



**Fourth Summit of the Americas
DECLARATION OF MAR DEL PLATA**

“Creating Jobs to Fight Poverty and Strengthen Democratic Governance”

MAR DEL PLATA, ARGENTINA - NOVEMBER 5, 2005

1. Convinced of the necessity to deepen democracy and consolidate freedom in the Americas, in accordance with the principles contained in the Charter of the Organization of American States and the Inter-American Democratic Charter and their full application as the foundation of the hemispheric community, we, the Heads of State and Government of the democratic countries of the Americas, gathered in the city of Mar del Plata, Argentina, on the occasion of our Fourth Summit, reaffirm our commitment to fight poverty, inequality, hunger, and social exclusion in order to raise the standard of living of our peoples and strengthen democratic governance in the Americas. We assign the right to work, as articulated in human rights instruments, a central place on the hemispheric agenda, recognizing the essential role of the creation of decent work to achieve these objectives.

2. Taking into account the International Labour Organization (ILO) Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998), and the commitment to promoting, strengthening, and defending democracy in the OAS Charter and the Inter-American Democratic Charter, we will promote social well-being, an equitable distribution of the benefits of economic growth, an increase in hemispheric standards of living, the elimination of hunger and the attainment of food security, the creation of new employment opportunities, and the promotion of entrepreneurship.

3. We reaffirm our support for the mandates and commitments undertaken at the Summits of the Americas; the World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995); the Millennium Summit of the United Nations (New York, 2000); the International Conference on Financing for Development (Monterrey, 2002); the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 2002); and the High-level Plenary Meeting of the Sixtieth Session of the United Nations General Assembly (New York, 2005)*, as a fundamental condition for the sustainable development of our countries.

Growth with Employment

4. In search of sustained, long-term, and equitable economic growth that creates jobs, reduces poverty, eliminates hunger, and raises the standard of living, including for the most vulnerable sectors and social groups, and in the framework of national strategies, we are committed to continuing the implementation of sound macroeconomic policies geared toward maintaining high growth rates, full employment, prudent fiscal and monetary policies, appropriate exchange rate policies, sound public debt management policies, and working to diversify economic activity and improve competitiveness. At the same time, we will stimulate income growth and better income distribution, increasing productivity, and protecting workers' rights and the environment. We recognize that the appropriate role of government in market oriented economies will vary from country to country.

* Reservation by the Delegation of Venezuela

5. *We emphasize the importance of the participation of the business sector in achieving our objectives. We recognize, in particular, that micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises, providers of goods and services, constitute a fundamental component for economic growth, job creation, and reduction of poverty and social inequality in our countries.*

6. *We reaffirm our commitment to the Monterrey Consensus that each country has primary responsibility for its own economic and social development through sound policies, promotion of good governance at all levels and respect for the rule of law and that, at the same time, the international community should support national development efforts. In this context, we reiterate that trade and investment opportunities are necessary for countries in fighting poverty and in their development efforts. Also, in this context, we commit to coordinate international efforts in support of sustainable development policies, to identify secure sources of financing, and to mobilize resources for development and the fight against poverty and hunger.*

7. *We are concerned also to note that poverty is a phenomenon found in all the countries of the Hemisphere and that extreme poverty affects millions of people. In that regard, we are committed to intensifying our efforts toward attaining the goals agreed to at the Millennium Summit, especially that of reducing, by 50%, the proportion of persons living in extreme poverty by 2015 given the fact that, despite the efforts made by the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, more than 96 million people still live in extreme poverty.*

8. *We recognize that economic growth is a basic, indispensable, but not sufficient, condition to address the high rates of unemployment, poverty, and growth of the informal economy. We recognize that only countries that have had years of sustained economic growth have successfully reduced poverty. However, in the recent past some countries of the Hemisphere have experienced periods of economic growth that did not translate into equivalent employment gains, compounding existing problems of high income concentration, poverty, and indigence. The challenge is to sustain higher rates of growth with equity and social inclusion, and to generate expanded opportunities, social investment, and social development.*

Good economic policies and a favorable international commercial and economic framework are factors that have helped the region achieve, in 2004, rising incomes and the fastest growth rates in a quarter century, which boosted job creation.

