

AG/DEC. 52 (XXXVII-O/07)

DECLARATION OF PANAMA:
ENERGY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

(Adopted at the fourth plenary session, held on June 5, 2007)

THE MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND HEADS OF DELEGATION OF THE MEMBER STATES OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES (OAS), meeting in Panama City, Republic of Panama, on the occasion of the thirty-seventh regular session of the General Assembly,

REAFFIRMING the principles and purposes of the OAS Charter, as well as the sovereign right of our countries to the conservation, development, and sustainable use of their energy resources;

REAFFIRMING ALSO our commitments under the OAS Charter and to the principles enshrined in the Inter-American Democratic Charter;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT that the Inter-American Democratic Charter states that the exercise of democracy promotes the preservation and good stewardship of the environment, and that it is essential that the states of the Hemisphere implement policies and strategies to protect the environment, to achieve sustainable development for the benefit of future generations;

RECOGNIZING that energy is an essential resource for the sustainable development of peoples, and that access to energy that is diverse, reliable, secure, and affordable is of paramount importance to economic growth with equity and social inclusion, and contributes to poverty eradication;

AWARE that economic and social development and environmental conservation are complementary, and that they are among the essential goals of the OAS member states;

RECALLING that the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action of the World Conference on Human Rights reaffirmed, in paragraph 10, the right to development;

RECOGNIZING the different and valuable existing energy cooperation and integration initiatives in the region, based on solidarity and complementarity;

RECOGNIZING ALSO the importance of generating and strengthening regional markets for the use of cleaner and renewable energy, and of the exchange of information and experiences by member states on the matter;

RECOGNIZING FURTHER the adverse effects and challenges of climate change and, accordingly, aware:

- Of the need to promote clean energy through research, development, and the transfer of environmentally sound technology, and international partnerships and/or agreements;

- Of the need to enhance energy efficiency and conservation in the Hemisphere and to promote sustainable patterns of production and consumption; and
- That the transition to a sustainable development model, based on the generation and efficient use of renewable forms of energy and balanced patterns of consumption, will require the implementation of a set of progressive measures and, in that context, that it is important to continue promoting, through the use of cleaner and innovative technologies, a better use of fossil fuels in relation to the environment, given their continued predominant role in the energy matrix;

NOTING that cooperation, partnerships, and/or agreements between the public and private sectors and other sectors of society, in accordance with national law, may help promote the Hemisphere's energy agenda;

RECOGNIZING that energy-sector enterprises should assume and/or deepen social responsibility for the benefit of community development and conservation of the environment;

BEARING in mind that the Fourth Summit of the Americas recommends "favor[ing] the research, development, and adoption of renewable and efficient energy sources and the deployment of technology for cleaner and more efficient energy sources, including among them, those that foster the intensive use of labor, which, together with the promotion of sustainable development, and addressing climate change concerns, permit the reduction of poverty";

UNDERSCORING the relationship between access to energy and the eradication of poverty to achieve the Millennium Development Goals;

BEARING IN MIND ALSO resolution AG/RES. 2253 (XXXVI-O/06), "Support for the Use of New and Renewable Energy Sources";

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the policies and programs promoted by the member states to encourage the use of new and renewable energy sources for sustainable development, such as solar, biomass, including biofuels, wind, tidal, hydroelectric, minihydraulic, and geothermal; and recognizing also the contributions of regional initiatives in the area of energy cooperation;

EMPHASIZING that energy is fundamental to achieving sustainable development objectives and that therefore the combination and complementarity of use of all types of energy sources, including a cleaner use of fossil fuels, contributes to the attainment of those objectives;

CONSIDERING that the hydroresources in the region, *inter alia*, represent an important source for the generation of renewable energy;

NOTING that the Declaration of Santa Cruz + 10 promotes the strengthening of regional and subregional cooperation on sustainable development, particularly regarding environmental education and awareness, the training and enhancement of human resources, and the creation and strengthening of networks and other cooperation mechanisms; and

CONSIDERING that the Inter-American Program for Sustainable Development (2006–2009) (PIDS) mentions, among its areas of action, the development of programs for the promotion of renewable energy and energy efficiency,

DECLARE:

1. Their recognition of the fundamental importance to the member states of the availability of energy resources for the promotion of their economic and social development in an environmentally sustainable manner.

2. Their recognition of the need to obtain and use all forms of energy that are in harmony with life and nature, preserving air, water, and land, which provide indispensable food and habitat for all living beings, and to foster access for the more vulnerable populations, consistent with social and environmental sensitivity.

3. Their resolve to underscore that democratic governance, strong democratic institutions, the rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms are essential elements in advancing the energy and sustainable development goals of member states and the region, combating social exclusion, and fostering the public good.

4. Their recognition of the importance of transparency in energy-related government and private-sector activities, as well as underscoring the importance of the Inter-American Convention against Corruption to the states of the Hemisphere and its follow-up mechanism (MESICIC).

