



CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION IN THE SUMMITS
OF THE AMERICAS PROCESS
Civil Society Hemispheric Forum
March 3-4, 2009
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RECOMMENDATIONS

CIVIL SOCIETY HEMISPHERIC FORUM IN PREPARATION FOR THE OAS GENERAL
ASSEMBLY AND THE FIFTH SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS

(March 3-4, 2009 Washington, D.C.)

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On March 3 and 4, 2009, more than 100 civil society participants from the hemisphere met at the OAS Headquarters, to formulate recommendations for the XXXIX OAS General Assembly and the Fifth Summit of the Americas, which will be held in San Pedro Sula, Honduras in June 2009 and Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago in April 2009, respectively.

The recommendations emerged during two days of discussions, in which five thematic sessions were held, and working groups engaged in open dialogues addressing the topics covered by the Draft Declaration of San Pedro Sula and the Draft Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain and strengthening civil society participation in OAS activities and the Summits of the Americas Process. The list of participants who attended the Civil Society Hemispheric Forum is included as an annex to this document.

RECOMMENDATIONS

NONVIOLENCE AND MULTIDIMENSIONAL SECURITY

Recommendations presented in plenary regarding the Draft Declaration of San Pedro Sula:

1. We recognize the value of the Draft Declaration of San Pedro Sula but we request to include more exhaustive analysis on the situation of violence and insecurity.
2. We request the recognition of the complexity of reasons and political, social, economical and cultural contexts that promote violence.
3. We request the recognition of all actors responsible for violence.
4. We recommend the revision of terminology that recognizes *alterity* and a culture of peace.
5. We recommend the establishment of mechanisms for accountability, monitoring and transparency.

Recommendations from the group discussion:

1. We recommend that Governments revise the concept security in the document. This does not develop the relationship between security and the doctrine of national security with a focus on multidimensional security.
2. It should be recognized that impunity persists in Latin America and, therefore, it is fundamental to identify in the Declaration all of the actors responsible that exercise violence as well as private settings that derive from state organs.

3. In addition to the conventions and declarations mentioned, the following should be included: Inter- American Convention on Human Rights, Inter-American Convention On International Traffic In Minors, Inter-American Convention To Prevent And Punish Torture, and Inter-American Convention On The Elimination Of All Forms Of Discrimination Against Persons With Disabilities
4. We request that Governments make explicit mention to the commitment of justice and truth.
5. The States should recognize and compile, in the Declaration, the existence of different initiatives of Non violence carried out by civil society. It is necessary to recognize civil society best practices in the Declaration.
6. We recommend that the Governments make public, as appropriate, the documents discussed in the framework of the Summit of the Americas process and the OAS General Assembly so that civil society can make the pertinent contributions.
7. We recommend that the Declaration should the concept of human security that recognizes the different forms of violence and insecurity.
8. We are concerned with the lack of recognition of all the social sectors, especially those historically marginalized and excluded, to this end we request the clear recognition of a commitment from the governments with the guarantee of human rights and access to justice without discrimination or exclusion of all the sectors, particularly those found in vulnerable conditions, such as children, youth, women, disabled, afrodescendents, indigenous populations, and sexual identity and orientation.
9. The Declaration should make explicit the commitments the Governments will assume, especially in the definition and assignment of sufficient resources for the development of a culture of nonviolence, and define the mechanisms that will make follow-up, monitoring and accountability possible.
10. We urge governments to commit to increase the resources assigned to informal and formal education programs to guarantee the construction of citizenship, an indispensable condition for the development of a culture of nonviolence, through the use of deliberation.
11. Governments should commit to finding the approaches and mechanisms for dialogue that will bring us closer to a peaceful solution to the armed conflict in Colombia.
12. The Declaration should recognize the right of our countries to live without violence.
13. We request the Governments to commit to prevent and avoid violent acts caused by their institutions that are responsible for guaranteeing internal order. In addition, we insist combating and overcoming impunity in order to strengthen the institutions that administer justice.
14. We call upon the Governments to subscribe to the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and their Families.

