Inter-American Democratic Charter states that "[t]he peoples of the Americas have a right to democracy and their governments have an obligation to promote and defend it" and that "[d]emocracy is essential for the social, political, and economic development of the peoples of the Americas";

RECALLING ALSO that the Inter-American Democratic Charter reaffirms that the promotion and protection of human rights is a basic prerequisite for the existence of a democratic society and recognizes the importance of the continuous development and strengthening of the inter-American human rights system for the consolidation of democracy;

AWARE that Article 34 of the Charter of the Organization of American States establishes that "[t]he Member States agree that equality of opportunity, the elimination of extreme poverty, equitable distribution of wealth and income and the full participation of their peoples in decisions relating to their own development are, among others, basic objectives of integral development";

RECOGNIZING that the Inter-American Democratic Charter establishes that “[e]ssential 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 that the participatory nature of democracy in our countries in different aspects of public life contributes to the consolidation of democratic values and to freedom and solidarity in the Hemisphere;

RECOGNIZING ALSO the importance of the Organization of American States (OAS) continuing to develop programs and activities aimed at promoting democratic principles and practices and strengthening a democratic culture in the Hemisphere, as well as the advisability of the OAS consulting and cooperating on an ongoing basis with member states;

RECALLING that the Inter-American Democratic Charter establishes that “[t]he promotion and observance of economic, social, and cultural rights are inherently linked to integral development, equitable economic growth, and to the consolidation of democracy in the states of the Hemisphere”;

BEARING IN MIND that the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man and the American Convention on Human Rights express the values and principles of liberty, equality, and social justice, which are inherent to democracy;

RECALLING that the Inter-American Democratic Charter establishes that “[i]t is the right and responsibility of all citizens to participate in decisions relating to their own development. This is also a necessary condition for the full and effective exercise of democracy. Promoting and fostering diverse forms of participation strengthens democracy”;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT resolutions AG/RES. 1957 (XXXIII-O/03), “Promotion and Strengthening of Democracy: Follow-up to the Inter-American Democratic Charter”; AG/RES. 2154 (XXXV-O/05), “Promotion of Regional Cooperation for Implementation of the Inter-American Democratic Charter”; AG/RES. 2251 (XXXVI-O/06), “Promotion of Regional Cooperation for Implementation of the Inter-American Democratic Charter on the Occasion of Its Fifth Anniversary”; and AG/RES. 2327 (XXXVII-O/07), AG/RES. 2422 (XXXVIII-O/08), AG/RES. 2480 (XXXIX-O/09) and AG/RES. 2555 (XL-O/10), “Promotion and Strengthening of Democracy: Follow-up to the Inter-American Democratic Charter”;

HAVING SEEN the reports of the Permanent Council on the implementation of resolutions AG/RES. 2044 (XXXIV-O/04) and AG/RES. 2045 (XXXIV-O/04) (CP/doc.4024/05 and CP/CISC-182/05, respectively), resolution AG/RES. 2119 (XXXV-O-05), the reports of the Secretary General on the implementation of resolutions AG/RES. 1993 (XXXIV-O/04) [CP/CISC-174/05] and AG/RES. 2327 (XXXVII-O/07), as well as the implementation of resolutions AG/RES. 2422 (XXXVIII-O/08) and AG/RES. 2555 (XL-O/10);

TAKING NOTE that the Declaration of Mar del Plata, “Creating Jobs to Fight Poverty and Strengthen Democratic Governance,” of the Fourth Summit of the Americas, reaffirmed the “commitment to fight poverty, inequality, hunger, and social exclusion in order to raise the standard of living of our peoples and strengthen democratic governance in the Americas”;

RECALLING that in the Declaration of Mar del Plata, the heads of state and government reiterated their “commitment to the OAS Charter and the Inter-American Democratic Charter” and reaffirmed their “resolve to strengthen their full and effective implementation”;

