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First Summit of the Americas

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The following document is the complete text of the Plan of Action signed by the Heads of State and Government participating in the First Summit of the Americas.

Summit of the Americas Plan of Action

The heads of state and government participating in the 1994 Summit of the Americas in Miami, Florida, desirous of furthering the broad objectives set forth in their Declaration of Principles and mindful of the need for practical progress on the vital tasks of enhancing democracy, promoting development, achieving economic integration and free trade, improving the lives of their people, and protecting the natural environment for future generations, affirm their commitment to this Plan of Action.

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I. PRESERVING AND STRENGTHENING THE COMMUNITY OF DEMOCRACIES OF THE AMERICAS

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1. Strengthening Democracy

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The strengthening, effective exercise and consolidation of democracy constitute the central political priority of the Americas. The Organization of American States (OAS) is the principal hemispheric body for the defense of democratic values and institutions; among its essential purposes is to promote and consolidate representative democracy, with due respect to the principle of non-intervention. The OAS has adopted multilateral procedures to address the problems created when democratic order has been interrupted unconstitutionally. In order to prevent such crises, the OAS needs to direct more effort toward the promotion of democratic values and practices and to the social and economic strengthening of already-established democratic regimes.

Governments will:

Give expeditious consideration to ratifying the Cartagena de Indias, Washington and Managua

Protocols to the OAS Charter, if they have not already done so.

Strengthen the dialogue among social groups and foster grass roots participation in problem solving at the local level.

Support efforts by the OAS to promote democracy by:

Encouraging exchanges of election-related technologies and assisting national electoral organizations, at the request of the interested state.

Strengthening the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy so that it can provide assistance at the request of the interested state on such matters as legislative and judicial processes, government reforms (including administration of justice, technical modernization of national legislative bodies, simplification of government regulations and promotion of participation by community organizations in local democracy), and other institutional changes.

Encouraging opportunities for exchange of experiences among member states' democratic institutions, particularly legislature-to-legislature and judiciary-to-judiciary.

Fostering understanding, dialogue and political reconciliation, at the request of the affected state and bearing in mind that national reconciliation comes from within.

Requesting the OAS to promote and follow up on these commitments.

2. Promoting and Protecting Human Rights

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Great progress has been made in the Hemisphere in the development of human rights concepts and norms, but serious gaps in implementation remain. While courts ultimately have the responsibility for enforcing legal rights and obligations, reforms in other institutions are needed to contribute to the further development of a climate of respect for human rights. There must also be universal access to justice and effective means to enforce basic rights. A democracy is judged by the rights enjoyed by its least influential members.

Governments will:

Give serious consideration to adherence to international human rights instruments to which they are not already party.

Cooperate fully with all United Nations and inter-American human rights bodies.

Develop programs for the promotion and observance of human rights, including educational

programs to inform people of their legal rights and their responsibility to respect the rights of others.

Promote policies to ensure that women enjoy full and equal legal rights within their families and societies, and to ensure the removal of constraints to women's full participation as voters, candidates and elected and appointed officials.

Review and strengthen laws for the protection of the rights of minority groups and indigenous people and communities to ensure freedom from discrimination, to guarantee full and equal protection under the law, and to facilitate active civic participation. Support a process to review and enhance the protection of indigenous rights in OAS member states and to develop promptly an effective United Nations declaration on indigenous rights.

Review national legislation affecting people with disabilities, as well as benefits and services for them, and make any changes needed to facilitate the enjoyment by these individuals of the same rights and freedoms as other members of society.

Undertake all measures necessary to guarantee the rights of children, and, where they have not already done so, give serious consideration to ratifying the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Guarantee the protection of the human rights of all migrant workers and their families.

Take the necessary steps to remedy inhumane conditions in prisons and to minimize the number of pretrial detainees.

Review training curricula for law enforcement agents to ensure that they adequately cover proper treatment of suspects and detainees as well as relations with the community.

Exchange experiences on protection of human rights at the national level and, where possible, cooperate in the development of law enforcement and security force training or other programs to reduce the potential for human rights violations.

Call on the OAS and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) to establish or to reinforce programs, as appropriate, to support national projects for the promotion and observance of human rights in the Western Hemisphere.

Further strengthen the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.

3. Invigorating Society/Community Participation

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A strong and diverse civil society, organized in various ways and sectors, including individuals, the private sector, labor, political parties, academics, and other non-governmental actors and organizations, gives depth and durability to democracy. Similarly, a vigorous democracy requires broad participation in public issues. Such activities should be carried out with complete transparency and accountability, and to this end a proper legal and regulatory framework should be established to include the possibility of obtaining technical and financial support, including from private sources.

Governments will:

Review the regulatory framework for non-governmental actors with a view to facilitating their operations and promoting their ability to receive funds. This review will emphasize the management and oversight of resources as well as transparency and the accountability to society of said actors.

Take steps to improve the participation in social activities and initiatives of groups traditionally marginalized, including women, youth, indigenous people and the extremely poor.

Exchange progress reports on activities in the civil society area at the 1996 Summit Conference on Sustainable Development in Bolivia.

Consider the development by the IDB of a new Civil Society Program to encourage responsible and accountable philanthropy and civic engagement in public policy issues.