15. We request the Governments to commit to strengthening the Inter-American System on Human Rights, which facilitate agile and effective mechanisms for the compliance of resolutions and sentences of the Inter Commission on Human Rights and the Inter American Court of Human Rights.
16. We request the Governments to commit to creating agile and effective mechanisms to comply with the mandates of the Declaration of San Pedro.
17. Governments should commit to process and mechanism of reconciliation, reparation and restitution.
18. We recommend governments to commit to promote consultation processes, dialogues and peaceful conflict resolution for the development of a culture of nonviolence.
19. We request governments to commit to work towards non-instrumentalization of problems of violence in the countries.
20. We urge the Governments to recognize the forms of violence that affect women specifically. Special attention should be given to assassination or femicide, which has reached an alarming rate in regions such as Central America.
21. The Declaration should be written with inclusive language identifying all social actors.

Specific recommendations:

1. Paragraph 18: Include the violence generated by the conditions of exclusion to education and labor, particularly among groups in a situation of vulnerability, such as children, youth, women, persons with disabilities, afrodescendents, indigenous populations, and sexual identity and orientation.
2. Paragraph 23: replace “oblige us” for “commit us”.
3. It is recommended to eliminate paragraph 25.
4. Paragraph 28: educational programs should include practices and methods of nonviolence of different cultures.
5. Paragraph 30: We request the substitution of the word “tolerance” for the word “plurality” and the recognition of the *alterity*.
6. Paragraph 32: We suggest eliminating this paragraph.
7. Paragraph 33: we recommend that Member States commit jurisdictional organizations and comptrollers combat impunity with regard to respect for equality under the law, presumption of innocence, and guarantee due process. This requires the transparency and permanent accountability of civil society, organizations and persons that exercise justice.

8. Paragraph 35: Protect, in an active and progressive manner, the human Rights of our populations, especially those in vulnerable conditions.
9. Paragraph 36: Include “the eradication of all forms of violence” and the defense of the woman.
10. Paragraph 39: Substitute “dialogue” for “consultation”.
11. Add a new paragraph: We the governments commit to the creation of mechanisms of mutual trust among countries in order to homogenize the acquisition of arms that only serve to guarantee internal order and peace.

ENERGY SECURITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Recommendations:

1. Ask the Government of the Trinidad & Tobago to release the most current Draft of the Declaration of Port of Spain to make available for comment by civil society.
2. Call upon the OAS to establish an ongoing dialogue with Youth throughout the hemisphere regarding climate and natural disasters starting at the V Summit.
3. Paragraph 44: Amend paragraph to read: *“We will also work towards promoting sound environmental governance by strengthening national environmental laws and building institutional capacity for the democratic management of natural resources, guaranteeing citizens access to environmental information, to participation in decision-making processes, and to mechanisms for environmental justice. In addition, the governments commit to developing a system of environmental indicators geared toward monitoring environmental information and justice, in coordination with civil society.”*
4. Paragraph 44 (Above amended paragraph): We call upon governments to establish binding guidelines. We ask each country to prepare a report by 2010 that identifies specifically the steps the governments have taken to address issues of access to information. We call upon countries to accede to the *Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention)*
5. Paragraph 5: Modify to include reference to specific vulnerable groups
6. Commit to a process to lead to total elimination of inefficient, incandescent light bulbs throughout the hemisphere by 2020. Commit governments to put in place performance-based and technology-neutral lighting efficiency standards that will save money for businesses and consumers, reduce energy consumption, drive innovation and increase consumer choice.
7. Encourage reduction of lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions from fuel use, paying special attention to the use of unconventional and synthetic fuels use in the transportation sector.

8. Encourage fuel lifecycle emissions analysis that includes production emissions, especially for fuels with higher lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions than conventional oil.
9. Support tracking and public information concerning the origin of various types of fuel.
10. Paragraph 38: Call upon governments to identify three top priorities for each country in moving toward greater energy security
11. Paragraph 38: Add the idea of “*Energy Justice*”
12. Paragraph 35: After “We commit... our nations,” add: “*Energy security must serve to promote energy justice, ensuring that energy is available to economically, geographically, and culturally marginalized populations to improve their quality of life. This international cooperation must take into account the social responsibility of States and energy justice between States. The governments commit to preparing transparent national strategies to deal with matters relating to energy and environmental sustainability.*”
13. Paragraph 36: Same, by 2010 instead of 2012.
14. Governments of the Americas should endorse idea of a Virtual Earth Summit in 2012 at which governments would report on their concrete actions to implement their previous commitments to sustainable development and civil society would be encouraged to make their own commitments to sustainable development.
15. Add new paragraph: *We recognize the importance of protecting and preserving forests throughout the hemisphere for the protection of biodiversity, providing a home for indigenous and traditional communities, avoiding greenhouse gas emissions and other ecosystem services. We call upon governments to take steps to reduce deforestation and increase reforestation and to work together to develop incentives to protect forests and their communities and wildlife. Governments should cooperate to address the need for improved forest governance, particularly the problem of illegal logging and illegal mining.*
16. We call upon the OAS to conduct a study by 2010 in the region on the implementation of international regimes and institutions that seek to reduce or mitigate exposure to toxic chemicals.
17. Paragraph 8: Add – “*We call on the governments to ensure that international conventions as well as laws governing environment and the workers are strictly adhered to without compromise*”
18. Paragraph 30: Change – “*minimum of 20% by 2020 and a minimum of 50% by 2050.*”
19. Add to Paragraph 30: “*By 2010 each government will produce a very specific plan of action to meet the 2020 and 2050 targets.*”
20. Paragraph 40: Change the word “*eventual,*” with the aim of ensuring stabilization.