RECALLING ALSO that in the Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain, “Securing Our Citizens’ Future by Promoting Human Prosperity, Energy Security and Environmental Sustainability,”^{1/} of the Fifth Summit of the Americas, the heads of state and government reaffirmed their commitment to “uphold the principles of and fully implement the Inter-American Democratic Charter”;

CONSIDERING that the Declaration of Nuevo León of the Special Summit of the Americas reaffirmed the Hemisphere’s commitment to democracy and reiterated the commitment to the full application of the Inter-American Democratic Charter, which constitutes an element of regional identity and, projected internationally, is a hemispheric contribution to the community of nations; and also recognized that corruption and impunity weaken public and private institutions, erode social values, undermine the rule of law, and distort economies and the allocation of resources for development;

REAFFIRMING solidarity and inter-American cooperation as an effective means of promoting and strengthening democratic governance in the respective countries; and

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the commencement of the dialogue on the effectiveness of the implementation of the Inter American Democratic Charter, in accordance with paragraph 14 of resolution AG/RES. 2555 (XL-O/10), “Promotion and Strengthening of Democracy: Follow-up to the Inter-American Democratic Charter,”

RESOLVES:

1. To continue promoting democratic cooperation in order to support member states, at their request, in their efforts to strengthen democratic institutions, values, practices, and governance; fight corruption; enhance the rule of law; bring about the full exercise of human rights, and reduce poverty, inequity, and social exclusion.

2. To reaffirm that the promotion and protection of human rights is a prerequisite for a democratic society, and that it is important to continue to develop and strengthen the inter-American human rights system.

3. To recognize the importance of promoting the principles, values, and practices of a democratic culture; and to request the General Secretariat to continue supporting this objective through training programs to promote the principles, values, and practices of a democratic culture, on the basis of articles 26 and 27 of the Inter-American Democratic Charter.

4. To reaffirm, as applicable, the mandates contained in resolution AG/RES. 2555 (XL-O/10), “Promotion and Strengthening of Democracy: Follow-up to the Inter-American Democratic Charter,” and, in this context, to reiterate the request to the Secretary General to present a report to the Permanent Council on all cases in which action on his part is called for in the Charter of the Organization of American States and the Inter-American Democratic Charter.

1. The Government of Nicaragua places on record its express reservation to the Declaration of the Fifth Summit of the Americas, held in Port of Spain, ... *(the text of this footnote continues on page 304.)*

5. To highlight the substantive contribution made by the Organization of American States (OAS) to the strengthening and development of electoral processes and systems in the member states, through OAS electoral observation missions, electoral advice, and technical cooperation, upon the request of a member state and consistent with the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation.

6. To request the General Secretariat to provide assistance to member states that so request in the implementation of recommendations contained in the reports of OAS electoral observation missions.

7. To encourage donors to pursue, through the General Secretariat, a coordinated donor approach to the support of OAS electoral observation missions in order to facilitate the early planning of missions.

8. To recommend to the General Secretariat that it support the modernization and strengthening of democratic institutions in the member states that so request, and promote cooperation and dialogue among these institutions as a means to build capacity and share experiences, including in the field of information and communications technology (ICT) and e-government.

9. To request the General Secretariat and member states to continue to promote a hemispheric discussion of issues relating to democratic governance, through dialogue, forums, and seminars.

10. To recognize the important role of participation by all sectors of society, including civil society, in the consolidation of democracy, given that this participation constitutes one of the vital elements for the success of development policies; and, to instruct the Permanent Council to convene the special meeting, in accordance with paragraph 13 of resolution AG/RES. 2555 (XL-O/10), no later than November 2011.

11. To instruct the Permanent Council to continue the dialogue on the effectiveness of the implementation of the Inter-American Democratic Charter, in accordance with paragraph 14 of resolution AG/RES. 2555 (XL-O/10), and that in 2011, the year of the tenth anniversary of the adoption of said Charter, it prepare its final report on the results or progress of same.

12. To request the General Secretariat to report to the General Assembly at its forty-second regular session on the implementation of this resolution. Execution of the activities envisaged in this resolution will be subject to the availability of financial resources in the program-budget of the Organization and other resources.