



## DECLARATION ON SECURITY IN THE AMERICAS

(Adopted at the third plenary session of October 28, 2003)

We, the States of the Americas represented at the Special Conference on Security, in Mexico City, committed to promoting and strengthening peace and security in the Hemisphere:

Recalling that the Inter-American Conference on Problems of War and Peace, held in Chapultepec, Mexico, in 1945, proposed a plan to respond to the security needs of the Americas;

Bearing in mind that the 1991 Santiago Commitment to Democracy and the Renewal of the Inter-American System decided to initiate a process of consultation on hemispheric security, from an updated and comprehensive perspective, in light of the new conditions in the region and the world;

Recalling that the Summit of the Americas in Santiago, Chile instructed the Organization of American States (OAS), through the Committee on Hemispheric Security to: “follow up on and expand topics relating to confidence and security building measures; analyze the meaning, scope, and implications of international security concepts in the Hemisphere, with a view to developing the most appropriate common approaches by which to manage their various aspects, including disarmament and arms control; and pinpoint ways to revitalize and strengthen the institutions of the inter-American system related to the various aspects of Hemispheric Security culminating in” a Special Conference on Security, to be held within the framework of the OAS;

Underscoring that the Summit of the Americas held in Quebec City, Canada asked the OAS Committee on Hemispheric Security to review all issues related to common approaches to international security in the Hemisphere, with a view to holding the Special Conference on Security;

Considering that the Declaration of Bridgetown recognized that security threats, concerns, and other challenges in the hemispheric context are of diverse nature and multidimensional scope, and that the traditional concept and approach should be expanded to encompass new and nontraditional threats, which include political, economic, social, health, and environmental aspects;

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Considering that the states of the Americas share historical roots, principles, and values of civilization that have allowed us to institute a legal order based on the Charter of the United Nations



and the Charter of the Organization of American States;

Recognizing that the states of the Hemisphere face both traditional threats to security and new threats, concerns, and other challenges that, in view of their complex characteristics, have meant that security is multidimensional in nature; and

Firmly convinced that, in view of the profound changes that have occurred in the world and in the Americas since 1945, we have a unique opportunity to reaffirm the principles, shared values, and common approaches upon which peace and security in the Hemisphere is built,

***Declare that:***

## **I. PRINCIPLES OF THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE CHARTER OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES**

1. *We reaffirm* that security in the Hemisphere has as a fundamental basis the respect of the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the Charter of the Organization of American States.

## **II. SHARED VALUES AND COMMON APPROACHES**

2. Our new concept of security in the Hemisphere is multidimensional in scope, includes traditional and new threats, concerns, and other challenges to the security of the states of the Hemisphere, incorporates the priorities of each state, contributes to the consolidation of peace, integral development, and social justice, and is based on democratic values, respect for and promotion and defense of human rights, solidarity, cooperation, and respect for national sovereignty.

3. Peace is a value and a principle in itself, based on democracy, justice, respect for human rights, solidarity, security, and respect for international law. Our security architecture will help preserve it through the strengthening of cooperation mechanisms among our states to address the traditional threats and the new threats, concerns, and other challenges facing our Hemisphere.

4. *We affirm* that our cooperation in addressing traditional threats and new threats,



concerns, and other challenges to security is also based on shared values and common approaches recognized in the Hemisphere.

Salient among them are:

a. Each state has the sovereign right to identify its own national security priorities and to define strategies, plans, and actions for addressing threats to its security, in accordance with its legal system and with full respect for international law and the norms and principles of the Charter of the OAS and the Charter of the United Nations.

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b. Representative democracy is an indispensable condition for the stability, peace, and development of the states of the Hemisphere. In particular, we reaffirm our commitment to the full observance of the Inter-American Democratic Charter and to its values, principles, and mechanisms.