HUMAN PROSPERITY

Recommendations:

1. It is necessary to improve mechanisms for collecting information. We propose that people are at the center of human prosperity; for this reason, governments must consider human beings in public policy proposals.
2. Increase investment in the agriculture sector for the poorest farmers. Refer to the World Bank Report which reaffirms the role of the agriculture sector in the development of the society.
3. Profound and persistent inequalities continue to exist. These inequalities translate into a negation of the right of access to economic and social rights and to justice to make practicable the rights recognized by the States. In this sense, Member States must promote the universalization of the rights recognized in the American Convention on Human Rights and other inter-American treaties and also recognize the indissoluble triad among human prosperity, human rights and democracy and commit to strengthen national and international human rights mechanisms.
4. Member States should include all collective groups in the human prosperity agenda. Change the terminology from 'the disabled' to "persons with disabilities" and adopt inclusive development policies that do not exclude persons with disabilities.
5. With regard to protection of intellectual property, add to the end of paragraph 30 of the draft Declaration: "taking into account all regional initiatives."
6. We recommend that the final document be made public and that it cannot be changed after being adopted by civil society.
7. Member States should commit to fight racism, discrimination and intolerance and should include as a transversal theme in the discussions the different sectors that have been traditionally discriminated against and excluded in human prosperity in the Americas: indigenous peoples, Roma people, women, youth and children, people with different gender orientation or identity, migrants, refugees, repatriated persons, religious minorities, or for reasons attributed to race, ethnicity, religion, sexual choice, gender, culture, national origin or nationality, disability, and age.
8. Member States should accelerate the process of approval of the draft Inter-American Convention against Racism and All Forms of Discrimination and Intolerance, which is now in discussion in the framework of the OAS Committee on Juridical and Political Affairs.
9. Member States should commit to support the work of the special rapporteurs on afro-descendants and on racial discrimination of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.
10. Member States should establish policies and programs to promote democratic values, inclusion and visibilization of afro-descendants and other sectors of the population, as essential components in the planning of OAS activities.

11. Member States should establish mechanisms and political spaces for dialogue among governance and civil society through the creation of an ad-hoc consultative council to the OAS Summits of the Americas Secretariat for the monitoring and evaluation of the progress made and fulfillment of Summits mandates.
12. Member States should create an institute for issues related to afro-descendants of the Americas which would be responsible for coordinating investigations.
13. Add the term 'cooperative' to point 11 of the Declaration of Port of Spain.
14. Member States should promote public health policies as a human right to reduce the impact of the HIV/AIDS epidemic with campaigns that impact upon prevention, attention and research on advances in new treatments. HIV/AIDS is a global health problem.
15. Add to paragraph 27 the inclusion of orphanages and at-risk-youth because they are vulnerable to committing crimes.
16. Include in paragraph 24 American mother tongues and respect for culture diversity.
17. Include transparency and accountability in the elaboration and execution of social development programs, through identification of corresponding indicators.
18. Include in paragraph 10 recognition that women's rights are human rights as declared in the platform of action 1995. Reiterate a commitment to the protection of women from violence in the public and private sphere and also from exploitation in any form.
19. Financial Crisis: Facing a prolonged and painful recession, the gains of emerging economies are already being erased and the economies of the lowest-income countries are being put under further strain. We recognize the central role of transparency and accountability in mitigating the crisis and preventing future failures. And we underscore that the poor are not able to bear the cost of the greed and mismanagement of financial professionals half a world away and that better development - to which the fight against corruption is central - must remain at the top of the global agenda.

