



XXVIII Meeting of Foreign Affairs Ministers of the Permanent Mechanism for Consultation and Political Coordination –Rio Group–

Joint Communiqué Montego Bay, Jamaica, November 5, 2009

The XXVIII Meeting of Foreign Affairs Ministers of the Permanent Mechanism for Consultation and Political Coordination – Rio Group- was held on November 5, 2009 in Montego Bay, thanks to the generous hospitality of the Government of Jamaica.

The meeting was presided over by Mexico's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Patricia Espinosa, acting as the Pro Tempore Secretariat, accompanied at the table by Chile's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mariano Fernández and the Dominican Republic's Undersecretary for Economic Affairs and Trade Negotiations, Juan Guilliani, both members of the Troika.

The Foreign Ministers approved by acclamation and welcomed Jamaica's participation as a full member of the Rio Group, simultaneously maintaining the representation of the Caribbean Community, which it originally held in 1989. The Rio Group extended an invitation to the Member States of the Caribbean Community and warmly welcomed the participation of the delegations of Barbados, Grenada, Saint Lucia, Saint Kitts and Nevis and Trinidad and Tobago.

In this context, they recognized that the increased participation of the Latin America and Caribbean Countries in the Rio Group enriches its diverse and plural nature and strengthens it as a fundamental instance of dialogue and coordination in our region.

The Foreign Ministers received the Pro Tempore Secretariat's Exercise Report which, a result of the joint effort along 20 months, has obtained significant achievements which reflect in the projection of the voice and presence in the region, with renewed authority, and in the intensity of the regional political dialogue and in the exchange with other actors of the international community.

Particularly, they confirmed the dynamism of the consultation process which the Rio Group has instituted to issue statements on those events of international and regional impact, in such a way that 46 declarations have been agreed in the period, among which stand out those related to situations which have threatened the stability, democratic values of the constitutional order in different latitudes, the systematic condemn against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and the solidarity with the people and countries which have suffered serious natural disasters.

The Ministers underscored that in fulfillment of the objectives of the Rio Group, it should devote its highest attention to the effects of climate change. They urged the international community towards implementing adaptation and mitigation measures and to promote, and achieve a successful conclusion of the 2009 Climate Change conference in Copenhagen, on the basis of the principle of shared and differentiated responsibility.

Consequently, they called on the government of the United States of America to, in fulfillment of the successive agreements approved by the United Nations General Assembly, put an end to the economic trade and financial embargo against Cuba which goes against international law, is severely and unjustifiably damaging to the well being of the Cuban people and affects the peace and co-existence among the nations of the Americas.

We reiterate the most vigorous rejection of the application of laws and measures contrary to international law such as the Helms-Burton Law and we appeal to the government of the United States to put an end to the application of this law.

Upon agreeing that the Rio Group has consolidated as a fundamental mechanism for dialogue and coordination among the Latin America and the Caribbean Countries, they pointed out that its heritage and diplomatic tradition significantly contribute towards the regional abilities to decisively promote unity, political coordination, cooperation, development, solidarity and integration among our countries.

The Ministers noted that to move forward in these purposes, it is essential, to constitute a space of concertation and convergence of the entire region. To this avail, the Ministers agreed to add efforts in order to ensure the success of the XXI Meeting of Chiefs of State and Government to be held in February 2010 in Cancun.

Before the reprehensible events which have taken place in the Republic of Honduras, the Foreign Ministers recalled that on June 29, a day after the Coup d'état, the Presidents gathered in Managua in the Mechanism's Second Extraordinary Summit and issued a statement in favor of the restoration of the constitutional order, the Rule of Law and the authorities legally constituted in the sister Republic of Honduras.

The Foreign Ministers, in ratifying their New York Declaration dated from September 22, reiterated their call for the immediate and (unconditional) restitution of President José Manuel Zelaya who was legitimately elected at the polls and issued a vigorous appeal to cease the harassment to Brazil's Diplomatic Mission in Tegucigalpa, and that its inviolability be guaranteed in strict compliance with the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations.

In light of this debate on the crisis in Honduras, the Foreign Ministers reaffirm that democracy is the best instrument to approach and look for a solution for the big national problems and to contribute towards a stable, just and equitable international order.

They confirmed the essential role played that in the integration of the basic principles and values of the Mechanism has the preservation of democracy and the democratic values, the validity of the institutions and the Rule of Law, the commitment with respect and the full effect of the human rights in the integration of the basis consensus of the Mechanism and all of which constitute basic objectives of the Rio Group.

Convinced that democracy is one of our region's most valued conquests, they stated that the peaceful power transmission through institutional means and with strict compliance to the constitutional rules in each of our States is the product of a continuous and irreversible process on which the region admits no interruptions or stepping backward.

At the same time, the Ministers considered that, in order that democracy and economic and social development are protected with force and vigor in the future, they need to respond to the challenge of eradicating poverty, generating decent and dignified work and to construct more equitable, just, inclusive and unified societies with social cohesion and justice, and equality of opportunities.

The Ministers repeated their full support for the principles of international law and in particular those contained in the United Nations Charter. They vigorously rejected the threat and use of force, among states, and non-intervention in the affairs and unilateral coercive economic measures. They underscored their full commitment to the independence of the Latin American and Caribbean nations, and with respect for their sovereign rights.

Finally, the Ministers referred to the commemorations of the bicentennial of national independence as an occasion for projecting ourselves as a democratic, and developed region, respectful and deeply committed to defending human rights, multilateralism, peace and justice.