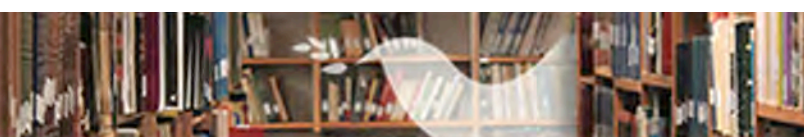
c. Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and good governance are essential for the stability, peace, and political, economic, social development of the states of the Hemisphere.

d. The constitutional subordination of all state institutions to the legally constituted civilian authority and respect for the rule of law on the part of all institutions and sectors of society are fundamental values that contribute to stability and peace in the states of the Hemisphere.

e. In our Hemisphere, as democratic states committed to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the OAS, we reaffirm that the basis and purpose of security is the protection of human beings. Security is strengthened when we deepen its human dimension. Conditions for human security are improved through full respect for people's dignity, human rights, and fundamental freedoms, as well as the promotion of social and economic development, social inclusion, and education and the fight against poverty, disease, and hunger.

f. Education for peace and the promotion of a democratic culture play a key role in the development of states, the strengthening of stability, and the consolidation of our Hemisphere as a region where understanding and mutual respect, dialogue, and cooperation prevail.

g. Social justice and human development are necessary for the stability of each state in the Hemisphere. Fostering friendly relations and inter-American cooperation for integral development strengthens security of the states of the Hemisphere.



h. The states of the Hemisphere reaffirm the importance of enhancing the participation of women in all efforts to promote peace and security, the need to increase women's decision-making role at all levels in relation to conflict prevention, management, and resolution and to integrate a gender perspective in all policies, programs, and activities of all inter-American organs, agencies, entities, conferences, and processes that deal with matters of hemispheric security.

i. The security threats, concerns, and other challenges in the hemispheric context are of diverse nature and multidimensional scope, and the traditional concept and approach must be expanded to encompass new and nontraditional threats, which include political, economic, social, health, and environmental aspects.

j. Traditional threats to security and the mechanisms for addressing them remain important and may be different in nature from the new threats, concerns, and other challenges to security and from cooperation mechanisms for addressing them.

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k. The new threats, concerns, and other challenges are cross-cutting problems that require multifaceted responses by different national organizations and in some cases partnerships between governments, the private sector, and civil society all acting appropriately in accordance with democratic norms and principles, and constitutional provisions of each state. Many of the new threats, concerns, and other challenges to hemispheric security are transnational in nature and may require appropriate hemispheric cooperation.

l. The states of the Hemisphere recognize different perspectives regarding security threats and priorities. The security architecture in our Hemisphere should be flexible and provide for the particular circumstances of each subregion and each state.

m. The security of states of the Hemisphere is affected, in different ways, by traditional threats and the following new threats, concerns, and other challenges of a diverse nature:

- terrorism, transnational organized crime, the global drug problem, corruption, asset laundering, illicit trafficking in weapons, and the connections among them;
- extreme poverty and social exclusion of broad sectors of the population, which also affect stability and democracy. Extreme poverty erodes social cohesion and undermines the security of states;
- natural and man-made disasters, HIV/AIDS and other diseases, other health risks, and environmental degradation;
- trafficking in persons;





- attacks to cyber security;
- the potential for damage to arise in the event of an accident or incident during the maritime transport of potentially hazardous materials, including petroleum and radioactive materials and toxic waste; and
- the possibility of access, possession, and use of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery by terrorists.

It is the responsibility of the specialized fora of the OAS, and inter-American and international fora to develop cooperation mechanisms to address these new threats, concerns, and other challenges, based on applicable instruments and mechanisms.

n. Subregional and regional integration processes contribute to stability and security in the Hemisphere.

o. Bilateral and subregional agreements and cooperation mechanisms in the area of security and defense are essential to strengthening security in the Hemisphere.

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p. Conflict prevention and the peaceful settlement of disputes between states are essential to the stability and security of the Hemisphere.

q. States of the Hemisphere recognize the importance of dialogue and of other national efforts to achieve resolution of situations of internal conflict and attain reconciliation and a just and lasting peace. International, inter-American, and subregional institutions and mechanisms can perform, when requested by the state concerned, a valuable role in supporting national peace and reconciliation efforts.

r. Full respect for the integrity of the national territory and for the sovereignty and political independence of each state in the region constitutes an essential basis for peaceful coexistence and security in the Hemisphere. We reaffirm the inherent right of all states to individual or collective self-defense and our commitment to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Charter of the United Nations and the OAS Charter.

s. The Hemisphere has made important advances towards the maintenance of peace. In order to guarantee that these are sustained, constant efforts are required to make effective use of the mechanisms agreed upon to prevent and peacefully resolve disputes or conflicts between states, in keeping with the OAS Charter and the Charter of the United Nations.

t. The states in the Hemisphere acknowledge the need to find prompt and peaceful solutions to the controversies that persist in the Hemisphere and undertake to make



every effort to reach negotiated agreements based on justice and full respect for international law and treaties in force.