4. Promoting Cultural Values

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Cultural development is a fundamental and integral component of development in the Americas and has an inherent capability to enrich our societies and to generate greater understanding among our countries.

In order to promote cultural values, governments will:

Encourage more dynamic relations among public and private institutions and organizations, including universities, museums, and centers of art and literature, as well as among individual cultural actors. Such exchanges emphasize our cultural diversity, recognize the value of our local cultures and contribute to improving hemispheric understanding.

Request that the OAS and IDB reinforce their plans and programs to facilitate these cultural

exchanges and the flow of cultural and historical information within and among our nations.

5. Combating Corruption

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The problem of corruption is now an issue of serious interest not only in this Hemisphere, but in all regions of the world. Corruption in both the public and private sectors weakens democracy and undermines the legitimacy of governments and institutions. The modernization of the state, including deregulation, privatization and the simplification of government procedures, reduces the opportunities for corruption. All aspects of public administration in a democracy must be transparent and open to public scrutiny.

Governments will:

Promote open discussion of the most significant problems facing government and develop priorities for reforms needed to make government operations transparent and accountable.

Ensure proper oversight of government functions by strengthening internal mechanisms, including investigative and enforcement capacity with respect to acts of corruption, and facilitating public access to information necessary for meaningful outside review.

Establish conflict of interest standards for public employees and effective measures against illicit enrichment, including stiff penalties for those who utilize their public position to benefit private interests.

Call on the governments of the world to adopt and enforce measures against bribery in all financial or commercial transactions with the Hemisphere; toward this end, invite the OAS to establish liaison with the OECD Working Group on Bribery in International Business Transactions.

Develop mechanisms of cooperation in the judicial and banking areas to make possible rapid and effective response in the international investigation of corruption cases.

Give priority to strengthening government regulations and procurement, tax collection, the administration of justice and the electoral and legislative processes, utilizing the support of the IDB and other international financial institutions where appropriate.

Develop within the OAS, with due regard to applicable treaties and national legislation, a hemispheric approach to acts of corruption in both the public and private sectors that would include extradition and prosecution of individuals so charged, through negotiation of a new hemispheric agreement or new arrangements within existing frameworks for international

cooperation.

6. Combating the Problem of Illegal Drugs and Related Crimes

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The problems of illegal drug and related criminal activities pose grave threats to the societies, free market economies, and democratic institutions of the Hemisphere. Drug use imposes enormous social costs; drug money and income are net drains on economic growth; and drug lords and criminal organizations endanger the security of our people through corruption, intimidation, and violence. While drug trafficking continues to be a significant source of illegal funds, the money laundering industry increasingly deals with the proceeds of all types of criminal activity. An integrated and balanced approach that includes respect for national sovereignty is essential to confront all aspects of these problems. For these reasons, a broad coordinated hemispheric strategy to reduce drug use and production, including new enforcement methods that can disrupt drug trafficking and money laundering networks and prosecute those engaged in such activities, is required. In this context, governments note the work of the 1992 San Antonio Summit, endorse the efforts of the Inter-American Commission on Drug Abuse Control, and agree to work together to formulate a counter-narcotics strategy for the 21st Century.

Governments will:

Ratify the 1988 United Nations Convention Against the Illicit Traffic of Narcotics and Psychotropic Substances and make it a criminal offense to launder the proceeds of all serious crimes.

Enact legislation to permit the freezing and forfeiture of the proceeds of money laundering and consider the sharing of forfeited assets among governments.

As agreed by ministers and representatives of Caribbean and Latin American governments in the Kingston Declaration, November 5-6, 1992, implement the recommendations of the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering and work to adopt the Model Regulations of the Inter-American Commission on Drug Abuse Control (CICAD).

Encourage financial institutions to report large and suspicious transactions to appropriate authorities and develop effective procedures that would allow the collection of relevant information from financial institutions.

Work individually and collectively to identify the region's narcotics trafficking and money laundering networks, prosecute their leaders, and seize assets derived from these criminal activities.

Adopt programs to prevent and reduce the demand for and the consumption of illicit drugs.

Adopt effective and environmentally-sound national strategies to prevent or reduce substantially the cultivation and processing of crops used for the illegal drug trade, paying particular attention to national and international support for development programs that create viable economic alternatives to drug production.

Pay particular attention to the control of precursor chemicals and support comprehensive drug interdiction strategies.

Strengthen efforts to control firearms, ammunition, and explosives to avoid their diversion to drug traffickers and criminal organizations.

Hold a working-level conference, to be followed by a ministerial conference, to study and agree on a coordinated hemispheric response, including consideration of an inter-American convention, to combat money laundering.

Convene a hemispheric-wide conference of donors, including multilateral development banks and UN agencies, to seek resources for alternative development programs aimed at curbing the production, trafficking, and use of illicit drugs, and the rehabilitation of addicts.

Support the discussion the OAS has initiated with the European Union on measures to control precursor chemicals.

Support the convening of a global counter-narcotics conference.

7. Eliminating the Threat of National and International Terrorism

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National and international terrorism constitute a systematic and deliberate violation of the rights of individuals and an assault on democracy itself. Recent attacks that some of our countries have suffered have demonstrated the serious threat that terrorism poses to security in the Americas. Actions by governments to combat and eliminate this threat are essential elements in guaranteeing law and order and maintaining confidence in government, both nationally and internationally. Within this context, those who sponsor terrorist acts or assist in their planning or execution through the abuse of diplomatic privileges and immunities or other means will be held responsible by the international community.

