



## **DECLARATION OF LIMA TO PREVENT, COMBAT, AND ELIMINATE TERRORISM**

(Adopted at the second plenary session, held on April 26, 1996)

The ministers and the heads of delegation of the member states of the Organization of American States (OAS), meeting in Lima, Peru, from April 23 to 26, 1996, for the Inter-American Specialized Conference on Terrorism,

TAKING AS A BASIS the principles and purposes enshrined in the Charter of the Organization of American States;

RECALLING that the Convention to Prevent and Punish the Acts of Terrorism Taking the Form of Crimes against Persons and Related Extortion That Are of International Significance, signed in Washington, D.C., in 1971; resolutions AG/RES. 4 (I-E/70), AG/RES. 775 (XV-O/85), AG/RES. 1112 (XXI-O/91), and AG/RES. 1213 (XXIII-O/93); and the Declarations of Asunción (1990) and Belém do Pará (1994) attest to an evolution in the treatment by the Organization of American States of the serious and disturbing phenomenon of terrorism;

CONSIDERING that, in the Declaration of Principles of the Summit of the Americas (Miami, December 1994), the heads of state and government said: "We condemn terrorism in all its forms, and we will, using all legal means, combat terrorist acts anywhere in the Americas with unity and vigor," and that, in the Plan of Action under the section entitled "Eliminating the Threat of National and International Terrorism" (item 7), they affirmed that this scourge constitutes "a systematic and deliberate violation of the rights of individuals and an assault on democracy itself" and decided that "a special conference of the OAS on the prevention of terrorism" should be held;

BEARING IN MIND that the ministers of foreign affairs of the Hemisphere noted in the Declaration of Montrouis: A New Vision of the OAS, adopted by the OAS General Assembly at its twenty-fifth regular session (June 1995), that "terrorism is a serious criminal phenomenon of deep concern to all member states, and that it has devastating effects on civilized coexistence, democratic institutions, and the lives, safety, and property of human beings," and that at that session the General Assembly convened an Inter-American Specialized Conference on Terrorism [AG/RES. 1350 (XXV-O/95)];

RECALLING the Declaration of Quito, signed at the IX Meeting of the Rio Group (September 1995), in which the heads of state and government said: "We reiterate our condemnation of terrorism in all its forms as well as our determination to make vigorous, united efforts to combat this scourge by all available legal means, since it violates basic human rights";

RECALLING also the Framework Treaty on Democratic Security in Central America (December 1995), signed by Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama, in which the parties undertake to prevent and combat, without exception, all types of criminal activity with a regional or international impact, such as terrorism;



TAKING NOTE of the Final Declaration of the States Participating in the Meeting of Consultation on Cooperation to Prevent and Eliminate International Terrorism, adopted in Buenos Aires (August 1995) by Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Paraguay, the United States, and Uruguay, which, inter alia, reiterated that "the cooperation that exists between our governments must be enhanced," in the context of which an agreement was signed in March 1996 among Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay to implement effective measures in response to the criminal phenomenon of terrorism;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the recent work of the United Nations and noting the documents issued by the Ottawa P-8 Ministerial Conference on Terrorism (December 1995) and the International Conference on Counterterrorism, held in Baguio (February 1996);

MINDFUL that terrorist acts are an assault on the rule of law and democratic institutions and are often intended to destabilize democratically elected constitutional governments;

CONCERNED by the detrimental effects terrorism can have on efforts to attain the common objective of regional integration and to promote economic and social development in the countries of the Hemisphere;

RECOGNIZING that terrorist acts, by whomever and wherever perpetrated and whatever their forms, methods, or motives, are serious common crimes or felonies;

DEEPLY ALARMED at the persistence of this scourge and at its occasional links to the illicit production and use of drugs and trafficking therein, to trafficking in chemical precursors, and to money laundering, as well as its possible ties to other criminal activities;

RECOGNIZING the importance to the fight against terrorism of eliminating the illicit production and use of arms, munitions, and explosive materials and trafficking therein; and

CONVINCED that existing regional cooperation must be intensified and that concerted and effective measures must be adopted urgently in response to the threat of terrorism,

DECLARE:

1. That observance of international law, full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for the sovereignty of states, the principle of nonintervention, and strict observance of the rights and duties of states embodied in the Charter of the OAS constitute the global framework for preventing, combating, and eliminating terrorism.
2. That terrorist violence erodes peaceful and civilized coexistence, affects the rule of law and the exercise of democracy, and endangers the stability of national institutions and the socioeconomic development of our countries.



3. That terrorism, as a serious form of organized and systematic violence, which is intended to generate chaos and fear among the population, results in death and destruction and is a reprehensible criminal activity.
4. Their most emphatic condemnation of all terrorist acts, wherever and by whomever perpetrated, and all methods used to commit them, regardless of the motivation invoked to justify the acts.
5. That terrorist acts are serious common crimes or felonies and, as such, should be tried by national courts in accordance with domestic law and the guarantees provided by the rule of law.
6. Their resolve to cooperate fully on matters of extradition, in conformity with their domestic law and treaties in force on the subject, without prejudice to the right of states to grant asylum when appropriate.
7. That terrorism, as noted by the heads of state and government at the Summit of the Americas, is a violation of the fundamental rights and freedoms of individuals and an assault on democracy itself.
8. Their decision to study, on the basis of an evaluation of existing international instruments, the need for and advisability of concluding a new inter-American convention on terrorism.
9. That it is important for OAS member states to ratify or accede to international instruments on terrorism as soon as possible and, when necessary, to implement them through their domestic laws.
10. Their decision to increase cooperation among member states in combating terrorist acts, while fully observing the rule of law and international norms, especially with regard to human rights.
11. That it is essential to adopt all bilateral and regional cooperation measures necessary to prevent, combat, and eliminate, by all legal means, terrorist acts in the Hemisphere, with full respect for the jurisdiction of member states and for international treaties and conventions.