u. Confidence- and security- building measures and transparency in defense and security policies contribute to increasing stability, safeguarding hemispheric and international peace and security, and consolidating democracy.

v. We recognize the importance and usefulness of the inter-American instruments and agreements, such as the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (Rio Treaty) and the American Treaty on Pacific Settlement (Pact of Bogotá), for states parties, recognizing the different security perspectives and commitments of the member states.

w. We reaffirm the objective of achieving an effective limitation of conventional weapons that will make it possible to devote the largest amount of resources to the economic and social development of the member states.

x. Solidarity among the American states, expressed through their economic, technical, political, legal, environmental, social, and security and defense cooperation, contributes to the stability and security of the states and the Hemisphere as a whole.

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y. The security of the Hemisphere is affected by the threats to global peace and security. At the same time, a stable and secure Hemisphere constitutes an essential component of world peace and security. Thus, the states of the Hemisphere have an important role to play in promoting international peace and stability, especially through respect for international law and support for bilateral, regional, and multilateral regimes for disarmament and non-proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction and arms control, as well as other agreements, and support for the security negotiations, mechanisms, activities, and processes within the United Nations framework.

z. We undertake to strengthen the multilateral system based on the Charter of the United Nations, the OAS Charter, and international law. We reaffirm the role of the United Nations Security Council as the organ with primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. We also reaffirm that the OAS, as a regional arrangement under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, should make every effort to achieve the peaceful settlement of local disputes and should cooperate with the United Nations Security Council to maintain international peace and security in accordance with provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and the OAS Charter.

### **III. COMMITMENTS AND COOPERATION MEASURES**

5. *We reaffirm* that democracy is a right and an essential shared value that contributes to



the  
stability, peace, and development of the states of the Hemisphere, and its full exercise is  
vital to  
enhancing the rule of law and the political, economic, and social development of peoples.  
We will  
promote and defend democracy through implementation of the OAS Charter and the  
Inter-American  
Democratic Charter and by strengthening the inter-American system for the protection of  
human  
rights.

6. *We reaffirm* our commitment to the principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes  
embodied in the Charter of the United Nations and the OAS Charter. Likewise, we  
reaffirm our  
decision to strengthen peace in the Hemisphere, through conflict prevention and the  
peaceful  
settlement of disputes. We shall continue to support bilateral subregional, and regional  
efforts,  
agreements, and mechanisms to prevent conflicts and bring about the peaceful settlement  
of disputes.

7. Furthermore, *we commit* to support actions taken by member states involved in  
disputes that  
still exist in the Hemisphere to achieve a negotiated peaceful solution of these disputes,  
so that the  
Hemisphere may be consolidated as a more stable and secure region. Consequently, we  
shall continue  
to support the work of the OAS General Secretariat through, *inter alia*, the Fund for  
Peace: Peaceful  
Settlement of Territorial Disputes, when the parties so request.

8. *We call for* renewed and ongoing attention to, and the development of appropriate  
instruments and strategies within the inter-American system to address, the special  
security concerns  
of small island states, as reflected in the Declaration of Kingstown on the Security of  
Small Island  
States.

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9. *We affirm* that strengthening bilateral and subregional agreements and mechanisms for  
cooperation on security and defense matters contributes to the region's peace and  
political stability  
and to security in the Hemisphere.

10. *We consider* that zones of peace and cooperation contribute to peace, security, and



cooperation in the Hemisphere and we therefore support the creation of zones of peace at the bilateral or subregional level by member states.

11. *We affirm* that the establishment of the first nuclear-weapons-free zone in a densely populated area through the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco) and its protocols constitutes a substantial contribution to international peace, security, and stability.

12. *We emphasize* the commitment of the states in the region to arms control, disarmament and the nonproliferation of all weapons of mass destruction and to the full implementation by all states parties of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

13. *We declare* our objective to make the Americas a region free of biological and chemical weapons.

14. *We shall prevent* the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery by, *inter alia*, resolutely supporting the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), including the universal application of the Agency's safeguards system, and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, and by establishing national standards and controls on exports of specialized materials, technology, and expertise that could contribute to the preparation, production, or use of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

15. *We reaffirm* our commitment to continue to strive to limit military spending while maintaining capabilities commensurate with our legitimate defense and security needs and fostering transparency in arms acquisitions. Continued implementation of confidence- and security-building measures is conducive to the creation of a favorable environment for this purpose.

