



CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION IN THE SUMMITS  
OF THE AMERICAS PROCESS  
Interamerican Civil Society Forum  
January 15-17, 2009  
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

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## SANTO DOMINGO DECLARATION

SECOND INTERAMERICAN AFRO-DESCENDANTS FORUM:  
PARTICIPATION AND ADVOCACY OF AFRO-DESCENDANTS IN THE FIFTH SUMMIT OF  
THE AMERICAS: SECURING OUR CITIZENS' FUTURE BY PROMOTING HUMAN  
PROSPERITY, ENERGY SECURITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

(January 15-17, 2009 - Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic)

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On January 15 and 16, 2009, 56 representatives of Latin American and Caribbean Afro descendant organizations participated in a Forum: "*Participation and Advocacy of the Afro descendant in the V Summit of the Americas: Securing our Citizens' Future by Promoting Human Prosperity, Energy Security and Environmental Sustainability.*" The event was sponsored by Global Rights, an institutional capacity building organization, and the Haitian-Dominican Encounter Network Jacques Viau, with the support from the Summits of the Americas Secretariat of the Organization of American States and the Inter-American Foundation.

Declaration:

**WHEREAS** the States of the Americas promised to fight against racism and racial discrimination, based on the 2000 Santiago de Chile Declaration and Plan of Action, drafted in preparation for the World Conference against Racism in Durban, South Africa in 2001;

**RECALLING** the commitments of the Member States in the Mar del Plata Declaration and Plan of Action (IV Summit) aimed at combating racism, racial discrimination and intolerance in our societies;

**CONSCIOUS** of the commitment of States at the IV Summit of the Americas to seek equal employment opportunities as well as to combat discrimination in the workplace and provide Afro descendants with access to education;

**CONSCIOUS** of the great work done by the current Working Group that is drafting an Inter-American Convention against Racism and All forms of Discrimination and Intolerance, currently under discussion within the Committee of Juridical and Political Affairs;

**TAKING INTO ACCOUNT** the conceptual paper and the Draft Declaration of Commitments presented by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago for the V Summit of the Americas: "Securing our Citizens' Future by Promoting Human Prosperity, Energy Security and Environmental Sustainability";

**RECALLING** that Member States, through different Resolutions of previous General Assemblies, have committed to strengthening civil society participation in the Summits of the Americas;

**CONCERNED** about Member States' failure to implement the mandates of previous Summits of the Americas;

**CONSIDERING** the limited transmission of information regarding the Summit Process in our countries and the generally low level of interaction between Member States and civil society;

**CONCERNED** by the human rights situation of the Afro descendant communities, indigenous Peoples, migrants, Roma, people with disabilities, refugees, stateless people; people with a different sexual orientation or gender identity; women, children, religious minorities; not only in terms of the economic, social and cultural rights; but also in terms of civil and political rights;

**CONCERNED** about the lack of visibility of the Afro Dominicans in public policies; as well as the migrant situation and the violation of the human rights of the Haitians and their descendants in the Dominican Republic;

**COMMITTED** to actively contribute to strengthening the OAS' work to combat racism and racial discrimination and intolerance in the Hemisphere;

**CONSCIOUS** that the Member States are the ones in charge of negotiating and approving the proposed Declaration of Commitments presented by the government of Trinidad and Tobago; we would like to make the following **RECOMMENDATIONS**;

1. That Member States commit themselves to combat racism, discrimination and intolerance; and that member states include in their discussions the groups that have been traditionally discriminated against and excluded from Human Prosperity in the Americas; we are talking about Afro descendant communities; indigenous peoples; Roma; women, youth and children; people with a different sexual orientation or gender identity, migrants, refugees, stateless people, religious minorities; people with disabilities, among others.
2. That Member States implement public policies and programs that will improve the educational and health systems in an integral and inclusive way, with quality; in order to ensure the reduction of poverty and guarantee human prosperity for all in the Americas;
3. That Member States take actions that contribute to sustainable development and the reduction of global warming, linking energy policies with the socioeconomic development of Afro descendant communities and indigenous peoples;
4. That Member States take into account the Millennium Development Goals; eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; Achieve universal primary education; promote gender equality and empower women; reduce child mortality; improve maternal health; combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; ensure environmental sustainability and Develop a global partnership initiative;
5. That Member States speed up the approval process of the draft Inter-American Convention Against Racism and All forms of Discrimination and Intolerance, currently under discussion by the Committee of Juridical and Political Affairs of the OAS;

6. That Member states fulfill their commitment to support the work of the Special Rapporteur of the Rights of Persons of African Descent and Racial Discrimination of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights;
7. That Member States encourage and strengthen actions that promote development that is compatible with the cultural identity and sense of belonging of Afro descendant communities and indigenous peoples;
8. That Member States establish policies and programmes that promote the values of democracy, inclusion and the visibility of Afro descendants and other groups as essential components in the planning of OAS activities;
9. That Member States establish mechanisms and political space for dialogue between governments and civil society through an ad hoc Civil Society *Consultative Counsel in the Summits of the Americas Secretariat*, in charged with the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of progress on Summit mandates;
10. That Member States create The Afro descendants Inter-American Institute, in charged with coordinating the research needed to help improve the economic and social conditions of Afro descendants in the hemisphere.