

DECLARATIONS AND RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

(Provisional version pending to be revised by the Style Committee)

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AG/DEC. 52 (XXXVII O/07)

DECLARATION OF PANAMA:
ENERGY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

(Adopted at the fourth plenary session, held on June 5, 2007)

THE MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND HEADS OF DELEGATION OF THE MEMBER STATES OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES (OAS), meeting in Panama City, Panama, during the thirty-seventh regular session of the General Assembly,

REAFFIRMING the principles and purposes of the OAS Charter, of the people of the Americas, as well as the sovereign right of our countries to the conservation, development, and sustainable use of their energy resources;

REAFFIRMING our commitments under the OAS Charter and to the principles enshrined in the Inter-American Democratic Charter;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT that the Inter-American Democratic Charter states that the exercise of democracy promotes the preservation and good stewardship of the environment, and that it is essential that the states of the Hemisphere implement policies and strategies to protect the environment, to achieve sustainable development for the benefit of future generations;

RECOGNIZING that energy is an essential resource for sustainable development of peoples, and that access to energy that is diverse, reliable, secure, and affordable is of paramount importance to economic growth with equity and social inclusion, and contributes to poverty eradication;

AWARE that economic and social development and environmental conservation are complementary, and that they are among the essential goals of the OAS member states;

RECALLING that the Vienna Declaration and Program of Action of the World Conference on Human Rights reaffirmed, in paragraph 10, the right to development;

RECOGNIZING the different existing energy cooperation and integration initiatives in the region, based on solidarity and complementarity;

RECOGNIZING the importance of generating and strengthening regional markets for the use of cleaner and renewable energy, and of the exchange of information and experiences by member states on the matter;

RECOGNIZING the adverse effects and challenges of climate change and, accordingly, aware:

- Of the need to promote clean energy through research, development, and the transfer of environmentally sound technology, and international partnerships and/or agreements;
- Of the need to enhance energy efficiency and conservation in the Hemisphere and to promote sustainable patterns of production and consumption; and
- That the transition to a sustainable development model, based on the generation and efficient use of renewable forms of energy and balanced patterns of consumption will require the implementation of a set of progressive measures and, in that context, that it is important to continue promoting, through the use of cleaner and innovative technologies a better use of fossil fuels in relation to the environment, given their continued predominant role in the energy matrix;

NOTING that cooperation, partnerships, and/or agreements between the public and private sectors and other sectors of society, in accordance with national law, may help promote the Hemisphere's energy agenda;

RECOGNIZING that energy sector enterprises should assume and/or deepen social responsibility for the benefit of community development and conservation of the environment;

BEARING in mind that the Fourth Summit of the Americas recommends "favor[ing] the research, development, and adoption of renewable and efficient energy sources and the deployment of technology for cleaner and more efficient energy sources, including among them, those that foster the intensive use of labor, which, together with the promotion of sustainable development, and addressing climate change concerns, permit the reduction of poverty;"

UNDERSCORING the relationship between access to energy and the eradication of poverty to achieve the Millennium Development Goals;

BEARING IN MIND ALSO resolution AG/RES. 2253 (XXXVI-O/06), "Support for the Use of New and Renewable Energy Sources;"

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the policies and programs promoted by the member states to encourage the use of new and renewable energy sources for sustainable development, such as solar, biomass, including biofuels, wind, tidal, hydroelectric, minihydraulic, and geothermal, and recognizing also the contributions of regional initiatives in the area of energy cooperation;

EMPHASIZING that energy is fundamental to achieving sustainable development objectives and that therefore, the combination and complementarity of use of all types of energy sources, including a cleaner use of fossil fuels, contributes to the attainment of those objectives;

CONSIDERING that the hydro-resources in the region, *inter alia*, represent an important source for the generation of renewable energy;

BEARING IN MIND that the Declaration of Santa Cruz +10 promotes the strengthening of regional and sub-regional cooperation on sustainable development, particularly regarding environmental education and awareness, the training and enhancement of human resources, and the creation and strengthening of networks and other cooperation mechanisms; and

CONSIDERING that the Inter-American Program for Sustainable Development (2006-2009) (PIDS) refers to, among its areas of action, the development of programs for the promotion of renewable energy and energy efficiency,

DECLARE:

1. Their recognition of the fundamental importance to the member states of the availability of energy resources for the promotion of their economic and social development in an environmentally sustainable manner.

2. Their recognition of the need to obtain and use all forms of energy that are in harmony with life and nature, preserving air, water, and land which provide indispensable food and habitat for all living beings, and to foster access for the more vulnerable populations, consistent with social and environmental sensitivity.

3. Their resolve to underscore that democratic governance, strong democratic institutions, the rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms are essential elements in advancing the energy and sustainable development goals of member states and the region, combating social exclusion, and advancing the public good.

4. Their recognition of the importance of transparency in energy related government and private sector activities, as well as underscoring the importance of the Inter-American Convention against Corruption to the states of the Hemisphere and its follow-up mechanism (MESICIC).

5. Their recognition also that the region must endeavor to reduce its vulnerability to fluctuations in the price and supply of energy and seek to increase its energy independence through measures such as, the diversification of the energy matrix, favoring an increase in the sustainable use of renewable and cleaner energy or other modalities, as appropriate, in accordance with each country's legislation, improving energy efficiency in general in all sectors of the economy, and to increase their coverage of energy services for social development purposes.