16. *We reaffirm* that, in the context of peace, cooperation, and stability established in the Hemisphere, each American state is free to define its own defense instruments, including





the mission,  
personnel, armed forces, and public security forces needed to guarantee its sovereignty,  
and to accede  
to the corresponding legal instruments, in the context of the Charter of the United Nations  
and the  
Charter of the Organization of American States.

17. *We reiterate* that, as stated in the Declarations of Santiago and San Salvador and the  
Consensus of Miami, confidence- and security-building measures increase transparency  
and  
understanding among the states of the Hemisphere and directly bolster regional stability.  
We affirm  
that the implementation and further development of confidence- and security-building  
measures,  
within the constitutional framework of each state, contribute to peace in the Hemisphere.  
We will  
build mutual confidence by implementing, as appropriate, confidence- and security-  
building measures

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identified in the aforementioned instruments and those established under bilateral and  
multilateral  
instruments and other arrangements.

18. *We affirm* that the Conferences of Ministers of Defense of the Americas and other  
existing  
fora for consultation on defense matters in the Hemisphere have become appropriate fora  
for  
promoting mutual understanding and confidence, dialogue, and transparency in the area  
of defense.

19. *We reaffirm* that the Meetings of Ministers of Justice or Ministers or Attorneys  
General of  
the Americas (REMJA) and other meetings of criminal justice authorities are important  
and effective  
fora for promoting and strengthening mutual understanding, confidence, dialogue, and  
cooperation in  
developing criminal justice policies and responses to address new threats to security.

20. *We reaffirm* our support for establishing the Hemisphere as an anti-personnel-  
landmine-free  
zone. We welcome the cooperative approach and efforts of all states as well as those of  
the  
Organization of American States Mine Action Team to support humanitarian de-mining,  
mine risk  
education, landmine victim assistance and rehabilitation, and socio-economic recovery.



We highlight the importance of the Ottawa Convention and its universalization and support State Parties to this Convention in their efforts to implement it to rid their territories of anti-personnel landmines.<sup>1/</sup>

21. *We recognize* that our Hemisphere is in a position to contribute to global peace and security and, with this in mind, we agree to collaborate on training and organization for peacekeeping missions, so that each state, according to its capabilities and should its domestic legal system permit, may participate in operations of this sort conducted by the United Nations.

22. *We affirm* that terrorism poses a serious threat to security, the institutions, and the democratic values of states and to the well-being of our peoples. We renew our commitment to fight terrorism and its financing with full respect for the rule of law and international law, including international humanitarian law, international human rights law, international refugee law, the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism, and United Nations Security Council resolution 1373 (2001). We will undertake to promote the universalization and effective implementation of current international conventions and protocols related to terrorism.

23. In the legal framework referred to in the previous paragraph, *we shall foster*, in the countries of the Hemisphere, the capacity to prevent, punish, and eliminate terrorism. We shall strengthen the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism and bilateral, subregional, and hemispheric cooperation, through information exchange and the broadest possible mutual legal assistance to prevent and suppress the financing of terrorism, prevent the international movement of terrorists, without prejudice to applicable international commitments in relation to the free movement of people and the facilitation of commerce, and ensure the prosecution, in accordance with domestic law, of those who participate in planning, preparing, or committing acts of terrorism, and those who directly or indirectly provide or collect funds with the intention that they should be used, or in the knowledge that they are to be used, in order to carry out terrorist acts. We undertake to identify and



fight new  
terrorist threats, whatever their origin or motivation, such as threats to cyber security,  
biological  
terrorism, and threats to critical infrastructure.

1. The United States cannot join consensus on this paragraph, both because of its  
substance and because  
the United States is reviewing its landmine policy.

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24. *We emphasize* the need to reinforce existing efforts in the Hemisphere with regard to  
transportation security with those of the International Civil Aviation Organization and the  
International Maritime Organization, without prejudice to the flow of trade. Furthermore,  
it is

important to coordinate national and multilateral initiatives in the area of transportation  
and port  
security, through such regional fora as the Western Hemisphere Transport Initiative, the  
Inter-  
American Ports Commission, the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism (CICTE),  
the Inter-  
American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD), and the Consultative Committee  
of the Inter-  
American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms,  
Ammunition,  
Explosives, and Other Related Materials (CIFTA).