9. *We recognize that some economies in the region have confronted negative external shocks with consequent internal adjustments, which affect their capacity to generate adequate employment. We call upon countries to continue to implement sound policies to deal with such factors. We also call for increased cooperation on the bilateral, regional, and multilateral levels to address these issues.*

10. *Recognizing the existence of external factors that hamper economic growth, we reaffirm the importance of international cooperation for medium-to-low income countries, in order to supplement those countries' efforts to implement their development programs and meet their commitments to the Millennium Development Goals. Such cooperation will contribute to employment generation and to democratic governance.*

11. *We note with concern the increased intensity of natural and man-made disasters and their devastating impact on human lives, infrastructure, and economies in the Hemisphere. We call for action at the national, regional, and international levels to strengthen disaster management programs, including through increased capacity for disaster preparedness, development of early warning systems, risk mitigation and post-disaster recovery, and reconstruction and technical and financial assistance as appropriate, particularly for disaster-prone countries, to reduce the impact of disasters. We also support efforts under way to explore private and public sector involvement in comprehensive approaches to catastrophic risk*

insurance.

12. *Sustained economic growth, with equity and social inclusion, is an indispensable condition to create jobs, fight extreme poverty, and overcome inequality in the Hemisphere. To achieve these ends, it is necessary to improve transparency and the investment climate in our countries, build human capital, encourage increased incomes and improve their distribution, promote corporate social responsibility, and foster a spirit of entrepreneurship as well as strong business activity.*

13. *Recognizing that the reduction of inequality and the elimination of poverty cannot be achieved solely through welfare-oriented social policies, we commit to undertaking comprehensive government policies that institutionalize the fight against poverty. We commit to consolidating more democratic societies with opportunities for all, and will promote greater access for our people to education, health care, labor markets, and credit.*

14. *Taking into account the efforts made in the Hemisphere in the struggle against drug trafficking, we reiterate our support to ensure that alternative development projects contribute to economic growth, promote the creation of decent work, and support the sustainable economic viability of communities and families in those countries affected by the presence of illicit crops.*

15. *One of the major challenges to democratic stability is to generate productive and quality employment in the interest of ensuring that all our people benefit from economic prosperity. We support a country's legitimate right to pursue and attain its development within the framework of its political, economic, social, and cultural realities. We reiterate our commitment to achieving greater economic integration and we will adopt economic policies that promote economic growth, generate employment, and reduce poverty. To this end, we will address the problems that come about because of trade barriers and unsustainable debt, and we will continue to reform the international financial architecture.*

16. *This reform has the following objectives, among others: to contribute to the prevention and rapid resolution of financial crises, which particularly harm developing countries in the region; to enhance financing for development; to combat poverty; and to strengthen democratic governance. We stress the need for multilateral financial institutions, in providing policy advice and financial support, to work on the basis of sound, nationally owned paths of reform that the respective countries have identified with, and which take into account the needs of the poor and measures to reduce poverty. To achieve our sustainable development objectives, we need international and multilateral institutions that are more efficient, democratic, and accountable. We call upon the international and regional financial institutions to strengthen coordination of their activities so that they can respond more effectively to the long-term development needs of the countries of the region to achieve measurable results in their efforts to eradicate poverty through more effective use of all available development financing sources. For the poorest and least creditworthy countries, we support increased multilateral development banks (MDB) funding provided as performance-based grants.*

17. *We will make efforts to increase investment in infrastructure in order to create favorable conditions for employment generation and increased productivity. We will also implement policies to foster the development of our local and/or regional markets*

18. *We express our commitment to the progress of the negotiations on the Doha Development Agenda. We will make every effort to attain an ambitious and balanced outcome at the Sixth World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference, which will lead to a successful conclusion of the Doha Round in 2006 based, inter alia, on the principle of special and differential treatment for developing countries.*

We remain committed to achieving substantial progress on all elements of the Doha Negotiations, in order to gain, in particular, greater access to markets for our exports, the elimination of all forms of agricultural export subsidies, and a substantial reduction of trade-distorting domestic support. We remain committed to achieving an ambitious outcome to the negotiations and to the full and effective implementation of the Work Program related to small economies. Our objective is to expand our trade, as a means of boosting growth and our capacity to generate more, higher quality, and better-paying jobs.

