

PLAN OF ACTION

To strengthen democracy, create prosperity and realize human potential, our Governments will:

1. MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK BETTER

Electoral Processes and Procedures

Recognizing the relationship among democracy, sustainable development, the separation of powers, as well as effective and efficient government institutions, and, noting that the transparency and accountability of electoral systems and the independence of bodies responsible for the conduct and verification of free, fair and regular elections are essential elements in ensuring support for and involvement in national democratic institutions:

Share best practices and technologies with respect to increasing citizen participation in electoral processes, including voter education, the modernization and simplification of voter registration and the voting and counting process, while taking into account the need to safeguard the integrity of the electoral process and promoting the full participation and integration of all persons eligible to exercise the right to vote, without discrimination;

Continue to enhance electoral mechanisms, using information and communications technologies where possible, to effectively guarantee the impartiality, promptness and independent action of agencies, tribunals or other bodies responsible for the conduct, supervision and verification of elections at national and sub-national levels, and strengthen and facilitate, with the support of the Organization of American States (OAS) and other regional and international organizations, hemispheric cooperation and exchange of legislative and technological experiences in these areas, and the deployment of election observers when so requested;

Convene under the auspices of the OAS, and with the collaboration of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), meetings of experts to examine in more depth issues such as: political party registration, access of political parties to funding and to the media, campaign financing, oversight and dissemination of election results and relations of political parties with other sectors of society;

Transparency and Good Governance

Recognizing that good governance requires effective, representative, transparent and accountable government institutions at all levels, public participation, effective checks and balances, and the separation of powers, as well as noting the role of information and communications technologies in achieving these aims:

Promote cooperation among national agencies in the Hemisphere charged with the development and maintenance of procedures and practices for the preparation, presentation, auditing and oversight of public accounts, with technical assistance where appropriate from multilateral organizations and multilateral development banks (MDBs), and support exchanges of information on oversight activities related to the collection, allocation and expenditure of public funds;

Encourage cooperation and exchange of experiences and parliamentary best practices between national legislators of the Hemisphere, while respecting the separation and balance of powers, through bilateral, subregional and hemispheric vehicles such as the Inter-Parliamentary Forum of the Americas (FIPA);

Work jointly to facilitate cooperation among national institutions with the responsibility to guarantee the protection, promotion and respect of human rights, and access to and freedom of information, with the aim of developing best practices to improve the administration of information held by governments on individuals and facilitating citizen access to that information;

Create and implement programs with the technical and financial support, where appropriate, of multilateral organizations and MDBs, to facilitate public participation and transparency, using information and communications technologies where applicable, in decision-making processes and in the delivery of government services, and to publish information within time-limits established by national legislation at all levels of government;

Media and Communications

Noting that access to existing and emerging information and communications technologies has an increasingly significant impact on the lives of individuals and offers important opportunities for democratic development, and that the media has an important role to play in promoting a democratic culture:

Ensure the media is free from arbitrary interventions by the state, and specifically, work to remove legal or regulatory impediments to media access by registered political parties including by facilitating, where possible, equitable access during election campaigns to television and radio;

Encourage cooperation among public and private broadcasters, including cable operators, and independent broadcast regulatory bodies and governmental organizations, in order to facilitate the exchange of best industry practices and technologies at the hemispheric level, to guarantee free, open and independent media;

Encourage media self-regulation efforts, including norms of ethical conduct, to address the concerns of civil society with regard to, inter alia, reducing the dissemination of extreme violence and negative stereotypes of women and ethnic, social and other groups, contributing in this way to the promotion of changes in attitudes and cultural patterns through the

projection of pluralistic, balanced and non-discriminatory images;

Fight against Corruption

Recognizing that corruption gravely affects democratic political institutions and the private sector, weakens economic growth and jeopardizes the basic needs and interests of a country's most underprivileged groups, and that the prevention and control of these problems are the responsibility of government as well as legislative and judicial institutions:

Consider signing and ratifying, ratifying, or acceding to, as soon as possible and as the case may be, the *Inter-American Convention Against Corruption*, in accordance with their respective legal frameworks, and promote effective implementation of the Convention by means of, inter alia, the Inter-American Program for Cooperation in the Fight Against Corruption and associated technical cooperation programs and activities, including those of relevant multilateral organizations and MDBs, in the area of good governance and in the fight against corruption, as well as programs which each country designs and implements in accordance with national laws, by its own appropriate bodies that may require assistance;

Support the establishment as soon as possible, taking into consideration the recommendation of the OAS, of a follow-up mechanism for the implementation of the *Inter-American Convention Against Corruption* by States Parties to this instrument;

Support strengthening the Inter-American Network of Institutions and Experts in the Fight Against Corruption in the context of the OAS, as well as initiatives aimed at strengthening cooperation among ethics officials and members of civil society;

Strengthen, in cooperation with multilateral organizations and MDBs, where appropriate, the participation of civil society in the fight against corruption, by means of initiatives that promote the organization, training and linkage of citizens groups in the context of concrete projects which promote transparency and accountability in governance;

Continue to promote policies, processes and mechanisms that protect the public interest, the use of disclosure of assets mechanisms for public officials in order to avoid possible conflicts of interest and incompatibilities, as well as other measures that increase transparency;

Empowering Local Governments

Recognizing that citizen participation and appropriate political representation are the foundation of democracy, and that local governments are closest to the daily lives of citizens:

Promote mechanisms to facilitate citizen participation in politics, especially in local or municipal government;

Promote the development, autonomy and institutional strengthening of local government in order to promote favorable conditions for the sustainable economic and social development of their communities;

Strengthen the institutional capacity of local governments to allow full and equal citizen participation in public policies without any discrimination, facilitate access to those services fundamental to improving citizens' quality of life, and strengthen decentralization and the integral development of these services in part through commensurate and timely funding and initiatives that permit local governments to generate and administer their own resources;

Promote sharing of information, best practices and administrative expertise among local government personnel, associations of local governments, community associations and the public, in part by facilitating access to information and communications technologies by municipalities and by encouraging cooperation and coordination among national, subregional and regional organizations of mayors and local government;

Stimulate international cooperation in training directors and managers of local government; Support convening a meeting in Bolivia of ministers or authorities at the highest level responsible for policies on decentralization, local government and citizen participation in municipal government, and consider closely the recommendations of the Sixth Inter-American Conference of Mayors and other relevant processes;

Support the OAS Program of Cooperation and Decentralization in Local Government, including, with the support of the IDB, the development of programs and the effective inclusion of citizens in decision-making processes;

2. HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS

Recognizing that the universal protection and promotion of human rights, including civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights, as well as respect for the norms and principles of international humanitarian law based on the principles of universality, indivisibility and interdependence are fundamental to the functioning of democratic society, stressing the importance of respect for the rule of law, effective and equal access to justice and participation by all elements of society in public decision-making processes:

Implementation of International Obligations and Respect for International Standards

Consider signing and ratifying, ratifying, or acceding to, as soon as possible and as the case may be, all universal and hemispheric human rights instruments, take concrete measures at the national level to promote and strengthen respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms of all persons, including women, children, the elderly, indigenous peoples, migrants, returning citizens, persons with disabilities, and those belonging to other vulnerable or discriminated groups, and note that the use of the term "peoples" in this document cannot be construed as having any implications as to the rights that attach to the

term under international law and that the rights associated with the term “indigenous peoples” have a context-specific meaning that is appropriately determined in the multilateral negotiations of the texts of declarations that specifically deal with such rights;

Reaffirm their determination to combat and eliminate impunity at all levels within their societies by strengthening judicial systems and national human rights institutions;

Combat, in accordance with international law, genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes wherever they might occur, and in particular, call upon all states to consider ratifying or acceding to, as the case may be, the *Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court*;

Recognize the importance of the Regional Preparatory Conference of the Americas against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Forms of Intolerance held in Santiago, Chile, in December 2000, and undertake to participate actively in the World Conference to be held in South Africa in 2001, promoting its objectives and stressing that political platforms based on racism, xenophobia or doctrines of racial superiority must be condemned as incompatible with democracy and transparent and accountable governance;

Support efforts in the OAS to consider the need to develop an inter-American convention against racism and related forms of discrimination and intolerance;

Strengthening Human Rights Systems

Continue promoting concrete measures to strengthen and improve the inter-American human rights system, in particular the functioning of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), focusing on: the universalization of the inter-American human rights system, increasing adherence to its founding instruments, complying with the decisions of the Inter-American Court and following up on the recommendations of the Commission, facilitating the access of persons to this protection mechanism and substantially increasing resources to maintain ongoing operations, including the encouragement of voluntary contributions, examining the possibility that the Court and the IACHR will function permanently, and entrust the XXXI General Assembly of the OAS, which will take place in San Jose, Costa Rica, in June of this year, to initiate actions to meet the above-mentioned goals;

Strengthen the capacity of governmental institutions mandated with the promotion and protection of human rights, such as national human rights institutions, thereby recognizing the important function they perform, and contribute to the successful establishment of a network of all such institutions of the Hemisphere, using information and communications technologies to promote and give effect to sustainable cooperation and better coordination; Create and strengthen national human rights action plans, in accordance with the mandate of the 1993 *Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action*, and foster independent national human rights institutions by seeking, where appropriate, technical and financial support from multilateral organizations, MDBs and specialized multilateral agencies;

Seek to promote and give effect to the *Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms* [also referred to as the United Nations (UN) Declaration on Human Rights Defenders];

Advance negotiations within the OAS on the *Proposed American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* with a view toward its earliest possible conclusion and adoption;

Migration

Reaffirming the commitments made in 1998 at the Santiago Summit concerning the protection of the human rights of migrants, including migrant workers and their families:

Strengthen cooperation among states to address, with a comprehensive, objective and long-term focus, the manifestations, origins and effects of migration in the region;

Promote recognition of the value of close cooperation among countries of origin, transit and destination in order to ensure protection of the human rights of migrants;

Establish an inter-American program within the OAS for the promotion and protection of the human rights of migrants, including migrant workers and their families, taking into account the activities of the IACHR and supporting the work of the IACHR Special Rapporteur on Migrant Workers and the UN Special Rapporteur on Migration;

Commit to undertake the widest possible cooperation and exchange of information among states concerning illegal trafficking networks, including developing preventative campaigns on the dangers and risks faced by migrants, particularly women and children who often can be victims of such trafficking, with a view to eradicating this crime;