Governments will:

Promote bilateral and subregional agreements with the aim of prosecuting terrorists and penalizing terrorist activities within the context of the protection of human rights and

fundamental freedoms.

Convene a special conference of the OAS on the prevention of terrorism.

Reaffirm the importance of the extradition treaties ratified by the states of the Hemisphere, and note that these treaties will be strictly complied with as an expression of the political will of governments, in accordance with international law and domestic legislation.

8. Building Mutual Confidence

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The expansion and consolidation of democracy in the Americas provide an opportunity to build upon the peaceful traditions and the cooperative relationships that have prevailed among the countries of the Western Hemisphere. Our aim is to strengthen the mutual confidence that contributes to the economic and social integration of our peoples.

Governments will:

Support actions to encourage a regional dialogue to promote the strengthening of mutual confidence, preparing the way for a regional conference on confidence-building measures in 1995, which Chile has offered to host.

II. PROMOTING PROSPERITY THROUGH ECONOMIC INTEGRATION AND FREE TRADE

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9. Free Trade in the Americas

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1) While pursuing economic integration and free trade in the Hemisphere, we reinforce our strong commitment to multilateral rules and disciplines. We endorse full and rapid implementation of the Uruguay Round, active multilateral negotiations in the World Trade Organization, bilateral and subregional trade agreements, and other trade arrangements that are consistent with the provisions of the GATT/WTO and that do not raise barriers to other nations.

2) Extraordinary achievements have been made by countries of the Hemisphere in trade

liberalization and subregional integration. Free trade and increased economic integration are key factors for sustainable development. This will be furthered as we strive to make our trade liberalization and environmental policies mutually supportive, taking into account efforts undertaken by the GATT/WTO and other international organizations. As economic integration in the Hemisphere proceeds, we will further secure the observance and promotion of worker rights, as defined by appropriate international conventions. We will avoid disguised restrictions on trade, in accordance with the GATT/WTO and other international obligations.

3) We will strive to maximize market openness through high levels of discipline as we build upon existing agreements in the Hemisphere. We also will strive for balanced and comprehensive agreements, including among others: tariffs and non-tariff barriers affecting trade in goods and services; agriculture; subsidies; investment; intellectual property rights; government procurement; technical barriers to trade; safeguards; rules of origin; antidumping and countervailing duties; sanitary and phytosanitary standards and procedures; dispute resolution; and competition policy.

4) We recognize that decisions on trade agreements remain a sovereign right of each nation. In addition, recognizing the importance of effective enforcement of international commitments, each nation will take the necessary action, in accordance with its own legislation and procedures, to implement the agreements in the areas covered by this Plan of Action.

5) As we work to achieve the "Free Trade Area of the Americas," opportunities such as technical assistance will be provided to facilitate the integration of the smaller economies and increase their level of development.

Immediate Action Agenda

We direct our ministers responsible for trade to take the following concrete initial steps to achieve the "Free Trade Area of the Americas."

6) With the objective of ensuring full and complete discussion among the parties to the various trade agreements in the Hemisphere, we direct that meetings be held under existing trade and investment fora. Members of these fora will determine areas of commonality and divergence in the particular agreements under review and should consider the means of improving disciplines among them and bringing them together. We further direct that members of these fora inform ministers of the status of their discussions and make recommendations for achieving the "Free Trade Area of the Americas."

7) Transparency in, and a clear understanding of, the subregional and bilateral agreements achieved to date among the nations in the Hemisphere are critical for advancing trade and investment integration in the Americas. We will direct the OAS Special Committee on Trade, with the support of the IDB, ECLAC, and other specialized regional and subregional organizations, to assist in the systematization of data in the region and to continue its work on studying economic integration arrangements in the Hemisphere, including brief comparative descriptions of the obligations in each of the Hemisphere's existing trade agreements. We will

further direct the Special Committee on Trade to prepare a report of its work by June 1995 for the meeting of ministers.

8) We direct our ministers responsible for trade to: (a) review the progress of work undertaken in the fora noted in paragraphs 6 and 7; (b) provide guidance with respect to further work; and (c) consider areas for immediate attention--such as customs facilitation and product testing and certification with a view to mutual recognition agreements--that could be taken up in the appropriate fora.

9) Therefore, today we launch the "Free Trade Area of the Americas" by initiating the following process. We will direct the OAS to assist the host country in arranging the ministerial meetings.

January 1995 Initiation of work programs and establishment of schedules in the fora in paragraph 6 and in the Special Committee on Trade.

June 1995 Meeting of Ministers responsible for trade.

-- preliminary report on status of work in the for a described in paragraph 6.

-- preliminary Special Committee on Trade report.

-- areas for immediate consideration.

March 1996 Meeting of Ministers responsible for trade.

-- final report to ministers by the Special Committee on Trade.

-- final reports to ministers from the fora described in paragraph 6.

-- timetable for further work.