Recognizing that the current global and regional economic crisis poses a considerable worrying threat to efforts to strengthen prosperity in the Americas and that vulnerable and marginalized sectors of society are at greater risk, we call on States to:

- A. Commit to ensuring that all measures adopted in response to the current economic crisis will prioritize protecting the rights of vulnerable sectors of society, including providing protection from discrimination.
 - B. Explicitly acknowledge and commit to the entire framework of obligations including all Economic, social and cultural rights that must be at the heart of efforts to improve the prosperity of all.
20. Add another article to include: We are committed to the protection of vulnerable groups, including seniors in chronic care institutions and in the care of families.

21. We are committed to the development of health care standards and the monitoring of the public and private nursing homes for seniors.
22. We recommend that general education take into consideration afro-descendants and indigenous peoples and their specific histories and cultural traditions.
23. Consistent with the UN designation of youth as one of the nine major groups and the OAS policy roundtable on youth, decent work and human prosperity in the Americas, the issue of youth entrepreneurship should be given special mention in the eradication of poverty and the attainment of prosperity in recognition of the unique issues faced by youth in accessing credit. In addition, we need to recognize that Latin American and the Caribbean although similar are not identical and therefore need to be treated differently in policy formulation.
24. Refer to the 2008 World Bank Report on agriculture for development which reaffirms the role of the agricultural sector in economic development and poverty reduction. Therefore, increase investment in the agricultural sector for small producers and poor farmers.
25. Recognize that free markets are not perfect and to guarantee national sovereignty and food security, governments need more control over their financial markets and mechanisms to protect the agricultural sector.
26. Member States should promote strategic alliances with the private sector to finance education and health through corporate social responsibility taking advantage of tax deductions.
27. Member States should commit to exercise the necessary political goodwill in the implementation of trade treaties ratified by them in order to promote small and medium-sized enterprises for job creation.
28. Civil society is preoccupied with the lack of fulfillment of the Summits of the Americas mandates on the part of Member States.
29. From the perspective of human rights, ensure that the inclusion of all collective groups is included in the human prosperity development agenda.
30. Recognize the situation of chronic poverty and exclusion that is faced by persons with disabilities who are restricted by lack of access to health, education, jobs, and technologies of communication. In order to change this situation of exclusion and marginalization, States should adopt conclusive policies that ensure equality, equity in opportunities for all persons with disabilities.
31. Regarding the theme of education, speak of inclusive education with attention to diversity which guarantees access to education and equity of opportunities as a right without discrimination.
32. Include as a transversal theme collective population groups (HIV/AIDS, people with disabilities, afro-descendants, indigenous peoples, women, the elderly, etc).

STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY AND THE PROMOTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Recommendations on the accessibility of information in the framework of civil society participation in the Summits process and the OAS General Assembly:

1. Initially, we request that the information necessary for civil society participation in the Summits process and the General Assembly be provided. In particular, we request that States, whether in a collective or an individual manner, make available the draft declarations under negotiation for civil society to participate in a constructive and timely dialogue. In addition, we request clarification on the conditions for civil society participation in the Summit and the General Assembly.

Recommendations on strengthening democracy and the promotion of Human Rights:

1. The main recommendation on the theme consists in reinforcing, in the declarations a human rights perspective to guarantee or contribute to the environmental sustainability, human prosperity and nonviolence.

Commitment with the full exercise of Rights for all:

1. In this sense, it is recommended to include the Member States' commitment to the active promotion of an environment in which all people, especially those in a vulnerable situations (indigenous peoples, afro-descendants, women, children and youth, LGBT persons, persons with disabilities, people living with HIV), can participate in the direction or the debate of public issues without discrimination and in equality (inspired in art. 29 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities)
2. It is important that States affirm their recognition, respect, and protection for human rights defenders, who play a key role in environmental sustainability, the denouncing environment degradation, human prosperity, the fight against corruption, denouncing governmental abuses, and the promotion of nonviolence. Based on this recognition, States should declare their commitment to:
 - A. Develop national strategies to promote the work of defenders and protect them from harassment or threats, and announce the implementation of such strategies to the General Assembly each year. Include actions against stigmatization of defenders.
 - B. Generate strategies with CSO participation for the implementation of Summits commitments at the national level.
 - C. Promote the role of the OAS National Offices in order to promote civil society participation.
3. Declarations should strengthen the recognition of people in conditions of vulnerability. In particular, it should underscore the groups that have not been mentioned. Specifically, the governmental commitments should be directed to:

- A. To ensure the respect and dignity for, and to guaranty the human rights of all people, and in particular, to avoid that those persons or groups that find themselves in situations of greater vulnerability experience limited access to their rights (women, children, youth and adolescents of both genders, people with disabilities, LGBT people, afro-descendants, indigenous peoples, and people with HIV). In particular, it is necessary to:
1. Recognize the right of people that live with HIV to be able to travel freely without being discriminated against, to have their confidentiality respected, and to enjoy plainly their rights (health, education, and work, amongst others).
 2. In reference to paragraph 53 of the Declaration of the Summit, to give greater visibility to sexual orientation and gender identity (in agreement with the resolution on the theme emitted at the 2008 OAS General Assembly in Medellin, Colombia).
 3. To guarantee the access to justice of all the aforementioned groups in a way that the violations are not protected by impunity, and that the access be equal in conditions; for example: the declarations regarding people with mental disabilities are traditionally of diminished value, because for people with mental disabilities access to justice necessitates interpretation depending on the type and degree of the disability.
 4. To recognize the situation of chronic poverty and of exclusion that people with disabilities are faced with, and which include the lack of access to health, education, employment, access to justice, and the use of information technologies. The States, therefore, should adopt inclusive policies that assure the equality of opportunities for all people with disabilities.
 5. To recognize the diverse manifestations of gender violence, such as domestic violence, the killing of women, specific violence against women in armed conflicts, and the impunity that characterizes these types of occurrences.
 6. To include a commitment to reducing maternal mortality by strengthening the women's rights. This point is absent in the declaration of the Summit due despite being a Millennium Development Goal (MDG).
 7. To commit to the eradication of torture and cruel, inhumane, and degrading treatment against groups in vulnerable situations, including incarcerated populations.
 8. To recognize the violations that people suffer due to their situations as migrants, internally displaced people, elderly, children or adolescents, and others that are excluded from enjoying their rights.
 9. The States should signal their commitment to provide education in the languages of the original populations. Similarly, they should assure the provision of justice, the access to health and other rights in the populations' original languages.

1. The central point is to reaffirm the support of the Presidents and the States with the strengthening of Inter-American System of the protection of human Rights. This is based on the conviction that the Inter-American System is vital for the protection of fundamental human Rights in a complementary manner with national Systems as well as fundamental in the strengthening of democracy.
2. More specifically we recommend:
 - A. That States express their commitment in ratifying Inter-American treaties on human rights; that take measures to guarantee the universalization of the Inter-American System, in particular, in those nations where it would be relevant to take concrete steps to ratify the American Convention on Human Rights, the Convention of Belem do Para y la Inter-American Convention on Forced Disappearance of Persons. Additionally, it is suggested that the States utilize the Summits to announce their decisions on the ratification of inter-American treaties. In the same sense, they should make a call for the quick approval of the Inter-American Convention Against All Forms of Discrimination and Intolerance.
 - B. That States commit to the effective compliance of the decisions of the inter-American system. To this it should be added the commitment of the States to create agile and efficient mechanisms and/or special legislation that permits the implementation of the sentences of the Court and resolutions of the IACHR.
 - C. That special mention is included on the importance of putting in motion the Legal Assistance Fund for the victims within the Inter-American System and the commitment to make this a reality.
 - D. That the process of reflection and dialogue on the reforms of the Inter-American System continue and a specific call is made for all the actors involved to participate: States, victims, and representatives.

The right to a life free of violence

1. Taking into account the existence of a specific working Group on nonviolence, do not repeat the themes that have already been covered but rather add other relevant themes from a human Rights perspective. Among those we consider the following important:
 - A. Refocus the discussion putting emphasis on the necessity of guaranteeing a life free of violence.
 - B. Make reference to the impact of impunity in the perpetuation of violence and the risk that it has on the protection of public goods.
 - C. Stress the importance of not utilizing military jurisdiction in those circumstances in which the investigated facts are contrary to human Rights protection standards.
 - D. Question the stereotypes that perpetuate inequality, exclusion and violence with respect to women and many other individuals or groups in vulnerable situations

(recommendation inspired in the language of the Convention of Belem do Para but to be extended to other situations and groups).

