



## **Communique by the Heads of State and Government of the Group of Río**

The Heads of State and Government of the Group of Rio, gathered for the Latin-American and Caribbean Summit for Integration and Development, at Costa de Sauípe, Brazil, underscored the importance of their Group as a political-consultation and concerted decision-making mechanism among Latin-American and Caribbean countries, as well as a privileged regional counterpart to other countries and groups of countries.

At the same time, they reiterated their commitment to Latinamerican and Caribbean integration, to achieving a concerted political stance, and to promoting issues of common interest on the agendas of international organizations and fora, in order to strengthen the region's international presence and influence.

Within that context, they welcomed President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva's initiative to convene and host the Latin-American and Caribbean Summit for Integration and Development, which coincides with the goals and principles that the Group has adopted since its creation.

They emphasized that this Summit has been an appropriate occasion to discuss issues related to integration and development, in view of the challenges posed by the financial, energy and food crises and by climate change, and thus significantly contributes to building agreements and actions that benefit the development of our region.

They also stressed the importance of taking advantage of the capabilities of the Group of Rio to attain concerted agreements in order to strengthen efforts oriented towards articulating different integration mechanisms as well as fostering cooperation, convergence and exchange of experiences.

They expressed their satisfaction regarding the ongoing process to strengthen the Group of Rio, and declared that increasing its membership contributes to improving the quality of its representation and is an essential component of this process. In that regard, they officialized the admission and welcomed Cuba, which today participates for the first time in this Summit as a full member of our Group.

At the same time, they underscored their interest in continuing strengthening the dialogue and the strong ties of the Group of Rio with all members of the Caribbean Community, that participates in the Group represented by Jamaica, and reiterated their aspiration to decidedly move forward towards an organization that encompasses all Latin-American and Caribbean states.

Costa de Sauípe, Bahía, 16 December, 2008.

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