25. *We condemn* transnational organized crime, since it constitutes an assault on  
institutions in  
our states and negatively affects our societies. We renew our commitment to fighting it  
by  
strengthening the domestic legal framework, the rule of law, and multilateral cooperation,  
respectful  
of the sovereignty of each state, in particular through the exchange of information,  
mutual legal  
assistance, and extradition. We shall combat transnational organized crime, *inter alia*, by  
fully  
implementing the obligations contracted by the states parties to the United Nations  
Convention on  
Transnational Organized Crime and its three protocols, so that money laundering,  
kidnapping, illicit  
trafficking in human beings, corruption, and other related crimes are criminalized in the  
Hemisphere  
and so that the assets from the proceeds of these crimes are identified, traced, frozen or  
seized and are  
ultimately confiscated and disposed of. We shall also improve coordination and technical  
cooperation



to strengthen national institutions dedicated to preventing and sanctioning these transnational crimes and identifying and prosecuting members of transnational criminal organizations.

26. *We will develop* a culture of cybersecurity in the Americas by taking effective preventive measures to anticipate, address, and respond to cyberattacks, whatever their origin, fighting against cyber threats and cybercrime, criminalizing attacks against cyberspace, protecting critical infrastructure and securing networked systems. We reaffirm our commitment to develop and implement an integral OAS cybersecurity strategy, utilizing the contributions and recommendations developed jointly by member state experts and the REMJA Governmental Experts Group on Cybercrime, CICTE, the Inter-American Telecommunication Commission (CITEL), and other appropriate organs, taking into consideration the existing work developed by member states, coordinated with the Committee on Hemispheric Security.

27. *We reaffirm* that multilateral cooperation, based on shared responsibility, integrity, balance, mutual trust, and full respect for the sovereignty of states, is essential for addressing the global drug problem and related crimes, which constitute a threat to the security of the region. We shall strengthen CICAD and the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism, so as to advance the fight against the illicit production, trafficking, and consumption of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and related crimes.

28. *We are convinced* that the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, ammunition, explosives, and related materials are a threat to hemispheric security and, when these are used by terrorists and criminals, undermines the rule of law, breeds violence and, in some cases, impunity, exacerbates conflicts, and represents a serious threat to human security. We reiterate the need for effective cooperation to prevent, combat, and eradicate this threat and we recognize the value of the CIFTA.





29. *We shall combat* the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, ammunition, explosives, and other related materials by, among other actions, destroying excess stocks of firearms designated by each State, securing and managing national stockpiles, and regulating firearms brokering, including sanctions for illicit arms brokering for the purpose of avoiding their diversion through illicit channels and their proliferation. Likewise, we shall strengthen efforts at bilateral and multilateral cooperation and, in particular, coordination and cooperation among the Consultative Committee of the CIFTA, CICAD, CICTE and the United Nations.

30. *We emphasize* that money laundering erodes the integrity, probity, and transparent operations of public and private financial institutions and its harmful effects extend to other sectors of society. We shall continue to work within the framework of CICAD, and with other relevant regional and international bodies, to strengthen cooperation and the exchange of information on controls within our countries' financial systems, so as to eradicate this crime.

31. *We reaffirm* our commitment to the fight against both passive and active corruption, which constitutes a threat to the security of our states and undermines public and private institutions and society's trust, does enormous economic damage, compromises stability, erodes the rule of law, and weakens the ability of governments to respond to other security threats. Its effects extend to different fields of activity in our states. Thus, cooperation, mutual legal assistance, extradition, and concerted action to combat corruption constitute a political and moral imperative. We pledge to strengthen the Follow-up Mechanism of the Inter-American Convention against Corruption and to support the United Nations Convention on this same question.

32. *We underscore* the role of education for peace and the strengthening of democracy in our Hemisphere as a region where tolerance, dialogue, and mutual respect prevail as peaceful forms of coexistence. We recommend that both in each state and in the corresponding inter-American instances, particularly the Inter-American Education Committee, actions be taken to



promote  
democratic culture in keeping with the provisions of the Inter-American Democratic Charter.

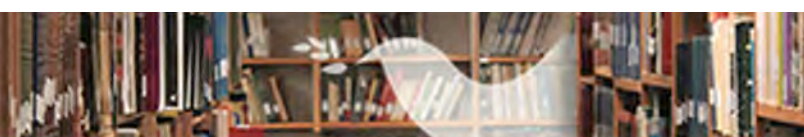
33. *We agree*, in the context of our commitment to a democratic culture, to strengthen civil society participation in considering, developing, and implementing multidimensional approaches to security.