- E. Bring attention to the persistence of slave labor in various States of the region.
- F. Strengthen the language about access to justice and special qualification; necessity that the governments guarantee equal access to independent, transparent, and efficient justice.
- G. Recognize that the policies to improve citizen security are not in the detriment to human Rights in general and, in particular, legal rights.
- H. Consider International and regional policies that affect States, for example economic policies that contribute to poverty that affect the environment or violence (such as those related to the utilization and trafficking of arms, drug policies, etc.).

STRENGTHENING CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION IN OAS ACTIVITIES AND THE SUMMITS OF THE AMERICAS PROCESS

1. We the civil society organizations of the hemisphere ask governments to adopt a strategy of civil society participation in the Organization of American States.
2. We ask that the OAS and its member states adopt the recommendations of the Active Democracy Network and the respective national reports and take action for implementation of Summit mandates within countries and across the hemisphere.
3. We recommend that OAS country offices take a more active role in the promotion of civil society participation.
4. We also recommend that the OAS establish a timeline mapping too the process of when and where information will come from and when and where it will go to.
5. We ask for institutionalization of civil society participation within the OAS system, and establishment of mechanisms for disclosure on the methodology on how the information presented by governments to the have been gathered.
6. We call for the continuation of the OAS Virtual Forum as an ongoing instrument for network and discussion of issues across the hemisphere by Civil Society.
7. We emphasize the need to have access to information and documents so our participation is substantive and timely. We underscore idea of receiving information timely. If we do not have it we cannot inform our discussions and actions.

Civil Society is fundamentally viable to the OAS and governments. We have information that are often not available to the OAS or even country governments. We must have trust between and among our organizations.

In this respect, civil society of the hemisphere, and in particular, civil society of Trinidad and Tobago and the Caribbean view our hosting of the Fifth Summit as a tremendous opportunity to display the brand of Caribbean democracy characterized by relatively open government, largely because of our nature and sizes.

We view with and share the concern of our publics about the Trinidad and Tobago's Government's decision to withhold from civil society current amendments to the draft declaration and join the voices of our hemispheric colleagues to request release of the information in the interest of transparency and accountability but also to make meaningful exercises like these which become somewhat redundant if we are to work with a document that has already undergone several amendments of which we have no knowledge .

We believe that as host of the next Summit, it is a tremendous opportunity for Trinidad and Tobago to lead by example and demonstrate its commitment to democracy and human rights in the region, and engagement of our people and people of the region in governance.

In this light we present the *Resolution from the Civil Society Hemispheric Forum in Preparation for the OAS General Assembly and the Fifth Summit of the Americas (ANNEX II)*

ANNEX I

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ANNEX II

Resolution from the Civil Society Hemispheric Forum In Preparation for the OAS General Assembly and the Fifth Summit of the Americas

To the Host Government of the Fifth Summit of the Americas and OAS Members States

**Tabled by the Active Democracy Network
Signed by participating civil society organizations of the Americas
Washington, D.C. USA, March 4, 2009**

Resolution

Given that the Trinidad and Tobago Government has committed to the philosophy of implementation of Summit mandates as host of the Fifth Summit of the Americas,

And in keeping the Inter-American Democratic Charter, especially Article 4 which guides all activities and commit member states to “Transparency in government activities, probity, responsible public administration on the part of governments, “

And given that declarations of previous Summits, in particular, the Quebec Declaration of the Third Summit which “welcome(s) and values the contributions of civil society, including business and labor organizations, to our Plan of Action, and affirms that openness and transparency are vital to building public awareness and legitimacy for our undertakings.”

And Article One of the Quebec Plan of Action on Transparency and Good Governance for making democracy work better which recognizes “that good governance requires effective, representative, transparent and accountable government institutions at all levels, public participation, effective checks and balances”

And in the interest of building mutual trust and mutual dialogue and the provision of information to civil society to work effectively,

Be it resolved that,

Civil society calls on the Host Government of the Summit of the Americas to release today the updated version of the draft declaration of the Summit of the Americas so that the civil society organizations attending this forum can provide timely, relevant, and substantive recommendations. We also ask you to share with us your government’s plans for civil society involvement at the Summit. We understand that there will be a civil society forum on the 15th and 16th and we insist that civil society set the agenda for this forum in consultation with the Member States. We would also like to have access to the agenda and procedures to participate in the dialogue with Foreign Ministers at the Summit.

We the civil society organizations who sign this document have been participating in the entire process leading up to this Summit and we see our participation in the Summit as the culmination of our efforts up to this point. We have made recommendations at three sub-regional forums and the

hemispheric forum in Washington, DC and we now insist that these recommendations be included among the official documents of the Summit.