5. Their recognition also that the region must endeavor to reduce its vulnerability to fluctuations in the price and supply of energy and seek to increase its energy independence through measures such as the diversification of the energy matrix, favoring an increase in the sustainable use of renewable and cleaner energy or other modalities, as appropriate, in accordance with each country's legislation, improving energy efficiency in all sectors of the economy, and to increase their coverage of energy services for social development purposes.

6. Their need to recognize the potential of biofuels for diversifying the energy matrix of the Hemisphere. Accordingly, they will join efforts to share experiences gained in the region, with a view to achieving maximum efficiency in the sustainable use of those sources to promote social, technological, agricultural, and productive development.

7. Their emphasis that the long-term sustainability of energy supply in the member states depends on the efficient management and development and the sustainable use of natural resources for conversion into innovative and environmentally sound energy applications.

8. Their recognition of the importance of ensuring compatibility among the production of all energy sources, agricultural production, preservation of the environment, and the promotion and defense of decent social and labor conditions, ensuring the role of the Americas as an efficient energy producer.

9. Their resolve to develop and invest in national, subregional, and regional energy infrastructures to facilitate the availability of and access to energy, as well as to protect them and to move toward subregional and regional energy integration. To these ends, they emphasize the advisability, in accordance with national law, of public-private partnerships and/or agreements, giving priority to those favoring our sustainable development.

10. Their support for the efforts toward the sustainable development of the member states, through the use of energy strategies and services recommended in this Declaration that can

promote the generation of new productive activities and the introduction of new environmentally sound technologies in matters that concern energy.

11. Their recognition of the need to strengthen economic and technical cooperation at the regional and international levels in the energy sector.

12. Their resolve to join forces in the implementation of energy policies in the Hemisphere to develop projects and initiatives based on solidarity, transparency, cooperation, and complementarity, to promote more prosperous, just, equitable, and inclusive societies.

13. Their recognition of energy integration efforts, including existing experiences, and continued progress in the integration of energy systems and networks, and in the study of the possibility of harmonizing regulations among member states, in order to promote sustainable development and the more efficient and rational use of energy resources and increased marketing of energy products and services among said states.

14. Their determination to increase access by citizens of the member states to efficient energy services; and to emphasize that the use of energy for household purposes and for small-scale productive activities contributes to improving living conditions and fighting poverty.

15. Their recognition of the need for member states to draw upon their experiences and those of multilateral organizations to promote synergy among specific programs on the use of energy for sustainable development and to study possible innovative funding and cooperation mechanisms.

16. Their recognition of the importance of multilateral lending and cooperation agencies for promoting new and innovative financing mechanisms and advisory services aimed at fostering renewable energy and access to new cleaner technologies as well as the more efficient use of existing programs and the use of special funds created with voluntary contributions from donors.

17. Their recognition also of the efforts of those countries that, on the basis of the implementation of new financing modalities, promote sustainable development, the use of renewable energy, cleaner energy, and environmental protection, in particular for those areas that are rich in biodiversity.

18. Their recognition also of the contribution of private-sector participation, in accordance with national laws and policies, in the development of traditional and new energy sources and in the installation of national and international distribution systems and networks.

19. Their recognition of the urgent need to take measures, mostly in the transportation and industry sectors, for the use of cleaner and more efficient technologies, the better use of existing technologies, and the use of less polluting fuels, bearing in mind also the need to promote the participation of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises, including cooperatives and other production units, to contribute to this effort.

20. Their recognition of the importance of promoting the development of cleaner and more efficient technologies conducive to the greater use of renewable and less polluting energy in public and private transportation, as well as of promoting an expanded use of public transportation with said technologies, both to increase the efficient use of energy and to reduce its environmental impact.

21. Their commitment to encourage the input of financial resources, including those of the private sector, with the aim of promoting the dissemination and transfer of environmentally sustainable technologies, and capacity-building.

22. Their encouragement of an efficient energy resource management that reflects what is required for achieving sustainable development in all the member states, taking into consideration national circumstances.

23. Their request that the General Secretariat, in coordination with other institutions and experts:

- Continue to promote instructional and training programs for relevant actors in the public and private energy sectors, taking into account the possibilities offered by the Scholarship and Training Programs of the OAS and other possible funding sources;
- Maintain, update, and distribute a registry of specialists of the member states who, at the request of the countries of the region, can offer cooperation on energy matters; and
- Support regional dialogue for the creation and strengthening of markets and the promotion of energy efficiency and conservation for sustainable development.

24. Their request to the Permanent Council and the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI) to convene an inter-American meeting of national authorities and experts, with the participation of other relevant institutions, before the thirty-eighth regular session of the General Assembly, for the discussion of experiences, best practices, and other information relating to the subject of this Declaration that will contribute to the sustainable development of all countries in the Hemisphere, and to create a Joint Working Group of the Permanent Council and CIDI to determine the meeting's agenda.

25. Their request to the General Secretariat of the OAS to promote the support and synergy of states, international organizations, civil society, the private sector, and the academic community, to promote the contents of this Declaration of Panama, and to report on a regular basis to the Permanent Council and to the Inter-American Council for Integral Development.

26. Their appreciation to the people and Government of the Republic of Panama for their warm hospitality during the thirty-seventh regular session of the OAS General Assembly.