19. Recognizing the contribution that economic integration can make to the achievement of the Summit objectives of creating jobs to fight poverty and strengthening democratic governance:

- A. Some member states maintain that we take into account the difficulties that the process of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) negotiations has encountered, and we recognize the significant contribution that the processes of economic integration and trade liberalization in the Americas can and should make to the achievement of the Summit objectives to create jobs to fight poverty and strengthen democratic governance. Therefore, we remain committed to the achievement of a balanced and comprehensive FTAA Agreement that aims at expanding trade flows and, at the global level, trade free from subsidies and trade-distorting practices, with concrete and substantive benefits for all, taking into account the differences in the size and the levels of development of the participating economies and the special needs and special and differential treatment of the smaller and vulnerable economies. We will actively participate to ensure a significant outcome of the Doha Round that will reflect the measures and proposals mentioned in the previous paragraph. We shall continue to promote the established practices and activities in the FTAA process that provide transparency and encourage participation of civil society.*

We instruct our officials responsible for trade negotiations to resume their meetings, during 2006, to examine the difficulties in the FTAA process, in order to overcome them and advance the negotiations within the framework adopted in Miami in November 2003. We also instruct our representatives in the institutions of the Tripartite Committee to continue allocating the resources necessary to support the FTAA Administrative Secretariat.

- B. Other member states maintain that the necessary conditions are not yet in place for achieving a balanced and equitable free trade agreement with effective access to markets free from subsidies and trade-distorting practices, and that takes into account the needs and sensitivities of all partners, as well as the differences in the levels of development and size of the economies.*

In view of the above, we have agreed to explore both positions in light of the outcomes of the next World Trade Organization ministerial meeting. To that end, the Government of Colombia will undertake consultations with a view to a meeting of the officials responsible for trade negotiations.

Jobs to Fight Poverty

- 20. Considering the widespread demand for dignified, decent, and productive work in the Hemisphere, the great task of our societies and governments in combating poverty and social exclusion is to adopt policies for generating more and better jobs in rural and urban areas, to contribute effectively to social inclusion and cohesion, prosperity, and democratic governance.*

21. *We commit to implementing active policies to generate decent work and create the conditions for quality employment that imbue economic policies and globalization with a strong ethical and human component, putting the individual at the center of work, the company, and the economy. We will promote decent work, that is to say: fundamental rights at work, employment, social protection and social dialogue.*
22. *We reaffirm our respect for the rights set forth in the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998) and undertake to promote these fundamental rights. We will develop and implement policies and programs that help labor markets to function efficiently and transparently and that help workers respond to the opportunities created by economic growth and new technologies.*
23. *We will combat gender-based discrimination in the work place, promoting equal opportunities to eliminate existing disparities between men and women in the working world through an integrated approach that incorporates gender perspective in labor policies, including by promoting more opportunities for ownership of businesses by women.*
24. *We reaffirm our strong commitment to confronting the scourge of racism, discrimination, and intolerance in our societies. These problems must be fought at all levels of government and the wider society. The Inter-American System also has a vital role to play in this process by, among other activities, analyzing the social, economic, and political obstacles faced by marginalized groups and identifying practical steps, including best practices, on how to combat racism and discrimination. To this end, we support the implementation of the OAS Resolution AG/RES. 2126 (XXXV O/05) that led to the establishment of a Working Group in charge of, inter alia, the preparation of a Draft Inter-American Convention Against Racism and all Forms of Discrimination and Intolerance, and lend encouragement to that Working Group to combat racism, discrimination, and intolerance through available means as a matter of the highest priority. We also recall our commitment to fully implement our obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.*
25. *We commit to protecting children from economic exploitation and from any tasks that may interfere with their education and integral development, according to the principle of the effective abolition of child labor, which is contained in the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998). In addition, we will take immediate and effective measures to prevent and eradicate the worst forms of child labor according to Convention 182 of the ILO (1999). We will strive to improve access to and the quality of basic education for all children, recognizing that providing educational opportunities is an investment in the future of our societies.*
26. *We reaffirm that all migrants, regardless of their immigration status, should be accorded the full protection of human rights and the full observance of labor laws applicable to them, including the principles and labor rights embodied in the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998).*
27. *We will promote decent work for migrant workers in the context of the Declaration of Nuevo León and encourage support for the Inter-American Program adopted by the General Assembly in resolution AG/RES. 2141 (XXXV-O/05). Likewise, the state parties to the International Convention on the Protection of the Human Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families reiterate the importance of its full implementation by the parties.*
28. *We call for an increase in inter-American cooperation and dialogue to reduce and*

discourage undocumented migration as well as to promote migration processes in accordance with the national legal system of each State and applicable international human rights law. We commit to dialogue in order to reduce the cost and facilitate remittances and to increase efforts to combat smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons, in keeping with international instruments of human rights; to provide for the dignified, orderly, and safe return of migrant, and to invite states to exchange best practices on establishing bilateral programs for migrant workers.