10. Capital Markets Development and Liberalization

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The availability of capital at competitive rates is essential to finance private sector investment--a vital ingredient in economic development. Developing, liberalizing and integrating financial markets domestically and internationally, increasing transparency, and establishing sound, comparable supervision and regulation of banking and securities markets will help to reduce the cost of capital by enhancing investor and depositor confidence.

Governments will:

Form a Committee on Hemispheric Financial Issues to examine steps to promote the liberalization of capital movements and the progressive integration of capital markets, including, if deemed appropriate, the negotiation of common guidelines on capital movements that would provide for their progressive liberalization.

Prepare, in cooperation with the Inter-American Development Bank, a comprehensive list of national capital regulations in order to promote transparency and support the discussions in the Committee on Hemispheric Financial Issues.

Support the cooperative endeavors of the Association of Latin American and Caribbean Bank Supervisors and the Council of Securities Regulators of the Americas to provide sound supervision and regulation that support the development and progressive integration of markets.

The Committee on Hemispheric Financial Issues should also review problems of debt in the Hemisphere, taking account of ongoing work and drawing, as appropriate, on a broad range of expertise.

11. Hemispheric Infrastructure

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Development in this Hemisphere depends on urgent infrastructure measures, including the priority allocation of financial resources, in accordance with national legislation and with the participation of both the public and private sectors. Strengthening the flow of private productive capital to economically and environmentally sound projects has become increasingly vital to countries throughout the Hemisphere as the growth of official sources of capital has failed to keep pace with the area's needs.

Governments will:

Charge multilateral development banks to work with governments and, as appropriate, private concerns, to develop mechanisms to deal with lending and investment issues.

Draw on other regional and sub-regional experiences within the Hemisphere to support infrastructure development.

Governments that so wish will develop suitable mechanisms, including multilateral and bilateral commitments on regulatory and legal rules and practices, to encourage private investment, both domestic and foreign, in national and transboundary infrastructure projects.

12. Energy Cooperation

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The nations of the Hemisphere have begun a new era of economic growth. This new era is based on greater economic cooperation, freer trade, and open markets. Sustainable economic development requires hemispheric cooperation in the field of energy.

Governments will:

Convene a follow-up hemispheric officials' meeting in the first semester of 1995 to encourage cooperation to study ways to develop the energy industry within the Hemisphere, consistent with the least cost national energy strategies and the activities described in the "Partnership for Sustainable Energy use" in the following areas:

Consideration of ways to use the energy sector to promote sustainable economic growth.

Cooperation to study ways to optimize and facilitate the financing mechanisms of international financial institutions to support the development of projects in the energy sector, especially including those pertaining to the enhancement of efficiency in the use of energy and to non-conventional renewable energy.

Cooperation to promote capital investment and to foster the use of innovative financial mechanisms to increase investment in the energy sector and the enhancement of efficiency in the use of energy and non-conventional renewable energy, in accordance with each country's legislation and developmental needs.

Promotion of the use of efficient and non-polluting energy technologies, both conventional and renewable, leading to a higher degree of knowledge and technical expertise in this area.

Consideration of the enhancement of ongoing efforts to establish electric and other energy facilities in accordance with domestic regulatory frameworks and, where appropriate, under sub-regional agreements.

13. Telecommunications and Information Infrastructure

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A country's information infrastructure--telecommunications, information technology, and broadcasting--is an essential component of political, economic, social and cultural development. The information infrastructure development needs in the Americas are immense. The governments of the Americas intend to meet these needs by engaging in multiple actions, where

consistent with their respective governing laws, such as: encouraging private sector investment to increase participation in the telecommunications and information infrastructure sectors; promoting competition; implementing flexible regulatory regimes; stimulating diversity of content, including cultural and linguistic diversity; providing access to information networks for service and information providers; and ensuring universal service, so that the benefits of the information infrastructure will be available to all members of our societies.

Governments will:

Engage in ongoing discussions at the international level of the actions referred to above and endeavor to take those actions in their own countries, taking account of domestic conditions and circumstances.

Undertake efforts to make government information more publicly available via electronic means.

Review the availability and interoperability of connections to international networks that facilitate trade, improve education and improve access to health care.

Encourage major universities, libraries, hospitals and government agencies to have access to these networks, building on the work of the OAS Hemisphere-Wide Inter-University Scientific and Technological Information Network.

Via the OAS Inter-American Telecommunications Commission (CITEL), and in coordination with the sub-regional telecommunications organizations, develop and carry out a work program to:

Evaluate regulatory, technical and legal means to promote liberalization, common standards, interoperability of networks and compatible use of the radio spectrum.

Examine ways to promote greater consistency of the certification processes for telecommunications equipment among member countries.

Develop regional guidelines for the provision of international value-added network services.

Support a meeting by 1996, coordinated by CITEL, of senior telecommunications officials to conduct further discussions of the above actions.

14. Cooperation in Science and Technology

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There is a need to re-assess the on-going interaction among the region's science and technology (S&T) infrastructure and cooperative mechanisms; to provide impetus for improved cooperation;

to reduce barriers to collaboration; to augment the demand for technology; and to disseminate information about technological opportunities using new advances in information technology; and generally to improve communications among the key S&T organizations, researchers in the region, and growing technology-based small and medium-sized enterprises.

The commitment of the countries of the Americas to non-proliferation has gained new momentum with the acceptance of the international safeguard regime by some of our countries. The outstanding progress achieved in this field is to be commended and should contribute to enhanced opportunities for cooperation in the area of advanced goods and technologies.