Establish linkages with subregional processes, such as the Regional Conference on Migration and the South American Conference on Migration, which are dialogue fora, in order to exchange information on the migration phenomenon, as well as promote cooperation with specialized international organizations, such as the International Organization of Migration (IOM), in order to advance and coordinate implementation efforts of Summit mandates;

Human Rights of Women

Continue to implement the recommendations contained in the 1998 Report of the Special Rapporteur of the IACHR on the Status of Women in the Americas and ensure the evaluation of and, where appropriate, the establishment of national mechanisms for follow-up;

Integrate fully the human rights of women into the work of hemispheric institutions, including the Inter-American Court on Human Rights and the IACHR, and increase the nomination of women as candidates for positions in these bodies;

Request the OAS, through its specialized organs and particularly the Inter-American

Commission on Women (CIM), to facilitate the integration of a gender perspective in the work of all its bodies, agencies and entities through the development of training programs and the dissemination of information on the human rights of women, as well as support governments in the systematic compilation and dissemination of sex disaggregated data; Develop, review and implement laws, procedures, codes and regulations to guarantee compatibility with international legal obligations and to prohibit and eliminate all forms of discrimination based on gender, and continue work begun at the Santiago Summit that set the goal of legal equality between men and women by the year 2002;

Develop additional policies and practices to combat violence against women, including domestic violence, in accordance with the definition established in the *Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against Women* (The Convention of Belém do Pará);

Consider signing and ratifying, ratifying, or acceding to, as soon as possible and as the case may be, the UN *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*, and its Optional Protocol;

Human Rights of Children and Adolescents

Consider, signing and ratifying, ratifying, or acceding to, as soon as possible and as the case may be, the two Optional Protocols to the UN *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, specifically on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, and the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography; seek to integrate fully their obligations pursuant to the UN *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, and other international human rights instruments into national legislation, policy and practice;

Integrate fully the human rights of children and adolescents into the work of hemispheric institutions, including the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, the IACHR and the Inter-American Children's Institute (IACI);

Freedom of Opinion and Expression

Continue to support the work of the inter-American human rights system in the area of freedom of expression through the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression of the IACHR, as well as proceed with the dissemination of comparative jurisprudence, and seek to ensure that national legislation on freedom of expression is consistent with international legal obligations;

Ensure that national legislation relating to freedom of expression is applied equitably to all, respecting freedom of expression and access to information of all citizens, and that journalists and opinion leaders are free to investigate and publish without fear of reprisals, harassment or retaliatory actions, including the misuse of anti-defamation laws;

3. JUSTICE, RULE OF LAW AND SECURITY OF THE INDIVIDUAL

Recognizing that equal access to independent, impartial and timely justice is a cornerstone of democracy and economic and social development, welcoming more frequent meetings, consultations and collaboration among our justice ministers, supreme court justices, attorneys general, ombudsman officials, law enforcement officials and others, and noting with satisfaction the increased interest in collaborating and sharing experiences to develop and implement judicial and law enforcement reforms:

Access to Justice

Support public and private initiatives and programs to educate people about their rights relating to access to justice, and promote measures that ensure prompt, equal and universal access to justice;

Promote cooperation to exchange experiences in alternative dispute resolution mechanisms to expedite the administration of justice, including among indigenous peoples, for which they may request the support as appropriate of the OAS, the IDB and other entities;

Independence of the Judiciary

Encourage measures to strengthen the independence of the judiciary, including transparent judicial selection, secure tenure on the bench, appropriate standards of conduct and systems of accountability;

Hemispheric Meetings of Ministers of Justice

Continue to support the work done in the context of the Meetings of Ministers of Justice and Attorneys General of the Americas, whose Fourth Meeting will take place in Trinidad and Tobago, as well as subsequent meetings, and the implementation of their conclusions and recommendations;

Develop a funding plan for the Justice Studies Center for the Americas that takes into account the interests and resources of both governments and other likely donors, and that will enable the Center to contribute not only to the modernization and formulation of public policy in this area, but also to the institutional development of judicial systems in the region;

Develop an exchange of best practices and recommendations, through the Meetings of Ministers of Justice and other appropriate mechanisms, seeking the technical and financial support of other multilateral organizations and MDBs where appropriate, that are consistent with international human rights standards, to reduce the number of pre-trial detainees, institute alternative forms of sentencing for minor crimes and improve prison conditions throughout the Hemisphere;

Establish, in the OAS, an Internet-based network of information among competent legal authorities on extradition and mutual legal assistance to facilitate direct communications among them on a regular basis and to identify common problems in handling specific cases

and issues that merit collective attention and resolution;

Combating the Drug Problem

Recognizing the extreme nature of the drug problem in the region, renewing their unwavering commitment to fight it in all its manifestations from an integral perspective, in accordance with the principle of shared responsibility, through the coordination of national efforts and in a spirit of cooperation and mutual respect as established in the *Hemispheric Anti-Drug Strategy*, and also recognizing the work accomplished by the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) and the Governmental Experts Group appointed to undertake the first round of the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism (MEM):

Note with satisfaction the creation and implementation of the MEM, and reiterate their commitment to make this instrument, unique in the world, a central pillar of assistance toward effective hemispheric cooperation in the struggle against all the component elements of the global drug problem;

Implement the proposals and recommendations found in the national and hemispheric reports, approved by CICAD, in accordance with the specific situation of each country;

Continue strengthening and reviewing the MEM to monitor national and hemispheric efforts against drugs, and recommend concrete actions to encourage inter-American cooperation and national strategies to combat this scourge;

Recommend:

- Intensifying joint IDB-CICAD efforts in order to obtain financial resources from the international donor community, through consultative groups supporting anti-drug efforts, for alternative development, as well as demand reduction programs;
- Establishing units with financial intelligence functions in countries that have not yet done so, with the support of CICAD and international agencies specialized in this area, and for which, in this context, it is recommended that CICAD and IDB training efforts be expanded;
- Developing, within the framework of CICAD, a long-term strategy that includes a three-year program to establish a basic and homogeneous mechanism to estimate the social, human and economic costs of the drug problem in the Americas, and to support countries through the necessary technical assistance;

Promote bilateral and multilateral cooperation and information exchange on policies and actions concerning drug prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and supply control, and develop educational campaigns to promote public awareness of the risk of drug consumption;

Support measures to impede organized crime, money-laundering, the diversion of chemical precursors, the financing of armed groups, and other illicit activities resulting from drug and

arms trafficking;

Promote bilateral and multilateral cooperation in order to consider in an integral manner the displacement phenomenon of different factors related to the drug problem, including the displacement of persons and illicit crops;

Transnational Organized Crime

Encourage all countries in the Hemisphere to consider signing and ratifying, ratifying, or acceding to, as soon as possible and as the case may be, the *UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime*, its *Protocol Against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air* and its *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children*, as well as the *Protocol Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components, and Ammunition*, once that protocol is open for signature;

Implement collective strategies, including those that emerge from the Meetings of Ministers of Justice of the Americas, to enhance the institutional ability of states to exchange information and evidence by concluding international agreements on mutual legal assistance where necessary, develop and circulate national reports, and strengthen cooperation, seeking the technical and financial support of multilateral organizations and MDBs where appropriate, in order to jointly combat emerging forms of transnational criminal activity, including trafficking in persons and the laundering of the proceeds and assets of crime and cyber-crime;

Review national laws and policies to improve cooperation in areas such as mutual legal assistance, extradition and deportation to countries of origin, acknowledging the serious concerns of countries that deport certain foreign nationals for committing crimes in those countries and the serious concerns of the receiving countries about the negative effect of these deportations on the incidence of criminality in the countries of origin, and express the desire to work together, as appropriate, to address the negative effects on our societies.

Promote, where necessary, and in accordance with national legislation, the adoption of investigation techniques, contained in the *United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime*, which are very important tools in the fight against organized crime;

Prevention of Violence

Recognizing that violence and crime are serious obstacles to social harmony and the democratic and socio-economic development of the Hemisphere, and as well noting the urgent need for an integral approach toward the prevention of violence:

Encourage national institutions to work together and coordinate with all appropriate multilateral organizations and MDBs in order to implement integrated programs that include initiatives for conflict resolution, where appropriate, for sustained prevention, permanent

attention, public education and treatment relevant to cases of violence against persons, families and communities, strengthening national institutional capacities in these areas; Consider developing cooperation with the media and entertainment industry with a view to avoiding the promotion and dissemination of a culture of violence, thus contributing to a culture of peace;

Encourage greater use of community-based policing, to develop increased dialogue and interaction of law enforcement authorities with civil society and local communities;

Promote cooperation to modernize criminal law, using information and communications technologies as appropriate, with a focus on human rights training and prevention of acts of violence, particularly violence perpetrated by law enforcement officials, in order to reduce violence against civilians and foster values necessary in our societies to retain social harmony;

Promote the exchange of national experiences and best practices on the use of police profiling with a view to preventing biased detentions, which tend to affect mostly minorities and the poor;

Expand opportunities to share experiences, techniques and best practices among government and civil society agencies involved in combating psychological, sexual or physical violence in the domestic setting and on the job, recognizing that such violence is overwhelmingly directed against women and children;

Seek to adopt necessary measures to prevent, impede and punish violence, the segregation and exploitation of women, minors, the elderly, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups, and seek to ensure that national legislation addresses acts of violence against them and that these laws are enforced, recognizing that where victims of violence require legal assistance to obtain redress, every effort should be made to guarantee that they receive such assistance;

Request multilateral and other organizations that participate in the Inter-American Coalition for the Prevention of Violence to intensify their support and technical assistance to those countries that so request, in the elaboration of national strategies and actions regarding this topic;

Promote concrete measures to prevent hostile actions against minorities in the Hemisphere, as well as the violent activities of local, regional and international movements that support and foster racist ideologies and terrorist practices to reach their goals;

Increase regional cooperation with a view to preventing the criminal use of firearms and ammunition, and examine additional measures and laws at the national level if required;

Implement, as soon as possible, the *Inter-American Convention Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and Other Related Materials*, and apply the CICAD Model Regulations, as appropriate;

4. HEMISPHERIC SECURITY¹

Recognizing that democracy is essential for peace, development and security in the Hemisphere which, in turn, are the best basis for furthering the welfare of our people, and noting that the constitutional subordination of armed forces and security forces to the legally constituted authorities of our states is fundamental to democracy:

Strengthening Mutual Confidence

Hold the Special Conference on Security in 2004, for which the OAS Committee on Hemispheric Security will conclude the review of all issues related to approaches to international security in the Hemisphere, as defined at the Santiago Summit;

Continue with priority activities on conflict prevention and the peaceful resolution of disputes, respond to shared traditional and non-traditional security and defense concerns and support measures to improve human security;

Support the efforts of the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to address their special security concerns, recognizing that for the smallest and most vulnerable states in the Hemisphere, security is multi-dimensional in scope, involves state and non-state actors and includes political, economic, social and natural components, and that the SIDS have concluded that among the threats to their security are illicit drug trafficking, the illegal trade in arms, increasing levels of crime and corruption, environmental vulnerability exacerbated by susceptibility to natural disasters and the transportation of nuclear waste, economic vulnerability particularly in relation to trade, new health threats including the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) pandemic and increased levels of poverty;

Improve the transparency and accountability of defense and security institutions and promote greater understanding and cooperation among government agencies involved in security and defense issues, through such means as increased sharing of defense policy and doctrine papers, information and personnel exchanges, including, where feasible, cooperation and training for participation in UN peace-keeping activities and to respond better to legitimate security and defense needs, by improving transparency of arms acquisitions in order to improve confidence and security in the Hemisphere;

¹ Mexico understands that all of Chapter 4 of the Plan of Action, including its title “Hemispheric Security” and all of its concepts and provisions, will be addressed in the appropriate OAS fora, in conformity with the mandate of the Second Summit of the Americas, held in Santiago de Chile, in April 1998.

Continue promoting greater degrees of confidence and security in the Hemisphere, inter alia through sustained support for measures, such as those set forth in the Santiago and San Salvador *Declarations on Confidence and Security Building Measures (CSBMs)*, and for existing mechanisms, agreements and funds, and consider signing and ratifying, ratifying, or acceding to, as soon as possible and as the case may be, the *Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction*, the *Inter-American Convention on Transparency in Conventional Weapons Acquisitions*, and the *Inter-American Convention Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and Other Related Materials*, giving full support to the UN Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all Its Aspects to be held in July 2001, bearing in mind the results of the Regional Preparatory Meeting of Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Brasilia in November 2000, and the work of the OAS, which contributed a regional perspective to the discussions;

Strongly support the Third Meeting of State Parties to the *Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction*, to be held in September 2001 in Managua, Nicaragua, and the Review Conference of the 1980 UN *Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects*, to be held in December 2001 in Geneva; as well as the efforts of the OAS to pursue the goal of the conversion of the Western Hemisphere into an anti-personnel- landmine-free zone;

Call for an experts meeting, before the Special Conference on Security, as a follow-up to the regional conferences of Santiago and San Salvador on CSBMs, in order to evaluate implementation and consider next steps to further consolidate mutual confidence;

Promote financial support to the OAS Fund for Peace: Peaceful Settlement of Territorial Disputes, established to provide financial resources to assist with defraying the inherent costs of proceedings previously agreed to by the parties concerned for the peaceful resolution of territorial disputes among OAS member states;

Support the work leading up to the Fifth Meeting of Defense Ministers of the Americas to take place in Chile, as well as meetings that will take place subsequently;

Fight Against Terrorism

Support the work initiated by the Inter-American Committee on Terrorism (CICTE) established within the OAS as a result of the *Commitment of Mar del Plata* adopted in 1998, and encourage hemispheric cooperation to prevent, combat and eliminate all forms of terrorism, taking into account the approval of the Statute and Work Plan of CICTE;

Consider signing and ratifying, ratifying, or acceding to, as soon as possible and as the case may be, those international agreements related to the fight against terrorism, in accordance with their respective internal legislation;

5. CIVIL SOCIETY

Recognizing the important role of participation by civil society in the consolidation of democracy and that this participation constitutes one of the vital elements for the success of development policies, noting that men and women have the right to participate, with equality and equity, in the decision-making processes affecting their lives and well-being, and considering that the diversity of opinion, experience and technical expertise of civil society constitute a significant and valuable resource for initiatives and responses of government and democratic institutions:

Strengthening Participation in Hemispheric and National Processes

Seek to establish public and private funding instruments aimed at building the capacity of civil society organizations in order to highlight the work and contribution of these organizations and to promote accountability;

Develop strategies at the national level and through the OAS, other multilateral organizations and MDBs to increase the capacity of civil society to participate more fully in the inter-American system, as well as in the political, economic and social development of their communities and countries, fostering representativeness and facilitating the participation of all sectors of society; and increase the institutional capacity of governments to receive, absorb and act on civil society input and advocacy, particularly through the use of information and communications technologies;

Promote participation of all minority groups in forging a stronger civil society;

Develop educational programs, in conjunction with relevant civil society organizations, academic experts and others, as appropriate, to provide democracy and human rights education and to promote the introduction of books and educational materials that reflect the ethnic, cultural and religious diversity of the Americas as part of primary and secondary school curricula;

6. TRADE, INVESTMENT AND FINANCIAL STABILITY

Trade and Investment

Ensure negotiations of the FTAA Agreement are concluded no later than January 2005 and seek its entry into force as soon as possible thereafter but, in any case, no later than December 2005, in conformity with the principles and objectives established in the San Jose Ministerial Declaration, in particular the achievement of a balanced, comprehensive agreement, consistent with WTO rules and disciplines, the results of which will constitute a single undertaking embodying the rights and obligations, as mutually agreed:

Ensure the transparency of the negotiating process, including through publication of the

preliminary draft FTAA Agreement in the four official languages as soon as possible and the dissemination of additional information on the progress of negotiations;

Foster through their respective national dialogue mechanisms and through appropriate FTAA mechanisms, a process of increasing and sustained communication with civil society to ensure that it has a clear perception of the development of the FTAA negotiating process; invite civil society to continue to contribute to the FTAA process; and, to this end, develop a list of options that could include dissemination programs in smaller economies, which could be supported by the Tripartite Committee or other sources;

Ensure full participation of all our countries in the FTAA, taking into consideration the differences in the levels of development and size of the economies of the Hemisphere, in order to create opportunities for the full participation of the smaller economies and to increase their level of development;

Supervise and support, with technical assistance, the full implementation of adopted business facilitation measures;

Instruct our representatives in the institutions of the Tripartite Committee to continue securing the allocation of the resources necessary to contribute to the support of the work of the FTAA Administrative Secretariat;

Urge the Tripartite Committee institutions to continue to respond positively to requests for technical support from FTAA entities; and request the institutions, according to their respective internal procedures, to favorably consider requests for technical assistance related to FTAA issues from member countries, in particular from the smaller economies, in order to facilitate their integration into the FTAA process;

Economic and Financial Stability

Welcome and support the work of our Ministers of Finance, who met in Toronto, Canada on April 3-4, 2001, to promote financial and economic stability as well as strong and sustainable growth, as fundamental preconditions for accelerated development and poverty reduction, and to ensure that the benefits of globalization are broadly and equitably distributed to all our people;

Recognize the value of efforts undertaken to advance Hemispheric integration, including improved access to goods, services, capital and technology, to achieve the full range of social and other objectives;

Support the efforts of Finance Ministers to address the challenges associated with globalization, to protect the most vulnerable and prevent crises, and affirm the importance of having the benefits of globalization widely distributed to all regions and social sectors of our countries, recognizing, at the same time, the unique challenges faced by small states;

Affirm that greater attention must be given to increasing economic growth and reducing

poverty in a mutually reinforcing way, and that this priority must include social sector policies that effectively achieve poverty reduction and greater investment in people, with improved access to basic education and health services;

Instruct our Finance Ministers to continue to explore ways to ensure that international financial institutions, regional development banks and other international bodies take adequate account of Summit initiatives in their lending policies and technical assistance programs for the Hemisphere;

Corporate Social Responsibility

Recognizing the central role that businesses of all sizes play in the creation of prosperity and the flow and maintenance of trade and investment in the Hemisphere, and, noting that businesses can make an important contribution to sustainable development and increasing access to opportunities, including the reduction of inequalities in the communities in which they operate, and taking into consideration the increasing expectations of our citizens and civil society organizations that businesses carry out their operations in a manner consistent with their social and environmental responsibilities:

Support the continued analysis and consideration in the OAS of corporate social responsibility, ensuring that civil society, including the private sector, is appropriately and regularly consulted and that this process benefits from the experiences of other international organizations, national agencies and non-governmental actors;

Convene a meeting as early as feasible in 2002 with the support of the OAS, the IDB and other relevant inter-American organizations involving representatives from governments, civil society, including mainly the business community, to deepen dialogue on corporate social responsibility in the Hemisphere, raise awareness of key issues to be determined and discuss ways to promote the development, adoption and implementation by the business community of principles of good conduct that will advance corporate social and environmental responsibility;

7. INFRASTRUCTURE AND REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT

Recognizing that the development of physical infrastructure is an important complement to economic integration; that advances in the area of infrastructure will release new driving forces toward a broad and deep integration, setting in motion dynamics that should be encouraged; and that infrastructure projects geared to integration should be complemented by the adoption of regulatory and administrative regimes that facilitate their implementation:

Telecommunications

Recognizing that states have the sovereign right to regulate their own telecommunications sectors and that affordable and universal access to new information and communications technologies is an important means to raise the living standards of our citizens and reduce the divide between rural and urban populations, and between countries; noting the importance of increasing cooperation with the private sector to further modernize and expand our telecommunications sectors; acknowledging and

reaffirming our efforts in and dedication to market opening and increasing free, fair and equitable competition in all telecommunications services, while respecting the regulatory framework of each country, in order to attract investment needed to develop infrastructure and to reduce the cost of service; stressing the importance of adopting policies to protect the interests of users and enhance the quality, efficiency, coverage and diversity of services, all based on respect for user privacy; and bearing in mind the social, political, economic, commercial and cultural needs of our populations, in particular those of less developed communities:

Propose measures designed to modernize national laws, as appropriate, based on principles such as: permanence of strong and independent regulatory bodies; a pro-competitive approach, including the adoption of rules on dominant operators; a flexible regulatory framework consistent with technological convergence, and to develop human and institutional capacity in support of these principles;