29. *We will spare no effort to achieve the immediate and complete abolition of forced or compulsory labor in the Americas. We are convinced that it will be a fundamental contribution to achieving the objectives of sustainable growth with social equity in our nations and the forging of a better future for all Americans.*
30. *We commit to strive to ensure equal opportunities to employment for all as well as to work to eliminate discrimination in the workplace, in access to education, training, and remuneration. In this context, we will pay special attention to gender-differentiated needs, the needs of indigenous peoples, Afro-descendants, and other groups in vulnerable situations.*
31. *We reaffirm our commitment to respect indigenous peoples rights and we commit to successfully concluding negotiations on the American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The full exercise of these rights is essential for the existence, welfare, and integral development of indigenous peoples and for their full participation in national activities. For this reason, we must create the necessary conditions to facilitate their access to decent work and living conditions that allow them to overcome social exclusion and inequality, and poverty.*
32. *We affirm our commitment to respect the rights of Afro-descendants and to ensuring their full access to educational opportunities at all levels, and to decent work that will help them overcome poverty and social exclusion and contribute to their increased participation in all sectors of our societies.*
33. *We will promote integrated frameworks of public environmental, employment, health, and social security policies to protect the health and safety of all workers and foster a culture of prevention and control of occupational hazards in the Hemisphere.*
34. *We will strengthen cooperation and exchanges of information in the struggle against chronic diseases as well as emerging and re-emerging diseases such as HIV/AIDS, SARS, malaria, tuberculosis, avian flu, and other health risks. We commit to fighting the stigma, misinformation, and discrimination against people living with HIV/AIDS in the workplace and favor their full access to employment with dignity. We propose to develop crosscutting strategies and cooperation mechanisms, principally within the framework of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), to combat these diseases, including the strengthening and adequate financing of the Global Fund to Combat AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria as well as the development of national preparedness plans to fight potential pandemics, such as avian flu. We urge all countries to accelerate the process of ratification of the new international health regulations and seek to enhance the cooperation mechanisms that would facilitate access to pertinent measures of prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of the population at risk.*
35. *Recognizing the need for comprehensive social protection systems, we will examine the forms of unemployment protection most appropriate and possible for our respective countries. As part of a package of social safety nets for the unemployed, we also recognize the positive contribution of unemployment insurance systems in temporarily*

alleviating the socioeconomic suffering of individuals, reducing the need for workers to resort to subsistence activities through precarious jobs and facilitating their reentry into the work force.

- 36. We consider it essential to strengthen broad, transparent, and inclusive social dialogue with all concerned sectors of society, at the local, national, regional, and hemispheric levels. Social dialogue is an important and basic instrument to promote and consolidate democracy and to build societies with inclusion and social justice.*
- 37. We recognize the fundamental and unique consultative role of employers' and workers' organizations in shaping employment and labor policies. We undertake to promote and facilitate tripartite dialogue in national, subregional, and hemispheric frameworks.*
- 38. We recognize the important link between development and culture and we agree that support for culture in its many dimensions contributes to, among other things, the preservation and protection of national heritage, the enhancement of the dignity and identity of our people, the creation of decent jobs, and the overcoming of poverty.*
- 39. We underline the importance of the OAS Meeting of Ministers and High Authorities on Sustainable Development to be held in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, in August 2006. We encourage the participation of member states and we call upon the OAS to continue to support the preparatory work necessary to make this meeting a success.*

