



SUMMIT IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW GROUP (SIRG)
First Meeting of Plenipotentiary Officials of 2009
March 23-25, 2009
Port of Spain Ballroom
Hyatt Regency Trinidad Hotel
Port of Spain, Trinidad & Tobago

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REPORT OF THE MEETING

1. PREPARATIONS

At the Fourth Regular meeting of the SIRG for 2009, which was held in Washington D.C., the Chair, Ambassador Luis Alberto Rodriguez, National Coordinator and Special Envoy for the Americas, of the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, had indicated to member states that the next meeting of the SIRG for 2009, would be held at the Plenipotentiary level. He informed that deliberations would continue with the pending paragraphs.

On March 16, 2009, the most recent revision of the Pending paragraphs in the Draft Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain, (GRIC/OP.1/doc.4/09) was circulated to all National Coordinators, and Permanent Missions, as the working document for the First Meeting of Plenipotentiary Officials of 2009, 2009.

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The Chair, Ambassador Luis Alberto Rodriguez, welcomed the participants to Trinidad and Tobago and to the home of the Summit- the Hyatt Regency. He stated that this was the first plenipotentiary meeting for 2009 and expressed the hope of completing the work of the SIRG. He then presented the meeting's agenda (GRIC/OP.1/doc.2/09) for the consideration of the delegates. There having been no objections or amendments to the agenda it was approved.

3. OPENING SESSION

The Chair opened the session by giving a brief outline of the work methodology for the Second SIRG. He informed that two SIRG meetings ago it was agreed that no new paragraphs would be introduced since 23 had already been accepted. He indicated that the paragraphs were not new and that delegates had ample time to discuss them with their authorities. The Chair urged delegates to be flexible and more compromising. He opined that although view points are diverse in the hemisphere, the summits were created because of the commitment of leaders to approve the well being of the peoples of the hemisphere. He stated that the Draft Declaration has to be signed by all and that while each country would like to see their opinion in the document however there are 34 countries and the sovereignty of each has to be respected and reflected in the Declaration. He argued that when the Declaration was drafted the hemisphere had not yet begun to feel the impact of the global crisis; nevertheless there are some paragraphs in the Declaration which address the issue. He further stated

that notwithstanding; a decision will have to be taken as to whether there is a need to further address the situation.

The Chair also stated that the Summit would be the first regional meeting to take place after the G20 meeting and that the leaders would have no time to address any long discourse they would need to understand what is before them. He also expressed the hope that all the paragraphs would be approved. Ambassador Rodriguez indicated that at the last meeting of the SIRG the following progress was made: 73 paragraphs were approved; 23 were pending. Paragraphs 2bis, 4bis, 4ter, 5ter 10bis, and 44quar were introduced in the plenary, paragraphs 14, and 15 were being reformulated by the delegation of Barbados, paragraph 24 was pending consultation with Argentina, United States and Ecuador. He further informed that paragraphs 44bis and 44ter were combined into a single paragraph and that Brazil would be leading the deliberations on the paragraph. Paragraph 51bis was being discussed by Barbados United States and Trinidad and Tobago. The Chair also informed that paragraphs 7b, 21bis, 32, 33, 34, E, 53 were presented to the plenary by the Working Group and paragraphs 40, 47, and 9bis were awaiting further consultation.

4. FIRST PLENARY SESSION

Overview of the methodology of the SIRG

In opening the First Plenary Session, the Chair reiterated the outline of the methodology proposed by the National Secretariat for the deliberations. He informed that the methodology would remain the same as in previous meetings and that the Director of the Summits Secretariat would introduce each paragraph.

The Chair instructed that paragraphs that were not approved in Plenary would be submitted to the Working Group for consideration. The Chair, like in previous meetings, reiterated that where extensive changes or new texts were being proposed, the Member States would orally present them to the meeting, and submit their text to the Summit Secretariat for translation and distribution. The Chair stated that on completion of the discussion on a paragraph, it would be read in its entirety, for final approval. He indicated that once approved the paragraph could not be reopened. He also indicated that members of the Joint Summit Working Group would be called upon for any clarification required, during the negotiations.

Ambassador Rodriguez reiterated that if final approval could not be obtained he would propose that the National Secretariat provide a modified text for consideration and that since there will no longer be a working group consensus must be found in the Plenary. He also indicated that paragraphs with bracketed text would be opened only for comments on the bracketed text and that grammatical issues would be dealt with by a style committee.