Facilitate the upgrading of human resources in the telecommunications sector through ongoing training programs on telecommunications policy, regulation, management and technology, and request the Inter-American Telecommunication Commission (CITEL), in coordination with national agencies, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU)'s Centre of Excellence for the Americas, and in partnership with regional and subregional organizations and the private sector, to create a focal point for information on human resource development programs to foster exchanges of information on relevant training programs among governments, universities, industry associations and the private sector, in order to assist countries of the Americas in meeting the growing need for trained and competent personnel in the rapidly changing knowledge-based economy;

Take measures striving to implement the *Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) for Conformity Assessment* developed by CITEL without prejudice to each participant's sovereign right to regulate its own telecommunications sector, and encourage discussion of adequate standards to ensure interoperability for existing and future telecommunications networks and the timely introduction of technology in new and existing markets, taking into account the regulations and recommendations of the ITU and other appropriate standard-setting bodies;

Support the convening of the ITU World Summit on the Information Society to be held in 2003, which will focus on the use of information and communications technologies for social and economic development;

Recommend that our national bodies work within CITEL to prepare guidelines on Universal Service, based on principles to be developed by CITEL and develop a clear definition of the responsibilities of governments and private entities;

Instruct, as appropriate, our telecommunications authorities and our relevant regulatory bodies, working within our regional and sub-regional agencies and organizations to develop and implement before the next Summit of the Americas a cooperative and collaborative program to support a connectivity agenda for the Hemisphere;

Encourage increased competitiveness and productivity of all sectors through applications

such as distance education and tele-health and promote the creation of domestic activities dedicated to the generation of Internet-based industries;

Request ministries or departments responsible for telecommunications and appropriate regulatory bodies to cooperate, within CITELE, in order to clarify and simplify rules governing the provision of satellite services in our countries, and work to complete the development of a Hemispheric Web site including each country's requirements and forms of application for licensing to provide satellite-based telecommunications services;

Promote the modernization and expansion of telecommunications infrastructure in rural and urban areas through timely introduction of new technologies and services, in particular broadband technologies, the adoption of new standards on telecasting, Web casting, and Internet Protocol (IP), paying particular attention to spectrum management, interconnection policies, appropriate pace of development and emergency communications;

Address voluntary funding for the implementation of CITELE's additional mandates set out in this Plan of Action;

Transport

Recognizing that environmentally sound, safe, and efficient transportation systems, including multi-modal corridors, are essential to the quality of the daily lives of the people of the Americas as well as to trade in goods and services among our countries; and reaffirming our support for the ongoing efforts of our Ministers responsible for transportation, through the Western Hemisphere Transport Initiative (WHTI), to increase the integration of our transportation systems and practices:

Endorse the areas for cooperation identified at the Ministers' meeting in Punta del Este, Uruguay, in March 2001;

Promote and facilitate increased cooperation, convergence and information-sharing in the transportation-related activities of the five subregions of the Hemisphere and with multilateral organizations, with a view to furthering the development of human and institutional capacity and ensuring the environmental sustainability of transportation systems and infrastructure; to this end, request that the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) continues to provide its valuable support to the WHTI;

Improve human resources development programs by encouraging exchanges of personnel among the countries and institutions of the region, as well as the development of, and participation in, transportation-related training programs and the dissemination of information regarding these programs by way of the WHTI's Web site and by other means;

Emphasize the need to develop proper infrastructure and high safety standards as a principal priority for the WHTI's work program, while recognizing the importance of human and institutional capacity development in ensuring the safety of transportation services;

Actively and collectively encourage international maritime and air carriers to fully comply with International Maritime Organization (IMO), International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), and International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) standards of safety governing the transport of dangerous goods including nuclear, hazardous and noxious substances and waste and stress the importance of having effective liability mechanisms in place;

Actively and collectively encourage international maritime carriers, in particular cruise ships, to comply with IMO standards in relation to the protection of the marine environment, and to take full account of the special area status of the wider Caribbean;

Acknowledging the concerns of some states about the transport of radioactive material, including waste, through routes close to the coasts of states or along navigable waterways of the Hemisphere and the potential health consequences for our people and the possible threat to the marine environment, and consistent with maritime rights and obligations in international law; encourage and support full compliance with existing IMO and IAEA conventions, standards and codes of practice and stress the importance of having effective liability mechanisms in place; encourage the consideration by the IAEA and the IMO and other competent international bodies to strengthen additional international measures, as necessary, which may include: the assurance of non-contamination of the marine environment; the recovery of radioactive material, including waste, in the case of accidental release; the provision of relief, rehabilitation or reconstruction, as appropriate, for affected people in the case of an accident; and invite countries shipping radioactive material, including waste, to provide timely information to potentially affected states in the Hemisphere relating to such shipments, consistent with the need to maintain and ensure the safety and security of those shipments;

Instruct our Ministers of Transportation to explore the possibility of discussing the modernization of air services in order to meet the growing flow of people and goods that has been taking place in the Hemisphere;

Energy

Recognize that in pursuing the regional integration of energy markets, issues such as market reform and stability, regulatory reform and trade liberalization will be addressed; support and endorse the Hemispheric Energy Initiative which promotes policies and practices to advance such integration;

8. DISASTER MANAGEMENT

Recognizing the need to develop, implement and sustain shared comprehensive disaster management strategies and programs to reduce the vulnerability of our populations and economies to natural and man-made disasters and to maintain or quickly restore minimum levels of consumption, income and production at the household and community levels in the aftermath of disasters, including irregular population settlements; acknowledging in this regard the need to expand the community of stakeholders at the regional, national and local levels engaged in the formulation of early warning systems, the management of risk and response operations in the event of disasters and integrated

sustainable development strategies:

Develop the capacity to forecast, prepare for and mitigate the potential impacts of natural and man-made hazards; promote vulnerability reduction; adopt and enforce better building codes and standards; ensure appropriate land-use practices; inventory and evaluate the vulnerability of critical facilities and infrastructure; estimate climate change variability and sea-level rise and assess their possible impacts; and in pursuit of the above, create the requisite legal framework and establish the cooperative mechanisms to access and share advances in science and technology and their application in the early warning, preparedness for and mitigation of these hazards;

Promote the exchange of information on the vulnerability of infrastructure exposed to disasters as well as the early warning capacity, particularly in the border areas of the countries of the Americas, in order to design specific prevention measures in the fields of engineering and legislation with the aim of reducing the socio-economic impact of natural disasters;

Establish or strengthen, where appropriate, partnerships with all relevant actors, including the private sector, technical professional associations, regional institutions, civil society, educational and research institutions and other multilateral coordinating agencies such as the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), in the development and implementation of disaster management policies and programs at the national and community levels, and promote greater awareness and effective integration of these policies and programs among national policy makers, local authorities, communities and media, and promote the insurance and reinsurance of the social and economic infrastructure as well as the decentralization of information and decision-making;

Promote the exchange of knowledge and experiences regarding the combat against inappropriate practices in the exploitation of natural resources and unsustainable patterns of consumption, including the problems of waste management, which increase the vulnerability of the people to natural disasters;

Promote the development of telecommunications for humanitarian assistance; actively encourage greater use and interoperability of telecommunications and other technologies and information systems that allow the observation and monitoring of different natural phenomena; use early warning systems such as remote sensing imagery, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) based data necessary to address and prevent emergencies; promote the compatibility of these systems in the planning and response to emergency operations among governments, specialized agencies, relevant international organizations, and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and, in this spirit, consider signing and ratifying, ratifying, or acceding to, as soon as possible and as the case may be, the *Tampere Convention on the Provision of Telecommunication Resources for Disaster Mitigation and Relief Operations*;

Establish information networks with the involvement of the Inter-American Committee on

Natural Disaster Reduction (IACNDR) and other relevant regional and international organizations to exchange scientific and technological knowledge and experiences; encourage further regional and subregional action to reduce risks and improve response to natural disasters; promote joint research and development technologies and contribute to strengthen coordination of national prevention and response agencies in natural disasters; to achieve this, draw on the work of ECLAC on the improvement, up-dating and implementation of its damage assessment methodology and continue to promote natural disaster mitigation and risk reduction awareness and preparedness;

Consider the creation of a hemispheric system for prevention and mitigation of disasters that would include, among others, a specialized database containing the best information available on the characteristics, experiences, strengths and weaknesses of national and regional agencies responsible for disaster prevention and mitigation and provide a new framework for technical cooperation and research aimed at creating a hemispheric culture of prevention and solidarity;

Adopt and support, as appropriate, initiatives aimed at promoting capacity building at all levels, such as the transfer and development of technology for prevention – risk reduction, awareness, preparedness, mitigation – and response to natural and other disasters, as well as for the rehabilitation of affected areas;

Promote mechanisms that incorporate risk management and risk reduction methods in public and private development investments;

Convene within a year a hemispheric meeting on disaster preparedness and mitigation with the support of the IACNDR and the participation of a wide range of government entities, regional and MDBs, private entities, NGOs and the research, scientific and technical communities, to discuss and develop cooperative efforts to facilitate implementation of Summit mandates on disaster management;

Request the IDB to undertake a feasibility study in partnership with the OAS, the World Bank, the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and other relevant inter-American organizations, as well as the private sector, including insurance companies, on measures to reduce and/or pool risk in a manner that results in reduced premiums on catastrophic insurance, and mechanisms to facilitate contingent re-construction financing and the immediate release of funds to resolve urgent needs of the affected country; this study would examine the relationship between re-insurance and national and community disaster management capacities, as well as trends toward dis-investment and job losses in those economic sectors requiring costly catastrophic insurance coverage and the role such measures might play in this regard; share with the private sector experiences in the development and application of risk management tools such as risk transfer instruments, vulnerability assessment methodologies and risk reduction incentives for the private sector;

9. ENVIRONMENTAL FOUNDATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Environment and Natural Resources Management

Recognizing that the protection of the environment and the sustainable use of natural resources are essential to prosperity and to the sustainability of our economies, as well as the quality of life and health for present and future generations; and committed to advancing sustainable development throughout the Hemisphere consistent with our 1994 and 1998 Summit of the Americas Declarations and Plans of Action and the 1996 Santa Cruz de la Sierra Declaration and Plan of Action:

Welcome the outcomes and endorse the areas of cooperation identified at the recent hemispheric meeting of Ministers responsible for the Environment held in Montreal;