Governments will:

Convene a meeting of ministers responsible for science and technology in the Hemisphere within the next year to assess progress and to promote the Bolivar Programme and the OAS Common Market of Scientific and Technological Knowledge (MERCOCYT) program, to provide the necessary support to improve scientific partnerships and technological ventures in the region, and to explore the possibility of establishing a council on science and technology.

Use existing multilateral mechanisms in the region to address a wide number of common S&T interests, including enhanced professional technical training, development and implementation of national policies and regional programs, dissemination and standardization of science and technology (including metrology and other technical norms), environmental technology development, and more effective partnerships to promote learning and competitiveness.

Stimulate greater S&T interaction in the Hemisphere and support efforts already undertaken in other fora, including the Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research, and the International Research Institute for Climate Prediction. Governments will serve to advance and communicate new initiatives such as the Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment (GLOBE) program.

Confirm their interest in participating in new initiatives driven by a demand from private sector and non-government interests in technological opportunities.

Confirm their national commitments to share S&T information with others in the Hemisphere, in accord with their respective laws, and to expand cooperation in scientific and environmental research.

15. Tourism

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Tourism is important to our economies and valuable in promoting understanding among the

people of the Americas.

Governments will:

Undertake initiatives to stimulate tourism in the Hemisphere.

III. ERADICATING POVERTY AND DISCRIMINATION IN OUR HEMISPHERE

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Large segments of society in our Hemisphere, particularly women, minorities, the disabled, indigenous groups, refugees and displaced persons, have not been equipped to participate fully in economic life. Nearly one-half of the Hemisphere's population still lives in poverty. Expanded participation of the poor in the region's economies, access to productive resources, appropriate support for social safety nets and increased human capital investments are important mechanisms to help eradicate poverty. In pursuit of these objectives, we reaffirm our support for the strategies contained within the "Commitment on a Partnership for Development and Struggle to Overcome Extreme Poverty" adopted by the OAS General Assembly.

The World Summit for Social Development to be held in Copenhagen in March 1995, as well as the United Nations World Conference on Women in Beijing in September 1995, will provide unique opportunities to define strategies to promote social integration, productive employment and the eradication of poverty.

16. Universal Access to Education

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Universal literacy and access to education at all levels, without distinction by race, national origin or gender, are an indispensable basis for sustainable social and cultural development, economic growth and democratic stability.

Governments will:

Guarantee universal access to quality primary education, working with public and private sectors and non-governmental actors, and with the support of multinational institutions. In particular, governments will seek to attain by the year 2010 a primary completion rate of 100 per cent and a secondary enrollment rate of at least 75 per cent, and to prepare programs to eradicate illiteracy, prevent truancy and improve human resources training.

Promote, with the support of international financial institutions and the private sector, worker

professional training as well as adult education, incorporating efforts to make such education more relevant to the needs of the market and employers.

Improve human resources training, and technical, professional and teacher training, which are vital for the enhancement of quality and equity of education within the Hemisphere.

Increase access to and strengthen the quality of higher education and promote cooperation among such institutions in producing the scientific and technological knowledge that is necessary for sustainable development.

Support strategies to overcome nutritional deficiencies of primary school children in order to enhance their learning ability.

Support decentralization including assurance of adequate financing and broad participation by parents, educators, community leaders and government officials in education decision-making.

Review existing regional and hemispheric training programs and make them more responsive to current needs.

Create a hemispheric partnership, working through existing organizations, to provide a consultative forum for governments, non-governmental actors, the business community, donors, and international organizations to reform educational policies and focus resources more efficiently.

Urge the March 1995 World Summit for Social Development and the September 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women to address the issue of universal access to education.

17. Equitable Access to Basic Health Services

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Despite impressive gains in the Hemisphere, limitations on health services access and quality have resulted in persistently high child and maternal mortality, particularly among the rural poor and indigenous groups.

Governments will:

Endorse the maternal and child health objectives of the 1990 World Summit for Children, the 1994 Nairobi Accord and the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, and reaffirm their commitment to reduce child mortality by one-third and maternal mortality by one-half from 1990 levels by the year 2000.

Endorse a basic package of clinical, preventive and public health services consistent with World

Health Organization, Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and World Bank recommendations and with the Program of Action agreed to at the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development. The package will address child, maternal and reproductive health interventions, including prenatal, delivery and postnatal care, family planning information and services, and HIV/AIDS prevention, as well as immunizations and programs combating the other major causes of infant mortality. The plans and programs will be developed according to a mechanism to be decided upon by each country.

Develop or update country action plans or programs for reforms to achieve child, maternal and reproductive health goals and ensure universal, non-discriminatory access to basic services, including health education and preventive health care programs. The plans and programs will be developed according to a mechanism to be decided upon by each country. Reforms would encompass essential community-based services for the poor, the disabled, and indigenous groups; stronger public health infrastructure; alternative means of financing, managing and providing services; quality assurance; and greater use of non-governmental actors and organizations.

Strengthen the existing Inter-American Network on Health Economics and Financing, which serves as an international forum for sharing technical expertise, information and experience, to focus on health reform efforts. The network gathers government officials, representatives of the private sector, non-governmental institutions and actors, donors and scholars for policy discussions, analysis, training and other activities to advance reform; strengthens national capabilities in this critical area; and fosters Hemisphere-wide cooperation.