34. *We underscore* the importance of continuing to ensure and promote the protection of refugees, those granted asylum, and asylum-seekers in a context of solidarity and effective cooperation among all states, in accordance with the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol and international principles governing the protection of refugees. We underscore the importance of providing protection and assistance for internally displaced persons. Likewise, we renew the call for international and inter-American cooperation in situations of mass refugee flows to facilitate voluntary repatriation under dignified and safe conditions, and, whenever appropriate and feasible, bearing in mind national possibilities, local integration or resettlement of refugees in a third state, in accordance with international standards.

35. *We shall strengthen* cooperation mechanisms and actions to address extreme poverty, inequality, and social exclusion on an urgent basis. Overcoming these unacceptable conditions is a primary task of the states of the Hemisphere, which requires continued commitment and actions to promote economic and social development, and education, and should be complemented with

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coordination, cooperation, and solidarity among states, and action by international financial institutions, including innovative financial mechanisms that emerge in the competent fora. We also reaffirm our commitment to combating extreme poverty within our states by adopting and implementing actions in accordance with the Millennium Development Goals, the Monterrey Consensus, and the Declaration of Margarita, *inter alia*, promoting development through economic cooperation of the Hemisphere, and fully utilizing national, regional, and international



development  
agencies.

36. *We affirm* our decision to collaborate, at the request of the state that so requires, in the search for urgent solutions to financial crises that may affect the political, economic, or social stability of the member state. Therefore, we will support member states in the search for a solution to the crisis, with due urgency, through negotiations within the institutional framework of the international financial organizations.

37. *We express* our concern over the fact that lack of access to and insufficient health care aggravate marginalization and extreme poverty. We reaffirm that universal and nondiscriminatory access to basic health services, including health education and prevention programs, is an ongoing commitment of our states. We also propose strengthening education and information campaigns to prevent the spread of diseases.

38. *We note* that inadequate health care exacerbates the spread of HIV/AIDS and other epidemic diseases, which represents a serious threat with greater impact on the states of the Hemisphere having fewer resources to prevent and combat them. We propose to develop crosscutting strategies, principally within the framework of the World Health Organization and the Pan American Health Organization with a gender perspective, and cooperation mechanisms to combat these diseases and their consequences, channeling increased national, multilateral, and bilateral resources to this end, with a view to improving availability and access to medications for all, particularly for the most vulnerable populations. We will improve the health of our peoples, promoting comprehensive health policies with a gender perspective, as well as access to health care, including medications and medical treatment, encouraging research on diseases disproportionately affecting developing states, mobilizing extra funding, improving international cooperation against new epidemics, and strengthening the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria.



39. *We express* our concern over natural and man-made disasters that afflict states of the Hemisphere and cause greater devastation in the most vulnerable states that have not yet developed adequate prevention and mitigation capabilities. We pledge to strengthen the existing inter-American mechanisms and develop new cooperation mechanisms to improve and broaden the region's response capability in preventing and mitigating the effects of these disasters. We will effectively and swiftly address natural disasters by strengthening existing bilateral, subregional, and multilateral actions and institutions, such as the Inter-American Committee for Natural Disaster Reduction and, when possible, using technology and scientific resources to prevent their occurrence, as well as taking adaptive measures to mitigate their effects in order to avoid or reduce damage to the environment, productive and critical infrastructure our heritage, and, most importantly, our peoples.

40. *We recognize* that environmental deterioration affects the quality of life of our peoples and may constitute a threat, concern, or challenge to the security of states in the Hemisphere. We undertake to strengthen our national capabilities, as well as inter-American mechanisms, in order to

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promote the sustainable use of our natural resources and advance toward integral development, and to promote preservation of the environment in a cooperative manner.

41. *We recognize* that global climate change could constitute a threat, concern, or challenge for the security of the states of the Hemisphere. We commit to working in coordination in order to mitigate the adverse effects that global climate change could have on our states and to develop cooperation mechanisms in accordance with the international efforts in this field.<sup>2/</sup>

#### **IV. INSTITUTIONAL ISSUES**

42. *We reaffirm* our commitment to revitalize and strengthen the organs, institutions, and mechanisms of the inter-American system related to the various aspects of hemispheric security to achieve greater coordination and cooperation among them, within their areas of





competence, in order to improve the ability of the American states to meet the traditional threats, as well as the new threats, concerns, and other challenges to hemispheric security.