Reaffirm our commitments to implement Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) to which we are party, including through enactment and effective enforcement of any necessary domestic laws, reiterating common and differentiated responsibilities as set forth in Principle 7 of the 1992 *Rio Declaration on Environment and Development* and taking into account the needs and concerns of small developing countries and noting, in this context, the recently concluded *Global Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants*; also stress the need to build synergies among MEAs to enhance their effectiveness in implementation and to strengthen international cooperation;

Support the preparatory process for the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development to review progress achieved in the implementation of the outcome of the UN Conference on Environment and Development, focusing on areas where further efforts are needed to implement *Agenda 21* and explore ways to reinvigorate the global commitment to sustainable development;

Request the OAS through its General Secretariat, in coordination with other agencies, to organize a meeting at the ministerial level before the end of 2001, to be held in Bolivia on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the Santa Cruz de la Sierra Summit of 1996, and present contributions to the Rio+10 Summit in 2002, recognizing that by its nature, sustainable development has long-term goals that require the countries of the Hemisphere to act in concert in this area;

Request the United Nations Environment Program (UNP.) and PAHO to support the convening of a regional meeting between Ministers responsible for the Environment and Ministers of Health to take stock of progress achieved, to identify priority areas for renewed emphasis and cooperative initiatives, and to explore ways of moving forward in the Americas and globally, with a view to contributing to the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development, recognizing the links between the environment and human health;

Resolve, as parties to the *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*, to pursue its objectives in accordance with its provisions and to address the issue of climate change as a priority for action, working constructively through international processes in order to make the necessary progress to ensure a sound and effective response to climate change; recognize the vulnerabilities in all our countries, in particular of Small Island Developing States and low-lying coastal states, and the need to support the conduct of

vulnerability assessments, the development and implementation of adaptation strategies, capacity building and technology transfer;

Promote the adoption, implementation and enforcement of national legislation, regulations, standards and policies that provide for high levels of environmental protection, recognizing the right of each country to set its own levels of environmental protection and, to this end, reinforce cooperative partnerships, placing particular emphasis on achieving cleaner air, enhancing access to safe water and sanitation services, and strengthening national and regional capacities for integrated water resources management and for waste management;

Consult and coordinate domestically and regionally, as appropriate, with the aim of ensuring that economic, social and environmental policies are mutually supportive and contribute to sustainable development, building on existing initiatives undertaken by relevant regional and international organizations;

Support initiatives such as the Hemispheric Round-table for Cleaner Production in furtherance of our efforts to promote partnerships among government, industry and civil society and advance, as appropriate, the Plans of Action and the Global Cleaner Production Information Network launched at the 2000 Montreal International Pollution Prevention Summit;

Promote and support implementation of priorities for action set out in the *Bahia Declaration on Chemical Safety* at the national level, particularly those aimed at increasing public access to information on toxic substances and at strengthening capacity in this area;

Promote improved environmental management at the municipal level, including through information exchange among local communities, the development of environmentally sound technology and the promotion of partnerships to facilitate, as appropriate, technology transfer, capacity building, including the strengthening of local institutions and services, and support for initiatives such as the World Bank Clean Air Initiative and IDB programs in this area;

Advance hemispheric conservation of plants, animals and ecosystems through, as appropriate: capacity building, expanding partnership networks and information sharing systems, including the Inter-American Biodiversity Network; cooperation in the fight against illegal trade in wildlife; strengthening of cooperation arrangements for terrestrial and marine natural protected areas, including adjacent border parks and important areas for shared species; support for regional ecosystem conservation mechanisms; the development of a hemispheric strategy to support the conservation of migratory wildlife throughout the Americas, with the active engagement of civil society; and the promotion the objectives and the implementation of the *Convention on Biological Diversity* and the *UN Convention to Combat Desertification*;

Promote the adoption of concrete and urgent actions towards the implementation of

sustainable forest management; promote policies, practices, incentives and investment in support of sustainable forest management, building on existing hemispheric initiatives and cooperation, as well as support the UN Forum on Forests and its program of work;

Reaffirm our commitment to advancing environmental stewardship in the area of energy by advancing policies, practices, transference of and access to technologies, that are economically efficient and take the environmental impacts of energy development and use into account; and endorse and support the work of the Hemispheric Energy Initiative in this area;

Promote the development of environmentally sound exploitation and management of minerals and metals, recognizing the importance of the social and economic dimensions of the activities of the mining sector, and support the work of regional and international fora in this area;

10. AGRICULTURE MANAGEMENT AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Recognizing the fundamental importance of agriculture as a way of life for millions of rural families of the Hemisphere as well as the role it plays in the creation of prosperity as a strategic sector in our socio-economic system and taking note of the importance of developing its potential in a manner compatible with sustainable development that would ensure adequate treatment and attention to the rural sector:

Promote dialogue involving government ministers, parliamentarians and civil society, in particular organizations linked to rural areas as well as the scientific and academic communities, with the objective of promoting medium and long-term national strategies toward sustainable improvement in agriculture and rural life;

Support national efforts to strengthen rural enterprises, in particular small- and medium-sized enterprises and promote, where appropriate, a favorable environment for agri-business; encourage, in a complementary manner, the training of small- and medium-sized rural entrepreneurs as well as the modernization of training institutions in this field;

Encourage the development of markets in the Hemisphere for goods obtained through the sustainable use of natural resources;

Strive to facilitate access to markets for those goods derived from alternative development programs implemented in countries engaged in the substitution of illicit crops;

Instruct the Ministers of Agriculture, during the next meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture, to promote, in cooperation with the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), joint action by all the actors of the agricultural sector to work towards the improvement of agricultural and rural life that enables the implementation of the Plans of Action of the Summits of the Americas;

11. LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

Recognizing that employment is the most direct way in which economic activity is linked to the improvement of the standard of living of our citizens and that true prosperity can only be achieved if it includes protecting and respecting basic rights of workers as well as promoting equal employment opportunities and improving working conditions for people in all countries in the region, with special attention to those in the informal sector, to people belonging to ethnic and religious minorities, other vulnerable persons including women, youth, indigenous, migrant workers, persons with disabilities and persons with HIV/AIDS; and noting the importance of investing in human resource development, of promoting employment security consistent with economic growth and developing mechanisms to assist workers with periods of unemployment, as well as of strengthening cooperation and social dialogue on labor matters among workers, their organizations, employers and governments:

Reaffirm the fundamental importance of the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor, welcome the progress made through its Plan of Action adopted in 1998, support the preparatory process for the Twelfth Conference in 2001, and direct Ministers to build upon the *Viña del Mar Declaration* which focused on the social dimensions of globalization and the modernization of Labor Ministries, by collaborating in the examination of the labor dimension of the Summit of the Americas process, in order to identify areas of agreement and issues where further work needs to be done;

Respect the International Labor Organization (ILO) *Declaration on the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-Up*, adopted in 1998, adopt and implement legislation and policies that provide for the effective application of core labor standards as recognized by the ILO and consider the ratification and implementation of fundamental ILO Conventions;

Consult and coordinate, domestically and regionally in the appropriate fora, with a view to contributing to raising the living standards and improving the working conditions of all people in the Americas; create a process for improved collaboration and coordination on the labor dimensions of the Summit of the Americas process between Labor Ministries and other appropriate ministries and key international institutions within the Americas that have a critical role to play in the improvement of labor conditions, in particular the OAS, the ILO, ECLAC, as well as the IDB and the World Bank;

Develop new mechanisms to increase the effectiveness of projects and other technical assistance designed to build the capacity of smaller economies and their institutions to effectively implement labor laws and standards and to foster equality of opportunity with respect to gender, among others, in strategies to promote employment, training, life-long learning and human resource development programs with the objective of promoting access to more and better employment in the new economy;

Strengthen the capacity of the Ministers of Labor to develop and implement effective labor

and labor market policies; collaborate with employers and labor organizations to develop and generate information on labor markets; participate in dialogue, tripartite consultations and dispute resolution strategies; and adopt ongoing strategies and programs as a core element for professional development in the labor market;

Continue to work towards the elimination of child labor, and as a priority, promote the hemispheric ratification and implementation of the *ILO Worst Forms of Child Labor Convention, 1999 (No. 182)*, work to bring national laws, regulations and policies into conformity with this Convention, and take immediate action to eliminate the worst forms of child labor;

Promote and protect the rights of all workers, in particular those of working women, and take action to remove structural and legal barriers as well as stereotypical attitudes to gender equality at work, addressing, inter alia, gender bias in recruitment; working conditions; occupational discrimination and harassment; discrimination in social protection benefits; women's occupational health and safety; and unequal career opportunities and pay;

12. GROWTH WITH EQUITY

Recognizing that economic growth is fundamental to overcoming economic disparities and strengthening democracy in the Hemisphere, and that in order to achieve sustained economic growth and political and social stability, it is necessary to face the primary challenge that confronts the Hemisphere - the eradication of poverty and inequity - that requires an integrated and focused approach, which promotes better competitiveness, equity enhancing trade and more equitable access to opportunities, taking into account the difficulties that the countries of the region face, including those under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative, in obtaining financing for their development; and that it is necessary to take measures at the national and hemispheric levels in order to create a positive environment for business, maximize the benefits of orderly migration, minimize the effects of economic volatility and natural disasters and encourage social stability and mobility in order to promote a more equitable distribution of the benefits of economic growth:

Development Financing

Acknowledge the need for development financing, including aid from bilateral donors and lending from the MDBs on appropriate terms, and commit to support our Finance Ministers and the MDBs in promoting policies to develop and maintain access to international capital markets to finance our sustainable development efforts, recognizing that debt servicing constitutes a major constraint on investment for many countries in the Hemisphere;

Enabling Economic Environment

Design and implement, with the cooperation of the IDB, the World Bank, other donors, as appropriate, as well as the ILO, building upon the work begun in regional and sub-regional programs after the 1998 Santiago Summit of the Americas, legislation, policies and regulations that reduce startup costs, support the creation of new financial products for

lower-income groups and youth, foster the development of credit unions, community finance institutions and supporting institutions such as credit bureaus and create conditions that encourage commercial banks and other appropriate financial institutions to broaden their client base to include more micro, small- and medium-sized enterprises and strengthen the capacities of micro, small- and medium-sized enterprise development agencies;