Training the Labor Force

- 40. We recognize the essential role of life-long learning opportunities, especially technical and professional training of our population. Investing in knowledge, skills, capacities, and abilities facilitates access and re-entry to the labor force, supports personal and professional development, and maximizes economic productivity and institutional strengthening.*
- 41. We recognize the importance of facilitating the integration of youth into the labor market, expanding coverage and improving the quality of information services and career counseling.*
- 42. We agree that in order to improve employment opportunities we must ensure quality education for all citizens, which requires the evaluation of our efforts based on clearly defined standards and accountability for results.*
- 43. We support the recommendations contained in the Declaration and Plan of Action of the Fourth Meeting of Ministers of Education, held in Scarborough, Trinidad and Tobago, August 10-12, 2005. We will strive for quality public education at all levels and promote literacy to ensure a democratic citizenry, foster decent work, fight poverty, and achieve greater social inclusion. Achieving these goals requires a substantial financial investment by our governments and international financial institutions. We note with satisfaction the suggestion of the Ministers of Education that our governments explore innovative forms of increasing financing for education with international financing institutions, such as debt swaps for investment in education.*
- 44. We understand that the potential for developing the capacity of our citizenry and attaining greater productivity depends on a well-educated and well-trained labor force. In this sense, we recognize the advances made in increasing access to education and we reiterate the need to expand coverage, improve quality, strengthen the teaching profession, and*

improve the efficiency of our education systems. We reiterate the importance of incorporating new information and communication technologies in the training of our citizenry to increase their productivity.

- 45. We commit to support the improvement of the quality of the teaching of science and we will strive to incorporate science, technology, engineering, and innovation as principal factors in national strategies and plans for social and economic development, for the fundamental purpose of reducing poverty and generating decent work. In this vein, we support the Declaration and Plan of Action adopted at the Ministerial Meeting of Science and Technology held in Lima.*
- 46. We recognize that scientific and technological research, and scientific development and progress play a fundamental role in the integral development of our societies, by building knowledge-based economies and contributing to economic growth and increased productivity. In this regard, we reiterate our support for the institutions established earlier in the Summits Process, such as the Inter-American Committee on Science and Technology, to create a scientific culture in the Hemisphere. We will continue to support public and private research associations and promote their interaction.*
- 47. We will continue to increase investment in science and technology, with the participation of the private sector and the support of multilateral institutions. We will also intensify our efforts to encourage our universities and higher institutions of science and technology to increase their linkages and deepen basic and applied research and promote greater incorporation of workers in the agenda of innovation. We will facilitate the greatest interaction possible between scientific and technological research communities by fostering the establishment and consolidation of advanced research networks and synergies among educational institutions, research centers, the public and private sectors and civil society.*
- 48. We recognize that the protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights should contribute to the promotion of technological innovation and to the transfer and dissemination of technology, to the mutual advantage of producers and users of technological knowledge and in a manner conducive to social and economic welfare, and to a balance of rights and obligations. Therefore, we reiterate our commitment to their protection in accordance with the WTO Agreement on Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights.*
- 49. We will do our utmost to take advantage of the possibilities offered by information and communication technologies to increase efficiency and transparency in the public sector, and to facilitate the participation of citizens in public life, thereby helping to strengthen democratic governance in the region. In that sense, we will continue promoting the adoption in the region of training programs in e-government, by sharing the experience of countries that have made headway in this field. This will help boost the skills of public sector employees through the use of innovative tools such as on-line training portals for government officials currently implemented in some countries. These actions will provide training at several levels, thereby helping to improve the skills of civil servants and strengthening education in democratic values and best practices in the region.*

Micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises as an engine of job growth

- 50. Micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises constitute a strategic force to generate new employment, improve the quality of life, and have a positive impact on development and economic growth while promoting equity and social inclusion.*

51. *We will promote and support actions to facilitate the participation of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in domestic markets and international trade. We will support the SME Congress of the Americas and encourage wider participation in this initiative. We stress the importance of opening new markets for SME goods and services.*
52. *We are committed to the fight against poverty and inequality and we recognize the contribution to the economy and to the creation of decent work by productive organizations, in accordance with each nation's characteristics, such as cooperatives and other production units.*
53. *We will foster the development of entrepreneurial skills and technical competence of SMEs, with the objective of facilitating their entry into new markets, aimed at strengthening SMEs and consequently increasing employment.*
54. *We will support the efforts that the multilateral development banks make with the micro, small and medium-sized enterprises as fundamental factors of economic growth and we will welcome the increased efforts of the World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and other regional development banks to create the enabling environment for strengthening such enterprises.*