The Chair opened the floor for the reading of the paragraphs by the Director of the Summit Secretariat.

5. SECOND PLENARY SESSION

Negotiations on the Draft Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain on pending paragraphs continued. Paragraphs 2bis and 4bis were approved. Barbados requested additional time

to consult on 14, 15 which they had tied to paragraph 21. The meeting was adjourned at 5.30 to allow the delegations time for caucusing.

6. THIRD PLENARY SESSION

The Chair informed participants that some progress was made with the deliberations of the pending paragraphs and that paragraphs 10bis, 35, E, 40, 44bis, 47, 49bis 51bis, and 53 would be addressed at this session. He also asked that the countries responsible for paragraphs 7, B, 14, 15, 32, 33, 34 to present a progress report on the deliberations of these paragraphs and an indication on how they would like to proceed. All the coordinators requested more time to consult. Argentina informed that the ALADI group would be proposing a new text for paragraph 10bis. The chair agreed to the additional time and began the negotiations on the paragraphs which were presented to the plenary.

7. FOURTH PLENARY SESSION

Negotiations on the Draft Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain

The delegations continued their deliberations on pending paragraphs and the Coordinators requested more time for informal negotiations.

8. FIFTH PLENARY SESSION

Negotiations on the draft Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain

In opening the session the Chair provided delegations with a verbal briefing on the arrangements that were made for their participation in the Summit. He informed them that each delegation was assigned office space in the IFC building and that an international Media area will also be created. This he informed will be run by a Canadian firm. The Representative of Brazil requested information on the program for the Summit. Ambassador Rodriguez informed that a number of programs were being finalized but that the Bulletin #3 which would be distributed in the afternoon would answer a number of questions which delegates may have.

The Chair further informed the delegates that he would like to have an extra day for deliberations on the Declaration and that he would make a travel agent available to help delegates with the changing of the flights. A number of delegates took the floor to indicate that the extension of the meeting by another day was not convenient to them because of the meeting of the Rio Group in Mexico and the fact that some other duties did not allow them to remain in Trinidad longer than originally planned. The Chair agreed that they would go on with negotiations as originally planned but that another meeting would have to be arranged to complete the document. The negotiations and informal consultations on pending paragraphs continued.

At the end of the session the Chair gave a status report on the deliberations. He informed that the followed were approved: 2bis, 4bis, 4ter 5ter (withdrawn), 10bis, 24, 14, 51bis, 47, 35 (ad Referendum Bolivia), 32, 44quart, 49bis, and 44bis. He also informed that 9 paragraphs were still pending. These were paragraphs 7, B, 14, 15, 23, 24, E, and 53.

9. SIXTH PLENARY SESSION

Negotiations on the draft Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain

In the light of the slow pace of the informal consultations on a package of paragraphs prepared by a few delegations, the Chair urged delegations to be flexible. He also indicated that since there appears to be some problem in moving forward on the package as a whole that he would present the paragraphs separately for consideration. The delegates requested some more time to present the package. The delegations then broke into sub regional groupings for further deliberations.

The 6 paragraph package (7 and B, 14, 14bis, 15, 21bis, 33.) was then presented by the Ambassador of Brazil. The countries took the floor to express their support for the paragraphs. All were approved. The chair informed that paragraphs 53 and 34 were still pending consultations.

The Chair indicated that the style committee would meet on Thursday at 2.p.m. to consider the paragraphs which had been approved. He informed that the committee which will be chaired by Mexico is comprised of Jamaica for English, Colombia for Spanish, Brazil for Portuguese and Canada for French. He also informed that although the committee meeting is open to all however if anyone wishes to make a comment they will have to do so through the representative of their respective language.

The Chair also informed a meeting will be held on April 2 and 3, 2009 to continue the negotiations. He also indicated that delegates will be informed of the venue at a later date.

The Representative of Nicaragua took the floor to indicate that his country did not share the concepts of the Draft Declaration of Port of Spain. The representative of Venezuela went on record as supporting Nicaragua. The Representative of Brazil indicated that he wishes to make an observation with respect to paragraph 49, but this would be written and presented to the Chair at a later date. Argentina, on behalf of the ALADI Group thanked the Chair for his skillful handling of the chairmanship. The other Coordinators of the sub regional groups all took the floor to express their gratitude to the Chair and the Secretariats. The Chair thanked the participants for their cooperation, as well as the members of the logistical and Secretarial teams.

The meeting was adjourned at 3.30 a.m.