Convene a special meeting of hemispheric governments with interested donors and international technical agencies to be hosted by the IDB, the World Bank and PAHO to establish the framework for health reform mechanisms, to define PAHO's role in monitoring the regional implementation of country plans and programs, and to plan strengthening of the network, including the cosponsors' contributions to it.

Take the opportunity of the annual PAHO Directing Council Meeting of Western Hemisphere Ministers of Health, with participation of the IDB and donors, to develop a program to combat endemic and communicable diseases as well as a program to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS, and to identify sources of funding.

Urge the March 1995 World Summit for Social Development and the September 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women to address the issue of access to health services.

18. Strengthening the Role of Women in Society

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The strengthening of the role of women in society is of fundamental importance not only for

their own complete fulfillment within a framework of equality and fairness, but to achieve true sustainable development. It is essential to strengthen policies and programs that improve and broaden the participation of women in all spheres of political, social, and economic life and that improve their access to the basic resources needed for the full exercise of their fundamental rights. Attending to the needs of women means, to a great extent, contributing to the reduction of poverty and social inequalities.

Governments will:

Recognize and give full respect for all rights of women as an essential condition for their development as individuals and for the creation of a more just, united and peaceful society. For that purpose, policies to ensure that women enjoy full legal and civil rights protection will be promoted.

Include a gender focus in development planning and cooperation projects and promote the fulfillment of women's potential, enhancing their productivity through education, training, skill development and employment.

Promote the participation of women in the decision-making process in all spheres of political, social and economic life.

Undertake appropriate measures to address and reduce violence against women.

Adopt appropriate measures to improve women's ability to earn income beyond traditional occupations, achieve economic self-reliance, and ensure women's equal access to the labor market at all employment levels, the social security systems, the credit system, and the acquisition of goods and land.

Cooperate fully with the recently-appointed Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, its Causes and Consequences, of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

Support and actively work to secure the success of the United Nations World Conference on Women that will take place in Beijing in September 1995.

Encourage, as appropriate, ratification and compliance with the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women and the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against Women.

Further strengthen the Inter-American Commission on Women.

Call upon regional and international financial and technical organizations to intensify their programs in favor of women. Encourage the adoption of follow-up procedures on the national and international measures included in this Plan of Action.

19. Encouraging Microenterprises and Small Businesses

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Microenterprises and small businesses account for a large percentage of the employment of the poor, particularly women, and contribute a considerable percentage of the gross domestic product of our countries. Strengthened support for microenterprises and small businesses is a key component of sustainable and equitable development.

Governments will:

Further pursue or initiate programs of deregulation and administrative simplification.

Increase efforts to enable enterprises to obtain information on appropriate technologies (especially those that are environmentally sound), markets, processes, raw materials and management systems that will permit them to be more competitive in the global economy.

Develop programs of financial deregulation to reduce costs in credit transactions and strengthen the institutional capacity of the financial sector servicing microenterprises and small businesses, and encourage the active participation by multilateral and bilateral agencies, development banks, commercial banks and other intermediary credit organizations, consistent with strict performance standards.

Strengthen the institutions and programs that supply services and facilitate access to training and technical assistance to make possible this sector's participation in the global economy through export of its products and services.

Encourage cooperation among businesses in this sector to enable them to benefit from the advantages of economies of scale without losing their distinctive characteristics.

Promote the strengthening of relations among the public, private and mixed (public/private) institutions that support the microenterprise and small business sector through programs of information, training, technical assistance, financing and association-building, enabling this sector to thrive over the long term.

Recommend to the multilateral development organizations, especially the World Bank and the IDB, the establishment or fortification of funds and other mechanisms to support microenterprises and small businesses.

20. White Helmets--Emergency and Development Corps

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The "White Helmets Initiative" is based on the conviction that a concerted international effort of developing and developed countries can facilitate the eradication of poverty and strengthen the humanitarian rapid response capability of the international community to emergency humanitarian, social and developmental needs.

The countries of the Americas could pioneer this initiative through the creation of national corps of volunteers that could respond to calls from other countries in the region. These national corps could eventually be put at the disposal of the United Nations.

Governments will on a voluntary basis:

Establish, organize and finance a corps of volunteers to work at the national level and, at the same time, be at the disposal of other countries of the Hemisphere and, eventually, the United Nations system, on a stand-by basis, for prevention, relief, rehabilitation, technical, social and development cooperation, with the aim to reduce the effects of natural disasters, social and developmental needs and emergencies.

Through the creation of a national corps of volunteers, be responsible for the following:

Selection and training of its national volunteer corps;

Financing of its national corps of volunteers, encouraging the involvement of the private sector;

Preparedness to send specialized volunteers, on short notice and at the request of the United Nations, to cope with situations generated by or to prevent the effects of natural disasters and humanitarian emergencies.

Contribute to the formation of this corps and invite private enterprises, foundations and regional financial institutions to do so.

Contribute to the development of an international roster of volunteers to be maintained in a master plan in the United Nations to be drawn upon to complement the activities of existing UN mechanisms. The IDB, OAS, and PAHO should be invited to participate and assist in developing this corps.