Provide and improve where necessary, both in rural and urban areas, access to quality information systems for micro, small- and medium-sized enterprises through the creation of non-discriminatory mechanisms with the cooperation of the IDB, the World Bank, other donors, as appropriate, as well as ECLAC, and establish programs aimed at promoting the use of computers and the Internet, based on public and private sector partnership, to gain greater access to information technology, to credit and markets and to instruments designed to assist them in all these areas;

Support and encourage, with the cooperation of the IDB and other donors as appropriate, the formation of business incubators, associative networks, joint projects, national competitiveness programs, credit unions and complementary agreements among micro, small- and medium-sized enterprises as part of a broader strategy allowing them to share best practices, to improve access to information, credit and adequate marketing systems and to break prevailing situations of isolation;

Increase access to opportunities for sustainable entrepreneurship, productivity and employment among young people;

Improve, as appropriate, social safety nets at the national and regional levels to stabilize individual and household income and consumption by such means as stabilization funds, micro-credit schemes, crop insurance programs, job retraining and training in vocational, entrepreneurial and business skills, with the involvement of the MDBs and development agencies as well as non-governmental and community-based organizations and to establish regional networks to share best practices and experiences;

Promote, in cooperation with the CIM, IICA, other appropriate inter-American institutions and the World Bank, improved market access for disadvantaged entrepreneurs, particularly women, youth, persons with disabilities, indigenous and rural populations, by developing programs that generate local employment and provide training, retraining and life-long learning, particularly in new technologies, and affordable services in business management, product development, financing, production and quality control, marketing and the legal aspects of business; by establishing outreach programs to inform low-income and poor populations, particularly in rural and remote areas, of opportunities for market and technology access and by providing assistance, monitoring, mentoring, advisory and other support services to enable these groups to take advantage of such opportunities;

Migration

Recognizing the positive aspects and benefits of orderly migration in countries of origin, transit and destination as a factor contributing to economic growth and national and regional development:

Support initiatives designed to strengthen linkages among migrant communities abroad and their places of origin and promote cooperative mechanisms that simplify and speed up the transfer of migrant remittances and substantially reduce the costs of sending them;

Support voluntary initiatives designed by communities or individuals for the use of funds in investment and productive projects benefitting the general welfare in communities of origin;

Promote the discussion of the migration phenomenon at the hemispheric level with due regard for its multi-dimensional nature and regional differences and, in so doing, consider the inclusion of the topic of migration in discussions on trade and economic integration;

Support programs of cooperation in immigration procedures for cross-border labor markets and the migration of workers, both in countries of origin and destination, as a means to enhance economic growth in full cognizance of the role that cooperation in education and training can play in mitigating any adverse consequences of the movement of human capital from smaller and less developed states;

Strive to ensure that migrants have access to basic social services, consistent with each country's internal legal framework;

Create and harmonize statistical information systems and foster the sharing of information and best practices through the use of new information and communications technologies, with the aim of promoting the modernization of migration management;

Enhancing Social Stability and Mobility

Continue and deepen progress toward implementation of the agenda for improving property registration established at the 1998 Santiago Summit of the Americas with particular emphasis on regularizing informal property rights, in accordance with national legislation, to ensure that all valid property rights are formally recognized, that disputes are resolved, and that modern legal frameworks to legitimize property records and encourage marketable property titles are adopted; and that these actions include the formulation of institutional, political and regulatory reforms that would facilitate the use of property registration as a mechanism to enable property owners to access credit and allow commercial banks and MDBs to expand their customer base among lower income sectors; promote greater cooperation and exchange of information and technology to modernize the systems of registry and cadastre in the Hemisphere, and also request multilateral and bilateral cooperation institutions to continue supporting and strengthening, in a complementary manner, their financial and technical assistance programs;

Support, in cooperation with ECLAC and the World Bank, research at the hemispheric level to generate disaggregated data on the differential impact of economic policies and processes

on women and men, rural and urban populations, indigenous and non-indigenous, and communities of high or low social mobility, and on their respective participation in economic growth;

Promote recognition of the social and economic contribution made by the unpaid work performed by women predominantly in the home, and consider providing innovative social safety nets in conformity with national law;

Promote greater recognition of the economic contribution of women's activities in the subsistence and informal sectors and provide, through the international and regional MDBs and the donor community, necessary assistance to communities participating in such activities, giving greater awareness at the national level to gender issues in macro-economic planning and policy-making;

Cooperate and promote dialogue on forced displacement, geared toward the improvement of the attention given to populations displaced by violence, taking into account the problems that these populations face; and harmonize national legislation in accordance with rules and standards of international humanitarian law, including the Geneva Convention of 1951;

Invite the IACHR and its Special Rapporteur on Internally Displaced Persons to continue to monitor and report on situations of forced displacement with a view to promoting durable solutions aimed at addressing the root causes of such phenomena;

13. EDUCATION

Recognizing that education is the key to strengthening democratic institutions, promoting the development of human potential, equality and understanding among our peoples, as well as sustaining economic growth and reducing poverty; further recognizing that to achieve these ends, it is essential that quality education is available to all, including girls and women, rural inhabitants, persons with disabilities, indigenous, and persons belonging to minorities; reaffirming the commitments made at previous Summits to promote the principles of equity, quality, relevance and efficiency at all levels of the education system and ensure, by 2010, universal access to and completion of quality primary education for all children and to quality secondary education for at least 75 percent of young people, with increasing graduation rates and lifelong learning opportunities for the general population; and also reaffirming the commitment to eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005:

Entrust the OAS to organize, within the framework of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI), a meeting of Ministers of Education in Uruguay, to be held before the end of 2001, with a mandate to:

- identify and set up appropriate hemispheric mechanisms to ensure the implementation of the education initiatives in this Plan of Action and to continue to promote actions on priorities identified in previous Summits based on a careful evaluation of our collective achievements in this area;

- establish time lines and benchmarks for follow-up on the implementation of our commitments in education;
- establish, in light of the fundamental importance of mobilizing resources to support sustained investment in education at all levels, a cooperative mechanism to promote the development of productive partnerships among governments and with regional and international organizations and the MDBs;
- promote the participation of and dialogue with relevant civil society organizations to strengthen partnerships between the public sector and other sectors of our societies in implementing this Plan of Action;

Formulate and implement policies, within the framework of a strategy for resolving social inequalities, to promote access to quality basic education for all, including early childhood and adult education, particularly to promote literacy, while providing for alternative methods that meet the needs of disadvantaged segments of the population or of those excluded from formal education systems, in particular girls, minorities, indigenous, and children with special education needs; share information and successful experiences in encouraging educational participation and addressing student retention within certain groups, especially boys -in particular in the Caribbean countries - whose drop-out rate at the secondary level is high in certain regions;

Support and promote lifelong learning by:

- offering varied curricula based on the development of skills, knowledge, civic and democratic values;
- providing flexible service delivery mechanisms, including the use of information and communications technologies, to foster employability, personal growth and social commitment; and
- certifying skills acquired on the job;

Strengthen education systems by:

- encouraging the participation of all sectors of society in order to obtain a consensus on policies that are viable and that guarantee the appropriate and continuous distribution of resources;
- decentralizing their decision-making and promoting the participation of civil society, especially parents; and
- promoting transparent school management in the interest of securing an adequate and stable allocation of resources so that educational institutions can play a leading role

as agents for change;

Enhance the performance of teachers by:

- improving their conditions of service; and
- raising the profile of the profession by providing, in addition to solid initial preparation, opportunities for ongoing professional development, and by designing accessible, flexible, dynamic and relevant training strategies using, among other means, new information and communications technologies;

Support ongoing regional projects for comparable indicators and educational assessment resulting from the Santiago Summit, including cooperation initiatives based on performance assessment programs regarding educational processes and achievement, taking into consideration studies in pedagogy and assessment practices previously developed by countries; develop comparable indicators to assess the services provided by each country to people with special education needs and promote the exchange of information on policies, strategies and best practices in the Americas;

Strive to ensure that secondary education is more responsive to evolving labor market requirements by promoting the diversification of programs and experimentation with new, more flexible teaching methods with emphasis on science and technology, including the use of new information and communications technologies, and by supporting the establishment of mechanisms for the recognition and certification of acquired skills; and to this end, promote the exchange of information and best practices and support cooperation projects; Promote more effective dialogue between society and institutions of higher education, and facilitate access for all to these institutions by balancing growing demand with higher quality standards and public funding with greater commitment from the private sector; support hemispheric cooperation for research in science and technology aimed at the solution of specific problems in the region and the transfer of knowledge;

Support the mobility, between countries of the Hemisphere, of students, teachers and administrators at institutions of higher education and of teachers and administrators at the elementary and secondary levels, in order to provide them with new opportunities to take part in the new knowledge-based society, to increase their knowledge of other cultures and languages, and to enable them to access information on post-secondary studies and learning opportunities offered across the Hemisphere, through new or existing hemispheric networks, such as the educational Web site set up after the Santiago Summit; continue to support initiatives in this field such as those carried out by the IDB and the OAS;

Promote access by teachers, students and administrators to new information and communications technologies applied to education, through training geared toward new teaching approaches, support for development of networks and sustained strengthening of information clearinghouses, in order to reduce the knowledge gap and the digital divide within and between societies in the Hemisphere;

Science and Technology

Promote the popularization of science and technology necessary to advance the establishment and consolidation of a scientific culture in the region; and stimulate the development of science and technology for regional connectivity through information and communications technologies essential for building knowledge-based societies;

Support the development of high-level human capital for the development of science and technology research and innovation that would encourage the strengthening of the agricultural, industrial, commercial and business sectors as well as the sustainability of the environment;

Promote, with the support of existing cooperation mechanisms, the development of the regional program of science and technology indicators;

Endeavor to implement and follow up on the scientific and technological activities mentioned above, counting on the support of hemispheric cooperation and coordination mechanisms related to this field;

14. HEALTH

Recognizing - further to the commitments made at the Miami and Santiago Summits and in accordance with agreed-upon international development goals in the areas of maternal, infant, child and reproductive health - that good physical and mental health is essential for a productive and fulfilling life, and that equitable access to quality health services is a critical element in the development of democratic societies, and for the stability and prosperity of nations; that the enjoyment of the highest standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition, as set forth in the *Constitution of the World Health Organization*; that gender equality and concern for indigenous peoples, children, the elderly and under-served groups must be of paramount concern in the development of health policy; that health outcomes are affected by physical, social, economic and political factors and that the technical cooperation of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and other relevant international organizations should continue to support health actions in the Hemisphere, in a manner consistent with the *Shared Agenda for Health in the Americas* signed by PAHO, the IDB, and the World Bank:

Health Sector Reform

Reaffirm their commitment to an equity-oriented health sector reform process, emphasizing their concerns for essential public health functions, quality of care, equal access to health services and health coverage, especially in the fields of disease prevention and health promotion, and improving the use of resources and administration of health services; promote the continued use of scientifically validated, agreed-upon, common indicators for assessing effectiveness, equity and efficiency of health systems;

Strengthen and promote development of domestic standards of practice, accreditation and licensing procedures, codes of ethics, and education and training programs for health personnel; improve the mix of health personnel in the provision of health services to better respond to national health priorities;

Intensify efforts and share and promote best practices to:

- reduce maternal and infant morbidity and mortality;
- provide quality reproductive health care and services for women, men and adolescents; and
- carry out commitments made at the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development and its five-year follow-up in New York;

Develop processes to evaluate the efficacy of alternative health practices and medicinal products to ensure public safety and share this experience and knowledge with other countries in the Americas;

Communicable Diseases

Commit, at the highest level, to combat HIV/AIDS and its consequences, recognizing that this disease is a major threat to the security of our people; in particular seek to increase resources for prevention, education and access to care and treatment as well as research; adopt a multi-sectoral and gender sensitive approach to education, to prevention and to controlling the spread of HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) by developing participatory programs especially with high risk populations, and by fostering partnerships with civil society including the mass media, the business sector and voluntary organizations; promote the use of ongoing horizontal mechanisms of cooperation to secure the safety of blood; increase national access to treatment of HIV/AIDS-related illnesses through measures striving to ensure the provision and affordability of drugs, including reliable distribution and delivery systems and appropriate financing mechanisms consistent with national laws and international agreements acceded to; continue dialogue with the pharmaceutical industry and the private sector in general to encourage the availability of affordable antiretrovirals and other drugs for HIV/AIDS treatment, and promote strategies to facilitate the sharing of drug pricing information including, where appropriate, that available in national data banks; promote and protect the human rights of all persons living with HIV/AIDS, without gender or age discrimination; utilize the June 2001 UN General Assembly Special Session on AIDS as a platform to generate support for hemispheric and national HIV/AIDS programs;

Enhance programs at the hemispheric, national and local levels to prevent, control and treat communicable diseases such as tuberculosis, dengue, malaria and Chagas;

Promote healthy childhood development through: prenatal care, expanded immunization

programs, control of respiratory and diarrheal diseases by conducting programs such as the Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses, health education, physical fitness, access to safe and nutritious foods, and the promotion of breast-feeding;

Non-Communicable Diseases

Implement community-based health care, prevention and promotion programs to reduce health risks and non-communicable diseases such as cardiovascular disease and including hypertension, cancer, diabetes, mental illness as well as the impact of violence and accidents on health;

Participate actively in the negotiation of a proposed Framework Convention on Tobacco Control; develop and adopt policies and programs to reduce the consumption of tobacco products, especially as it affects children; share best practices and lessons learned in the development of programs designed to raise public awareness, particularly for adolescents, about the health risks associated with tobacco, alcohol and drugs;

Connectivity

Provide sound, scientific and technical information to health workers and the public, utilizing innovations such as the Virtual Health Library of the Americas; encourage the use of tele-health as a means to connect remote populations and to provide health services and information to under-served groups, as a complement to the provision of existing health care services;

15. GENDER EQUALITY

Recognizing that women's empowerment, their full and equal participation in the development of our societies, and their equal opportunities to exercise leadership are all central to the reduction of poverty, the promotion of economic and social prosperity, people-centered sustainable development, consolidation of democracy and conflict resolution and the development of equal partnerships between women and men; further recognizing that these principles are the basis for promoting gender equality and women's human rights in the Americas and working towards the elimination of the full range of inequalities:

Endorse the *Inter-American Program on the Promotion of Women's Human Rights and Gender Equity and Equality* approved at the First Meeting of Ministers or of the Highest Ranking Authorities Responsible for the Advancement of Women, held in April 2000, by the CIM; endorse as well the *Regional Programme of Action for the Women in Latin America and the Caribbean 1995-2000* and the further actions and initiatives adopted at the Twenty-Third Special Session of the UN General Assembly (Beijing +5) to implement the *Beijing Declaration* and its *Platform for Action*; and integrate a gender perspective into the programs, actions and agendas of national and international events, to ensure that women's experiences and gender equality are an integral dimension of the design, implementation and evaluation of government and inter-American policies and programs in all spheres;

Strengthen national machineries and other government bodies responsible for the advancement of women and for the promotion and protection of the human rights of women; provide them with the necessary human and financial resources, including through exploring innovative funding schemes so that gender is integrated into all policies, programs and projects; and support both the fundamental role that women's organizations have played and will continue to play in advancing gender equality and the joint efforts between governments and the private sector which contribute to respect and understanding of the human rights of women;

Promote gender equity and equality and women's human rights by strengthening and fostering women's full and equal participation in political life in their countries and in decision-making at all levels;

Reinforce the role of the CIM as the technical advisor to the Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG) on all aspects of gender equity and equality and recognize the importance of the CIM in follow-up to relevant Summit recommendations; provide for an appropriate level of resources to the CIM to carry out its role as the principal hemispheric policy-generating forum for the advancement of the human rights of women and particularly of gender equality; promote the support and participation of the IDB, the World Bank and ECLAC in the implementation of and follow-up to this Plan of Action;

Promote the use of information and communications technologies as a mechanism to address inequalities between men and women and ensure women's equality of access to these new technologies and to the requisite training; to this end, ensure that government connectivity programs and programming at local, national and regional levels, integrate a gender perspective representative of the diversity of women within various groups, including indigenous peoples and rural and ethnic minorities;

Strengthen systems for collecting and processing statistical data disaggregated by sex, and adopt the use of gender indicators that will contribute to a baseline analysis of the status of women and to the implementation of public policies at the national and regional levels, and that make it possible to improve the monitoring and assessment of regional and international agreements;

16. INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Recognizing that the unique cultures, histories and demographic, socio-economic and political circumstances of indigenous peoples (as the term is explained in the section of this Plan of Action entitled "Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms") in the Americas necessitate special measures to assist them in reaching their full human potential, and that their inclusion throughout our societies and institutions is a valuable element in the continuous strengthening, not only of human rights in our hemispheric community, but also, more broadly, of our democracies, economies and civilizations; noting that although progress has been made, it is necessary to strengthen participation of indigenous peoples, communities, and organizations, to promote an open and continuous dialogue between them and governments, and to continue to work together to ensure effective

implementation of the relevant mandates in the Santiago Summit Plan of Action:

Make their best efforts, in accordance with national legislation, to encourage donor agencies, the private sector, other governments, regional and international organizations as well as MDBs to support hemispheric and national conferences in order to exchange experiences among indigenous peoples and their organizations in implementing activities to promote their sustainable cultural, economic and social development, and in such other areas as may be identified by indigenous peoples;

Acknowledge the value that the world views, uses, customs and traditions of indigenous peoples can make to policies and programs related to the management of lands and natural resources, sustainable development and biodiversity; on this basis, develop corresponding strategies and methods to consider and respect indigenous peoples' cultural practices and protect their traditional knowledge in accordance with the principles and objectives of the *Convention on Biological Diversity*;

Increase the availability and accessibility of educational services in consultation with indigenous peoples, especially women, children and youth, in accordance with their values, customs, traditions and organizational structures, by promoting linguistic and cultural diversity in education and training programs for indigenous communities; promote national and regional strategies for indigenous women, children and youth; similarly, encourage international exchange programs and public and private sector internships in order to promote equal opportunity, raise the average school-leaving age, maximize individual and collective achievement, and promote lifelong learning for all indigenous people;

Promote and accommodate, as appropriate, the particular cultural, linguistic and developmental needs of indigenous peoples, in urban and rural contexts, into the development and implementation of educational initiatives and strategies, with special attention to building institutional capacity, connectivity and linkages, including through national focal points, with other indigenous peoples of the Hemisphere;

Promote and enhance, in all sectors of society, and especially in the area of education, the understanding of the contribution made by indigenous peoples in shaping the national identity of the countries in which they live;

Develop strategies, measures, and mechanisms aimed at ensuring the effective participation of indigenous peoples in the design, implementation and evaluation of comprehensive health plans, policies, systems and programs that recognize the value of developing holistic communities that take into consideration cultural, economic and social realities and circumstances;

Support the Health of Indigenous Peoples Initiative, promoted by PAHO, in assisting states and in consultation with indigenous peoples, to formulate integrated public policies and health systems that foster the health of indigenous peoples, in designing and implementing inter-cultural frameworks and models of care specifically aimed at addressing the health

needs and priorities of these peoples, and in improving information collection, analysis and dissemination on the health and social conditions of these peoples, with particular emphasis on children;

Reduce the digital, communications and information gaps between the national average and indigenous peoples and communities, through relevant connectivity and communications programs and projects that provide services in the fields of political, economic and social development, including the use of indigenous peoples information networks;

Promote the collection and publication of national statistics to generate information on the ethnic composition and socio-economic characteristics of indigenous populations in order to define and evaluate the most appropriate policies to address needs;

Support the process of reform of the Inter-American Indian Institute, based on extensive consultations among states and indigenous peoples of the Hemisphere, and further develop processes to ensure broad and full participation of indigenous peoples throughout the inter-American system, including in the discussions on the *Proposed American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*;

17. CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Recognizing that respect for and value of cultural diversity contribute to social and economic dynamism, and are positive factors in the promotion of good governance, social cohesion, human development, human rights and peaceful co-existence in the Hemisphere, and that the effects of globalization offer great possibilities for the promotion of cultural diversity, but also raise concerns about the ability of some communities to express certain aspects of their cultural identity; further recognizing the unique role of cultural property in the strengthening of geographic, social, historic and anthropological bonds within societies; acknowledging the need to strengthen strategies to prevent the illicit trafficking in cultural property which is detrimental to the preservation of the collective memory and cultural heritage of societies and threatens the cultural diversity of the Hemisphere; and bearing in mind that the General Assembly of the UN declared the year 2001 as the Year of Dialogue Among Civilizations;