Framework for Creating Decent Work

55. *We are committed to building a more solid and inclusive institutional framework, based on the coordination of economic, labor, and social public policies to contribute to the generation of decent work, which must comprise:*
- a) *A labor framework that promotes decent work and reaffirms our respect for the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its follow-up. We shall continue to strengthen the application of our national labor laws and promote their effective enforcement;*
 - b) *An economic framework characterized by responsible fiscal policies fostering equitable growth that generates employment;*
 - c) *A business climate that attracts investment, fosters new enterprise creation, and promotes competition;*
 - d) *A legal framework that upholds the rule of law, transparency, and access to justice; reinforces impartiality and independence of judicial institutions; prevents and combats impunity and corruption in both the public and the private spheres; and fights international crime;*
 - e) *A public policy framework for integral and sustainable development that can reduce poverty and inequality, advance human health, and protect the environment in harmony with international environmental agreements to which we are all party, including those that address endangered and migratory species and wildlife, wetlands, desertification, ozone depleting chemicals, and climate change; we take note, with satisfaction, of the upcoming United Nations Conference on Climate Change in Montreal.*
 - f) *A regulatory framework that seeks to incorporate the informal sector and unregistered work into the formal sector, recognizing the heterogeneous nature of the informal sector, in order to expand social protection and to enhance the quality and productivity of work;*
 - g) *A comprehensive framework for rural and agricultural development, to promote investment, job creation, and rural prosperity;*
 - h) *To achieve the abovementioned objectives we will promote increased cooperation and coordination between local, regional, and national governments.*
56. *We recognize the vital contributions of Ministries of Labor to the achievement of the objectives of the Fourth Summit of the Americas, “Creating Jobs to Fight Poverty and Strengthen Democratic Governance,” and to the promotion of decent work and policies that encourage investment and economic growth with equity. We are committed to strengthening them with the goal of ensuring that they have sufficient national budgetary and technical resources to carry out their duties in an efficient and effective manner. We call upon our respective Ministers of Labor, working with employers and workers, to promote professional training and lifelong learning activities so that workers may adequately insert themselves into labor markets, to facilitate the skills and the knowledge development of workers and job seekers; to implement policies and programs, such as improved employment services and access to quality labor market information, that provide for the efficient functioning of labor markets; and to effectively enforce our national labor laws and regulations.*

We encourage the ministers to continue bilateral and multilateral cooperation aimed at capacity building. We also take note of the Declaration and Plan of Action of Mexico and their role in furthering the objectives of the Summit.

Strengthening Democratic Governance

- 57. We reiterate our commitment to the OAS Charter and the Inter-American Democratic Charter and we reaffirm our resolve to strengthen their full and effective implementation.*
- 58. We are convinced that representative democracy is an indispensable condition for the stability, peace, and development of the region[†]. We recognize that for democracy to prosper, governments must be responsive to the legitimate aspirations of their people and work to provide their people with the tools and opportunities to improve their lives.*
- 59. In this sense, we endorse the commitments undertaken in the Declaration of Florida adopted at the thirty-fifth regular session of OAS General Assembly held in June 2005. Likewise, we take note of the importance of what was agreed by the participants of the Community of Democracies at their Third Ministerial Meeting, held in Santiago, in April 2005.*
- 60. We reaffirm that the participatory nature of democracy in our countries in different aspects of public life contributes to the consolidation of democratic values and to freedom and solidarity in the Hemisphere.*
- 61. Our efforts to generate decent work will contribute to promoting equity, social mobility, a better quality of life, and social inclusion for our citizens as well as to achieving social justice.*
- 62. Increased participation by citizens, communities, and civil society will contribute to ensuring that the benefits of democracy are shared by society as a whole.*
- 63. We recognize that the universal promotion and protection of human rights, including civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights on the basis of the principles of universality, indivisibility, and interdependence, as well as respect for international law, including international humanitarian law, international human rights law, and international refugee law are essential to the functioning of democratic societies. Accordingly, we reaffirm the need to continue the process of strengthening and enhancing the effectiveness of the inter-American human rights system, in particular, the functioning of and access to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.*
- 64. We reaffirm that democratic governance based on respect for the rule of law and which is stable, transparent, effective, inclusive, and accountable, contributes to creating the enabling environment to attract investment, build economic prosperity, foster the creation of decent work, and achieve social justice.*