IV. GUARANTEEING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND CONSERVING OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

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21. Partnership for Sustainable Energy Use

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Consistent with Agenda 21 and the Framework Convention on Climate Change, sustainable energy development and use promote economic development and address environmental concerns. Governments and the private sector should promote increased access to reliable, clean, and least cost energy services through activities and projects that meet economic, social, and environmental requirements within the context of national sustainable development goals and national legal frameworks.

Governments will:

Pursue, in accordance with national legislation, least cost national energy strategies that consider all options, including energy efficiency, non-conventional renewable energy (i.e., solar, wind, geothermal, small hydro, and biomass), and conventional energy resources.

Emphasize market-oriented pricing, which discourages wasteful energy use.

Identify for priority financing and development at least one economically viable project in each of the following areas: non-conventional renewable energy, energy efficiency, and clean conventional energy.

Promote, in cooperation with the private sector and rural and isolated communities, rural electrification programs which take into account where appropriate the utilization of renewable energy sources, in accordance with the domestic regulatory framework.

Seek to ratify and begin implementation of the provisions of the Framework Convention on Climate Change which entered into force on March 21, 1994.

Encourage the World Bank and IDB to increase promptly and substantially, as a portion of energy lending, financing of projects in energy efficiency and renewable energy and financing to improve the environmental sustainability of conventional energy sources, in accordance with economic rationality.

Call on the multilateral financial institutions and other public and private financial institutions to finance regional and national programs in support of this action plan, such as training and exchange programs as well as technology cooperation, in accordance with the needs and conditions of receiving countries.

Assist with coordination and technical cooperation between countries, using existing regional organizations, including project identification and implementation, training programs, and personnel and information exchanges to increase capacity.

Promote the identification and implementation of private sector projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Convene a Sustainable Energy Symposium in the first half of 1995 to discuss follow-up activities relative to this initiative. In the spirit of cooperation countries will share their experiences and discuss progress on implementing this action plan.

22. Partnership for Biodiversity

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Our Hemisphere contains over half the world's biodiversity. To sustain the Hemisphere's social and economic development, we must intensify efforts to understand, assess, and sustainably use this living resource base. We must act now to increase the technical and management capacity and public awareness of national and international efforts in this area. Agenda 21, the Convention on Biological Diversity, and other related international instruments recognize these needs and call for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity resources.

Governments will:

Seek to ensure that strategies for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity are integrated into relevant economic development activities including forestry, agriculture, and coastal zone management, taking into account the social dimension and impact of these activities.

Develop and implement the policies, techniques, and programs to assess, conserve, and sustainably use terrestrial, marine, and coastal biodiversity resources.

Seek to ratify the Convention on Biological Diversity and pursue opportunities for collaboration under it, and, as appropriate, other international and regional environmental instruments.

Support democratic governmental mechanisms to engage public participation, particularly including members of indigenous communities and other affected groups, in the development of policy involving conservation and sustainable use of natural environments. The forms of this participation should be defined by each individual country.

Develop national plans and programs to establish and strengthen the management of parks and reserves, seeking links to economic, social, and ecological benefits for local people.

Build capacity for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, through programs on management of parks and protected areas, forests and wetlands management, the Small Islands Developing States Action Plan, the Coral Reef Initiative, CITES support projects, and the

Caribbean Regional Marine Pollution Action Plan, among others.

Launch a "Decade of Discovery" to promote hemispheric technical and scientific cooperation and to facilitate the exchange of information relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity.

Increase support of training and education initiatives addressing sustainable use of biodiversity resources and foster activities by universities, non-governmental actors and organizations and the private sector to assist in the training of managers and to empower local communities.

Call on multilateral financial institutions, including the IDB and the Global Environment Facility, to support eligible regional and national projects.

Discuss progress on implementation of national and international activities described above at the 1996 Summit Conference on Sustainable Development in Bolivia, and at subsequent annual sustainable development ministerials.

23. Partnership for Pollution Prevention

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As recognized in Agenda 21, sound environmental management is an essential element of sustainable development. Cooperative efforts are needed to develop or improve, in accordance with national legislation and relevant international instruments: (1) frameworks for environment protection; and (2) mechanisms for implementing and enforcing environmental regulations. To achieve this goal, a new partnership will promote cooperative activities for developing environmental policies, laws, and institutions; increasing technical capacity; promoting public awareness and public participation; continuing to pursue technological, financial and other forms of cooperation; and facilitating information exchange, including on environmentally sound technologies. The activities of the partnership will build on and advance the implementation of international agreements and principles including those agreed to at the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and the 1994 Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, in areas identified as priorities by countries of the Hemisphere.

Governments will:

Strengthen and build technical and institutional capacity to address environmental priorities such as pesticides, lead contamination, pollution prevention, risk reduction, waste and sanitation issues, improved water and air quality, access to safe drinking water, urban environmental problems, and to promote public participation and awareness.

Develop and implement national action plans to phase out lead in gasoline.

Strengthen national environmental protection frameworks and mechanisms for implementation and enforcement, and include sustainability criteria and objectives in national and other development strategies.

Undertake national consultations to identify priorities for possible international collaboration.