Enhance partnerships and exchanges of information, including through the use of information and communications technologies, by holding a series of seminars among experts, government officials and representatives of civil society on the importance of the linguistic and cultural diversity of the Hemisphere to promote a better acceptance, understanding, appreciation and respect among the peoples of the region;

Encourage the convocation of a meeting at the ministerial or highest appropriate level, with the support of the CIDI, to discuss cultural diversity with a view to deepening hemispheric cooperation on this issue;

Create an environment to foster awareness and understanding of cultural and linguistic diversity of countries in the Americas, through a variety of means, including the use of new communications technologies as well as the Internet; support, by means of broad collaboration, new media projects which promote inter-cultural dialogue through the production and distribution of cultural products created for television, film, the recording industry, the publishing industry and the electronic media; enrich the diversity of cultural content of these industries, inter alia through the preservation and restoration of cultural property and through the return of illegally acquired cultural property in accordance with our international obligations;

Promote social cohesion, mutual respect and development by:

- recognizing the contribution of physical education and fair, drug-free sport; and
- supporting initiatives which: preserve and enhance traditional and indigenous sport, strengthen the role of women in sport, and increase opportunities for children and youth, persons with disabilities and minorities to participate in and benefit from sport and other physical activities;

Commit to active cooperation among diverse institutions, at both the national and international levels, to eradicate the illicit traffic in cultural property further to the 1970 *United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property*; also, promote joint action with civil society organizations to implement and support policies, plans and programs that will strengthen and promote research, recovery, study, conservation, maintenance, restoration, access to and appreciation of cultural heritage and cultural property through proper care, preservation and use;

18. CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Recognizing that promoting the rights of children and their development, protection and participation is essential to ensure that they reach their full potential; further recognizing the effectiveness and the need for intervention centered on protection against discrimination, inequity, abuse, exploitation and violence, especially of the most vulnerable and taking into account a gender perspective; asserting the importance of the cooperation endorsed at the Tenth Summit of Ibero-American Heads of States and Governments in Panama, as well as the significant opportunity for progress for children in 2001 in the context of the Inter-American Year of the Child and the Adolescent and the goals adopted at the 1990 World Summit for Children; and recognizing the vital contribution of the *Convention of the Rights of the Child* in the promotion and protection of children's rights, and the work undertaken by the Inter-American Children's Institute (IACI):

Implement and support the commitments contained in the *Agenda for War-Affected Children* agreed to by 132 states at the International Conference on War-Affected Children held in Winnipeg, Canada, in September 2000, including fostering the active participation of

children and adolescents in policy, dialogue and programming for children and adolescents affected by armed conflict and also encouraging the establishment of a network for them; consider additional ways to monitor, report on and advocate the protection, rights and welfare of children affected by armed conflict in the Hemisphere in conjunction with the IACHR's Rapporteur for Children's Rights;

Promote actions to establish, strengthen and implement public policies to ensure the well-being and integral development of children and adolescents, and promote the convening of conferences, seminars and other national or multilateral activities dedicated to children and adolescents, especially throughout 2001 in the context of the Inter-American Year of the Child and the Adolescent;

Ensure that every child in conflict with the law is treated in a manner consistent with his/her best interests, in accordance with our obligations under the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* and other relevant international human rights instruments, including the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*; bear in mind the *United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice*; and provide training opportunities, as appropriate, including gender-sensitivity and human rights instruction, to those involved in the administration of justice;

Identify, share and promote best practices and approaches, particularly community-based approaches aimed at supporting families, meeting the needs of children and adolescents at risk and protecting them from physical or mental abuse, injury or violence, discrimination, neglect, maltreatment, and exploitation, including sexual abuse, commercial exploitation and the worst forms of child labor as expressed in ILO Convention 182; in accordance with national legislation, develop national policies and models for rehabilitation or judicial systems for minors, incorporating initiatives for crime prevention, safeguarding the due process of law, and allowing access to institutions and programs for rehabilitation and reintegration of child and adolescent offenders into society and their families;

Endorse and seek cooperative means to advance the recommendations contained in the *Kingston Consensus* of the Fifth Ministerial Meeting on Children and Social Policy, held in Jamaica in October 2000, which represents the region's contribution to the *UN Special Session for Children* to be held in September 2001;

Encourage cooperation to reduce cases of international abduction of children by one of their parents; consider signing and ratifying, ratifying, or acceding to, as soon as possible and as the case may be, *The Hague Convention of 25 October 1980 on Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction*, *The Hague Convention of 29 May 1993 on Protection of Children and Co-operation in respect of Inter-country Adoption*, and the 1989 *Inter-American Convention on the International Return of Children*; and comply with their obligations under these Conventions in order to prevent and remedy cases of international parental child abduction;

In order to protect and promote children's rights, develop and implement inter-sectoral

policies and programs, which may include the promotion of civil registration of all children, and allocate appropriate resources to undertake these tasks; establish and support cooperation amongst states as well as with civil society and young people to ensure effective implementation and monitoring of children's rights, including country-appropriate indicators of the health, development, and well-being of children, and through sharing best practices on reporting through national reports by States Parties to the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*;

Promote consultation, participation and representation of young people in all matters affecting them by providing access to reliable information and opportunities for them to express their views and contribute to discussions in local, national, regional and international fora and events;

Reinforce the role of PAHO, the IACI, and the IACHR as technical advisors to the SIRG, on all aspects of children's issues, and recognize the importance of these institutions in follow-up of relevant Summit recommendations.

FOLLOW UP TO THE PLAN OF ACTION

On the occasion of our third meeting, in Quebec City, we underscore the need to deepen and broaden our cooperation to meet the needs and provide for the aspirations of citizens. To achieve these objectives, it is fundamental that we effectively implement the commitments we have made. To this end:

We recognize the primary role of governments in the implementation of the Plan of Action.

We welcome and encourage the extensive sectoral cooperation that exists at the ministerial level in various sectors, which form the building blocks of hemispheric cooperation. We direct our respective Ministers to continue to support the implementation of the mandates contained within this Plan of Action and to report on progress.

Summit Management

We continue to support the SIRG as the primary body, accountable through Foreign Ministers, for the monitoring of implementation of Summit mandates.

With the objective of strengthening hemispheric inclusion in the Summit of the Americas process, we agree to the formation of a regionally representative Executive Council of the SIRG, with a permanent Steering Committee composed of past, current and future Summit hosts. The Executive Council shall serve:

- to assess, strengthen and support follow-up of Summit initiatives, with the OAS serving as the technical secretariat and institutional memory of the Summit process;
- to maximize coherence between the Summit of the Americas process and mandates and subregional Summit processes;
- to deepen partnerships and coordination between the Summit of the Americas process and its partner institutions (OAS, PAHO, IICA, IDB, ECLAC, and the World Bank), including examination of the suitability of new relationships with subregional MDBs; and
- to advance greater engagement and partnerships with subregional foundations, and with civil society groups, including business and the voluntary sector, in the support of Summit mandates.

The Steering Committee shall assist the Summit Chair in preparing for future Summits, including preparations for SIRG meetings.

Implementation and Financing

We underscore the need for ongoing dialogue and coordination in the inter-American system to ensure the effective and efficient implementation of Summit mandates. We welcome the engagement of the institutional partners (OAS, PAHO, IICA, IDB, ECLAC and the World Bank) in all stages of the Summit of the Americas process and endorse:

- regular dialogue between the SIRG and the partner institutions to ensure coordination in the planning, financing and implementation of Summit mandates;
- participation of the Heads of the partner institutions at future ministerial-level meetings of the SIRG; and
- the strengthening of collaboration and greater exchanges of information and expertise among MDBs, inter-American organizations and national agencies, with a view to encouraging effective use of their resources, optimizing effectiveness of program delivery, avoiding unnecessary overlap and duplication in existing mandates, maximizing funding opportunities for beneficiaries and ensuring consistency in the implementation of the Summit initiatives aimed at advancing greater social equity.

We recognize the essential role of the MDBs and funding agencies in mobilizing expertise and resources in support of the social and economic goals of the Plan of Action. We direct our Ministers, working with the SIRG, to explore with the partner institutions, the ongoing financial support of initiatives, and encourage:

- our national representatives on the Boards of these institutions to promote the development of programs supportive of the Summit's social and economic goals;
- efforts of the IDB and the World Bank to provide expertise and mobilize resources for initiatives consistent with priority areas of programming;
- active pursuit of improved communication and coordination between National Coordinators and Executive Directors of the IDB and the World Bank, including a meeting between the SIRG and Executive Directors to discuss implementation of Summit mandates;
- the strengthening of relationships at the national level among government ministries and agencies responsible for the implementation of Summit mandates, the IDB and the World Bank, to ensure greater exchange in the planning and implementation of Summit mandates;
- Western Hemisphere Finance Ministers to increase their engagement in and support of the overall Summit of the Americas agenda, both with respect to their position as Finance Ministers, and as applicable, as Governors of the MDBs; we instruct our Finance Ministers to give consideration to the establishment of financial mechanisms to support the Summit initiatives; and
- Efforts of the Inter-American Agency for Cooperation and Development (IACD) to secure financing from both traditional and new sources, including new partnerships with the private sector, and its efforts to have the goals of the Summit inform the development of its Strategic Plan 2002-2005.

We recognize the central role of the OAS in supporting the Summit of the Americas process and the function that the OAS Special Committee on Inter-American Summits Management (CEGCI) fulfills in coordinating the efforts of the OAS in this regard and in serving as a forum for civil society to contribute to the Summit of the Americas process.

We instruct Foreign Ministers at the next General Assembly of the OAS in San Jose, Costa Rica, to strengthen and reform, where appropriate, the institutional mechanisms and financial capacity of the General Secretariat of the Organization to support the Summit of the Americas process, as technical secretariat, and to provide support to ministerial and sectoral meetings relevant to the OAS. In addition, we instruct the creation of a specific fund to finance the activities to support the SIRG.

We further support consideration by the OAS, other inter-American organizations and national governments, of ways in which civil society can contribute to the monitoring and implementation of Summit mandates, for recommendation to the SIRG as well as further development of mechanisms and information systems to ensure the dissemination of information on the Summit of the Americas process and the commitments assumed by governments.