[†] Reservation by Venezuela

65. *In this sense, we recognize the work of the Meetings of Ministers and of High Authorities of the Inter-American High Level Network on Decentralization, Local Government, and Participation by Citizens, in particular the III RIAD, whose central theme was the role of local and regional governments, citizen participation and regional development in combating poverty, the generation of work and income, and the strengthening of democratic governance.*
66. *Accountability is a key instrument to achieve transparency and efficiency in the use of resources administered by our governments. Fighting corruption is a key aspect of strengthening democracy and economic growth. For this reason, we call upon states to implement the Inter-American Convention against Corruption and participate fully in the Follow-up Mechanism for the Implementation of the Inter-American Convention against Corruption. We stress the importance of the oversight role of legislatures, as appropriate, in the fight against corruption and the importance of promoting inter-parliamentary exchanges to encourage the development of national and international strategies to fight against corruption.*
67. *We will promote economic prosperity by ensuring that the community of democratic states remains committed to peace and to dealing with threats, concerns, and other challenges to security. We reiterate our commitment to the objectives and purposes contained in the Declaration on Security in the Americas based on a multidimensional concept of security, and will continue to strengthen cooperation among our states.*
68. *We state that terrorism affects the normal functioning of our societies and has a negative impact on our economies and labor markets and particularly the generation of jobs. To sustain an environment to promote economic prosperity and the well-being of our people, we will take all necessary steps to prevent and counter terrorism and its financing in full compliance with our obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law, international human rights law, and international refugee law.*
69. *We will strengthen the timely exchanges of information and the broadest possible mutual legal assistance in order to prevent, combat, and eliminate terrorism, prevent the international movement of terrorists and ensure their prosecution, and, as appropriate, their extradition in accordance with domestic laws and relevant treaties and conventions. We will cooperate to avoid that any individual who participates in the financing, planning, preparation and commission of terrorist acts finds safe haven in our countries.*
70. *We emphasize our concern for the criminal gang problem and its related aspects, as well as its effect on the economic and social environments that challenge the progress made by our societies in the stability, democratization, and sustainable development process: a situation that requires additional urgent action to promote the prevention of criminal acts, prosecute those who commit them, rehabilitate and reinsert them, and create opportunities to facilitate access by youth to decent work.*
71. *We offer our encouragement to the OAS in drafting the Social Charter of the Americas and its Plan of Action, whose principles and objectives will be directed towards the achievement by member states of societies that offer all of our citizens more opportunities to benefit from sustainable development with equity and social inclusion.*
72. *National efforts to generate decent jobs and good employment must be supported by international cooperation and solidarity. In this context, we will strengthen hemispheric cooperation mechanisms among our countries within the OAS framework and with other multilateral organizations and financial institutions, to ensure an effective use of instruments and resources needed to promote sustainable growth and development. In this*

regard, we take note with interest of the international efforts, contributions and discussions, such as the Action Against Hunger and Poverty, aimed at identifying innovative and additional sources of financing for development on a public, private, domestic or external basis, according to each country's national development strategies, to increase and supplement traditional sources of financing in support of the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDG's) and reflecting the global partnership of the Monterrey Consensus.

- 73. Taking into account the results of this Summit and the Fourteenth IACML, we request that the ILO address, at its Sixteenth Americas Regional Meeting in 2006, the central topic of the Fourteenth IACML, "People and their Work at the Heart of Globalization," with special emphasis on decent work, and consider government and tripartite actions to implement the Declaration and Plan of Action of Mar del Plata.*
- 74. We recognize the pivotal role that the OAS plays in the implementation and follow-up of Summit mandates, and we instruct the General Secretariat to continue to act as technical secretariat; provide support for meetings of the Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG), ministerial meetings, and specialized conferences; coordinate the participation of civil society; and ensure the dissemination of information on the Summits Process and the commitments adopted by the countries.*
- 75. We instruct the members of the Joint Summit Working Group, comprised of the OAS, IDB, Economic Commission for Latin América and the Caribbean (ECLAC), PAHO, Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI), the World Bank, ILO, International Organization for Migration (OIM), Institute for Connectivity in the Americas (ICA), Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), and the Andean Development Corporation (CAF), under the coordination of the OAS, to continue, through their respective activities and programs, to support the follow-up and implementation of the Declarations and Plans of Action of the Summits of the Americas, and of the Declaration and Plan of Action of Mar del Plata, as well as to assist in the preparations for future summits.*
- 76. With this Declaration and the attached Plan of Action, we Heads of State and Government of the Hemisphere reaffirm the central role we assign to the creation of decent work, in order to meet our commitments to fight poverty and strengthen democratic governance. We recognize once again the value of work as an activity that dignifies and structures the lives of our peoples, as an effective instrument for social interaction, and as a means of participation in the achievements of society: the primary objective of our governments' actions for the Americas.*