43. *We recommend* that, within the OAS, the Committee on Hemispheric Security coordinate cooperation among the organs, agencies, entities, and mechanisms of the Organization related to the various aspects of security and defense in the Hemisphere, respecting the mandates and areas of competence of each, in order to achieve the application, evaluation, and follow-up of this Declaration.

44. *We also recommend* that the Committee on Hemispheric Security maintain the necessary liaison with other institutions and mechanisms, whether subregional, regional, or international, related to the various aspects of security and defense in the Hemisphere, respecting the mandates and areas of competence of each, in order to achieve the application, evaluation, and follow-up of this Declaration.

45. *We recognize with satisfaction* the recommendations presented by CICAD, CICTE, and the Consultative Committee of CIFTA and recommend that, on the basis of these, the Committee on Hemispheric Security develop strategies and integrated action plans related to these new threats, concerns, and other challenges to hemispheric security.

46. *We express our appreciation* for the recommendations of the specialized conferences and meetings of the inter-American system and we recommend that the Committee on Hemispheric Security give them due consideration in its work plans and, when appropriate, in developing coordinated strategies and integrated plans of action related to the new threats, concerns, and other challenges to hemispheric security.

2. The United States cannot join consensus on this paragraph because, among other things, it mischaracterizes the nature of the long-term challenge posed by global climate change, which is neither hemispheric in its origin nor susceptible to short-term solutions, and because it



singles out only one potential cause of environmental degradation when there are numerous other actual causes that are at once better understood, immediate, and more compelling, including air and water pollution and unsustainable land use practices. Moreover, as a Party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United States is already taking a broad array of actions to address the long-term challenge of global climate change, including specific efforts with many hemispheric partners. It is unclear how the vague commitment in this paragraph will be made operational or what gaps it is intended to fill.

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47. *Similarly, we express our appreciation* to civil society for its contributions and recommend that, when appropriate, the Committee on Hemispheric Security give them due consideration in its work related to the new threats, concerns, and other challenges to hemispheric security.

48. *We recommend* that the Permanent Council, through the Committee on Hemispheric Security, continue the process of study and assessment of the Inter- American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (Rio Treaty) and the American Treaty on Pacific Settlement (Pact of Bogotá) as well as other hemispheric instruments currently in force on collective security and the peaceful settlement of disputes, bearing in mind security realities in the Hemisphere and the distinct nature of traditional and nontraditional threats to security as well as cooperation mechanisms for addressing them.

49. *We reiterate* the need to clarify the juridical and institutional relationship between the Inter-American Defense Board (IADB) and the OAS. Thus, we recommend that the Permanent Council, through the Committee on Hemispheric Security, taking into account what is stated in Article 54, subparagraphs (a) and (b) of the OAS Charter and in accordance with the criteria set forth in the General Assembly resolutions on this matter, in particular resolution AG/RES. 1240 (XXIII-O/93) -- “advice and the delivery of consultancy services of a technical-military character which in no case may have an operational nature”--; resolution AG/RES. 1848 (XXXII-O/02) -- “including



the  
principle of civilian oversight and the democratic formation of its authorities”--; and  
AG/RES. 1908  
(XXXII-O/02) and AG/RES. 1940 (XXXIII-O/03) -- “to provide the OAS with technical,  
advisory,  
and educational expertise on defense and security issues”--, complete the analysis of the  
relationship  
between the IADB with the OAS and that it submit recommendations to the thirty-fourth  
regular  
session of the General Assembly so that it can determine the norms that govern that  
relationship and  
the mandate of the IADB. The Permanent Council through the Committee on  
Hemispheric Security  
will maintain regular contact with the authorities of the IADB for the purposes of this  
paragraph.

50. *We emphasize* that the commitments adopted by our Heads of State and Government  
through  
the Summit of the Americas process provide a framework for the promotion of  
cooperation in matters  
pertaining to hemispheric security.

51. *We recommend* that, periodically, the Committee on Hemispheric Security meet as  
the  
“Forum for Confidence- and Security-Building Measures” in order to review and  
evaluate existing  
confidence- and security-building measures and, if appropriate, consider new measures  
that will make  
it possible to ensure progress in this area.

52. *We recommend* that the General Assembly strengthen the capacity of the General  
Secretariat  
to better serve the member States and the political bodies of the Organization on matters  
of  
hemispheric security, including substantive and secretariat support to the Committee on  
Hemispheric  
Security.

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