

COMMITMENT FOR DEMOCRACY IN CUBA

WHEREAS during June 4, 2005 we met in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida on the eve of the XXXV Regular Session of the Organization of American States General Assembly.

RECALLING Article 3 of the OAS Charter which states “The solidarity of the American States and the high aims which are sought through it require the political organization of those States on the effective exercise of representative democracy”

CONSIDERING the importance that international solidarity has played in raising the spirits of oppressed people, human rights defenders, and democratic activists and considering also that providing and strengthening solidarity is one of the principal purposes for which the OAS was created.

INSPIRED by the international commitment to promote democracy made by the members of the Community of Democracies to promote an agenda of democracy and freedom at the United Nations.

RECALLING ALSO various international efforts **undertaken** to shed light on the Castro regime’s violations of human rights and obstruction of democracy, including the Prague and San Jose Memorandums which have provided an important framework for international support for democracy in Cuba.

BEARING IN MIND that international and regional mechanisms exist, particularly the Inter-American Democratic Charter that can serve as a guide to promote a democratic transition on the island.

RECOGNIZING the commitment of the Inter-American community to promote democracy as reflected by Article 1 of the Inter-American Democratic Charter, which states that “the peoples of the Americas have a right to democracy and their governments have an obligation to promote and defend it.”

CONSIDERING that Article 3 of the Inter-American Democratic Charter **sets forth** that the “Essential elements of representative democracy include inter alia, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, access to and the exercise of power in accordance with the rule of law, the holding of periodic, free and fair elections based on secret balloting and universal suffrage as an expression of the sovereignty of the people, the pluralistic system of political parties and organizations, the separation of powers and the independence of the branches of government.”

MINDFUL that the true source of sovereignty lies in the exercise of fundamental rights and that people are not sovereign if they cannot exercise these rights, if they cannot freely elect their political representatives and if they cannot count on the existence of an independent judiciary to balance the power of the government, and that a state cannot be said to be representative of a nation’s sovereignty if it institutionally violates these rights.

AWARE of the need to help the Cuban people bring about democracy through the strengthening of civil society and the civil movement so that through their own efforts and with international solidarity, Cubans will one day enjoy the peace that only freedom brings

CONVINCED of the need for the inter-American system to help the people of Cuba build a vibrant modern representative democracy and contribute vital resources in the areas of elections, respect for the rule of law, human rights, freedom of the media, and economic and social development.

WE THEREFORE AFFIRM:

Our commitment to work **for the establishment of democracy in Cuba**, so that one day all Cuban citizens can fully exercise their rights as human beings and live in dignity.

Our pledge to make every effort to obtain the immediate and unconditional liberation of all political prisoners and prisoners of conscience who have been deprived of their freedom for seeking a democratic system and respect for human dignity.

Our commitment to encourage the countries of the Western Hemisphere and Europe to (1) openly disapprove of the abuses of human rights in Cuba; (2) demand the immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners in Cuba; (3) join efforts to promote democracy in Cuba; (4) use their embassies in Cuba to cooperate in providing help and support to those who work for the establishment of democratic values and practices and respect for human rights.

URGE

OAS member states to use the Inter-American Democratic Charter as the framework for the integration of Cuba to the inter-American system.

The international community and particularly the OAS member states to express their solidarity with the legitimate aspirations of the Cuban people to live in democracy and enjoy the rights and benefits accorded in the Inter-American Democratic Charter.

OAS member states to continue supporting the work of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to promote the observance and defense of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Cuba.

The Inter-American Human Rights Commission to continue to monitor and call attention to the human rights situation on the island and assist the people of Cuba, as appropriate, to establish mechanisms that will restore the rule of law so that fundamental legal, political, and civil rights are respected.

**INTERNATIONAL
COMMITTEE FOR
DEMOCRACY
IN CUBA / ICDC**

MEMBERS: Marcos Aguinis (Argentina); Urban Ahlin (Sweden); Madeleine Albright (USA); Patricio Aylwin Azócar (Chile); José María Aznar (Spain); Elena Bonner (Russia); Kim Campbell (Canada); José Ribeiro e Castro (Portugal); Vinicio Cerezo (Guatemala); Violeta Barrios de Chamorro (Nicaragua); Chang Chun-hsiung (Taiwan); Philip Dimitrov (Bulgaria); Ján Figel (Slovakia); André Glucksmann (France); Arpad Göncz (Hungary); Václav Havel (Czech Republic); Jeane J. Kirkpatrick (USA); Enrique Krauze (Mexico); Mart Laar (Estonia); Luis Alberto Lacalle (Uruguay); Mario Vargas Llosa (Peru); Cecilia Malmström (Sweden); Edward McMillan-Scott (UK); Markus Meckel (Germany); Adam Michnik (Poland); Luis Alberto Monge (Costa Rica); Karel Schwarzenberg (Czech Republic); Armando Calderón Sol (El Salvador); Arnold Vaatz (Germany); Matti Wuori (Finland)

RECOMMEND

That the new European democracies, share their experiences with the Cuban democratic opposition with the aim of hastening Cuba's transition to democracy.

That the OAS begin to consider how it can play a constructive role in helping a future Cuban democratic transition government rejoin the hemispheric family of democracies and rebuild its political, legal, economic system within the framework of the Inter-American Democratic Charter.

Signed this ____ day of _____, 2005

VACLAV HAVEL
Former President of Czech Republic

LUIS ALBERTO LACALLE
Former President of Uruguay

LUIS ALBERTO MONGE
Former President of Costa Rica

PHILLIP DIMITROV
Former Prime Minister of Bulgaria

KIM CAMPBELL
Former Prime Minister of Canada

MART LAAR
Former Prime Minister of Estonia

ELENA BONNER
Chair, The Andrei Sakharov Foundation

ALVARO DUBON
Central American Parliament

GABRIEL JOAQUIN LLANO
Argentinean Parliament

CECILIA MALMSTROM
Member European Parliament, Sweden

JAROMIR STETINA
Senator, Parliament Czech Republic

JAIME TROBO
Member, Parliament of Uruguay