Support democratic governmental mechanisms to engage public participation, particularly from members of indigenous and other affected communities, in the consideration of policies regarding the environmental impact of development projects and the design and enforcement of environmental laws.

Convene a meeting of technical experts, designated by each interested country, to develop a framework for cooperative partnership, building on existing institutions and networks to identify priority projects. These projects will initially focus on (1) the health and environmental problems associated with the misuse of pesticides, and (2) the impacts of lead contamination from gasoline and other sources. Subsequent activities could address waste, air, water quality, marine pollution from ships and other sources, and problems associated with urbanization.

Promote the participation of organizations, such as the IDB, MIF, the World Bank, PAHO, the OAS, and non-governmental actors and organizations, as appropriate, to finance, develop and implement priority projects.

Develop environmental policies and laws with the goal of ensuring that economic integration of the region occurs in an environmentally sustainable manner.

Establish mechanisms for cooperation among government agencies, including in the legal and enforcement areas, to facilitate environmental information exchange, technology cooperation and capacity-building.

Develop compatible environmental laws and regulations, at high levels of environmental protection, and promote the implementation of international environmental agreements.

Discuss progress on implementation of international and national activities described above at the 1996 Summit Conference on Sustainable Development in Bolivia and at subsequent annual sustainable development ministerials.

Appendix

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The primary responsibility for implementing this Plan of Action falls to governments,

individually and collectively, with participation of all elements of our civil societies.

Existing organizations or institutions are called upon to implement the package of initiatives that has emerged from this Summit of the Americas. In many instances we have proposed that specific issues be examined by meetings of ministers, senior officials or experts. We are also proposing that some of these initiatives be carried out in partnerships between the public and private sector. Wanting to benefit from existing hemispheric mechanisms, and considering the various proposals included in this Plan of Action, we offer the following recommendations, which shall not impede any government from approaching other institutions not cited herein, as appropriate.

I. Principal Initiatives in Which International Organizations and Institutions Will Be Involved

A) The OAS will have a paramount role in following up on the various decisions of this Summit meeting. Regarding the Plan of Action, the OAS has a particularly important supporting role in connection with the following:

- Strengthening Democracy
- Promoting and Protecting Human Rights
- Combating Corruption
- Eliminating the Threat of National and International Terrorism
- Building Mutual Confidence
- Free Trade in the Americas
- Telecommunications and Information Infrastructure

The Action Plan also envisages roles for the OAS in the following areas:

- Promoting Cultural Values
- Combating the Problem of Illegal Drugs and Related Crimes
- Cooperation in Science and Technology
- Strengthening the Role of Women in Society
- Partnership for Pollution Prevention

B) We call on the Inter-American Development Bank to support the activities specified in this Plan of Action. The policies agreed in the recently completed augmentation of its capital and

replenishment of the Fund for Special Operations already move in the directions identified and should receive special emphasis. The IDB has a particularly important role in connection with the following:

- Universal Access to Education
- Equitable Access to Basic Health Services
- Encouraging Microenterprises and Small Businesses
- Partnership for Sustainable Energy Use
- Partnership for Biodiversity
- Partnership for Pollution Prevention

In addition, the Action Plan envisages roles for the IDB and its affiliates in the following areas:

- Promoting and Protecting Human Rights
- Invigorating Society/Community Participation
- Promoting Cultural Values
- Combating Corruption
- Combating the Problem of Illegal Drugs and Related Crimes
- Free Trade in the Americas
- Capital Markets Development and Liberalization
- Hemispheric Infrastructure
- Cooperation in Science and Technology
- White Helmets--Emergency and Development Corps

C) Other international organizations, notably ECLAC and PAHO in the Hemisphere, as well as the World Bank and all agencies of the UN system active in the Hemisphere, are called upon to assist in the implementation of the action items where appropriate.

II. High-Level Meetings

The following high level meetings and conferences are called for to carry out the mandates

emanating from the Summit:

- Summit Conference on Sustainable Development (Bolivia, 1996) with follow-on Annual Ministerials
- Ministerial Conference on Combating Money Laundering (preceded by working level meeting)
- Conference of Donors for Alternative Development Programs to Curb Narcotics Trafficking
- Global Counter-Narcotics Conference
- Special OAS Conference on Combating Terrorism
- Regional Conference on Confidence-Building Measures (Chile, 1995)
- Meetings of Ministers Responsible for Trade (June 1995, March 1996)
- Meeting of Committee on Hemispheric Financial Issues
- Hemispheric Meeting on Development of Energy Industries (first semester 1995)
- Meeting of Ministers Responsible for Science and Technology (1995)
- Meeting Between Governments and Donors/Technical Agencies to Establish Health Reform Mechanisms
- Sustainable Energy Symposium (first half of 1995)

III. Initiatives in Which Public and Private Sector Partnerships Play an Important Role

- Strengthening Democracy
- Promoting and Protecting Human Rights
- Invigorating Society/Community Participation
- Promoting Cultural Values
- Combating Corruption
- Hemispheric Infrastructure
- Cooperation in Science and Technology

- Universal Access to Education
- Equitable Access to Basic Health Services
- Encouraging Microenterprises and Small Businesses
- White Helmets--Emergency and Development Corps
- Partnership for Sustainable Energy Use
- Partnership for Biodiversity
- Partnership for Pollution Prevention

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