6. Their need to recognize the potential of biofuels for diversifying the energy matrix of the Hemisphere. Accordingly, they will join efforts to share experiences gained in the region, with a view to achieving maximum efficiency in the sustainable use of those sources to promote social, technological, agricultural, and productive development.

7. Their emphasis on the long-term sustainability of energy supply in the member states depends on the efficient management and development and sustainable use of natural resources for conversion into innovative and environmentally sound energy applications.

8. Their recognition of the importance of ensuring compatibility among the production of all energy sources, agricultural production, preservation of the environment, and the promotion and defense of decent social and labor conditions, ensuring the role of the Americas as an efficient energy producer.

9. Their resolve to develop and invest in national, subregional, and regional energy infrastructures to facilitate the availability of and access to energy, as well as to protect them and to move toward subregional and regional energy integration. To these ends, we emphasize the advisability, in accordance with national law of public-private partnerships and/or agreements, giving priority to those favoring our sustainable development.

10. Their support for the efforts toward the sustainable development of the member states, through use of energy strategies and services recommended in this Declaration that can promote the generation of productive activities and the introduction of new environmentally sound technologies in matters that concern energy.

11. Their recognition of the need to strengthen economic and technical cooperation at the regional and international levels in the energy sector.

12. Their resolve to joining forces in the implementation of energy policies in the Hemisphere to develop projects and initiatives based on solidarity, transparency, cooperation, and complementarity, to promote more prosperous, just, equitable and inclusive societies.

13. Their support for energy integration efforts, including existing experiences, and continued progress in the integration of energy systems and networks, and in the study of the possibility of harmonizing regulations among member states, in order to promote sustainable development and the more efficient and rational use of energy resources and increased marketing of energy products and services among such states.

14. Their determination to increase access by citizens of the member states to efficient energy services; and to emphasize that the use of energy for household purposes and for small scale productive activities contributes to improving living conditions and fighting poverty.

15. Their recognition of the need for member states to draw upon their experiences and those of multilateral organizations, *inter alia*, to promote synergy among specific programs on the use of energy for sustainable development and to study possible innovative funding and cooperation mechanisms.

16. Their recognition of the importance of multilateral lending and cooperation agencies for promoting new and innovative financing mechanisms and advisory services aimed at fostering renewable energy and access to new cleaner technologies as well as the more efficient use of existing programs and the use of special funds created with voluntary contributions from donor.

17. Their recognition also of the efforts of those countries that, based on the implementation of new financing modalities, promote sustainable development, the use of renewable energy, cleaner energy, and environmental protection, in particular, for those areas that are rich in biodiversity.

18. Their recognition also of the contribution of private-sector participation, in accordance with national laws and policies, in the development of traditional and new energy sources and in the installation of national and international distribution systems and networks.

19. Their recognition of the urgent need to take measures, mostly in the transportation and industry sectors, for the use of more efficient and cleaner technologies, the better use of existing technologies, and the use of less polluting fuels, bearing in mind also the need to promote the participation of micro-, and medium-sized enterprises, including cooperatives and other production units to contribute to this effort.

20. Their recognition of the importance of promoting the development of cleaner and more efficient technologies conducive to the greater use of renewable and less polluting energy in public and private transportation, as well as to promote an expanded use of public transportation with said technology, both to increase the efficient use of energy and to reduce its environmental impact.

21. Their commitment to encourage the input of financial resources, including those of the private sector, with the aim of promoting the dissemination and transfer of environmentally sustainable technologies, and capacity-building.

22. Their encouragement of an efficient energy resource management that reflects what is required for achieving sustainable development in all the member states, taking into consideration national circumstances.

23. Their request to the General Secretariat, in coordination with other institutions and experts, to:

- continue to promote instructional and training programs for relevant actors in the public and private energy sectors and taking into account the possibilities offered by the Scholarships and Training Program of the OAS and other possible funding sources;
- maintain, update, and distribute a registry of specialists of the member states who, at the request of the countries of the region, can offer cooperation on energy matters; and
- support regional dialogue for the creation and strengthening of markets and the promotion of energy efficiency and conservation for sustainable development.

24. Their request to the Permanent Council and the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI) to convene an inter-American meeting of national authorities and experts, with the participation of other relevant institutions before the General Assembly in 2008, for the discussion of experiences, best practices, and other information relating to the subject of this Declaration that will contribute to the sustainable development of all countries in the Hemisphere, and to create a Joint Working Group of the Permanent Council and CIDI to define the meeting's agenda.

25. Their request to the General Secretariat of the OAS, to promote the support and synergy of States, international organizations, civil society, the private sector, and the academic community, to promote the contents of this Declaration of Panama, and to report on a regular basis to the Permanent Council and to the Inter-American Council for Integral Development.

26. Their appreciation to the people and Government of the Republic of Panama for their warm hospitality during the thirty-seventh regular session of the OAS General Assembly.

AG/DEC. 55 (XXXVII O/07)

DECLARATION COORDINATION OF VOLUNTEERS IN THE HEMISPHERE IN
RESPONSE TO NATURAL DISASTERS AND THE FIGHT AGAINST HUNGER AND
POVERTY – WHITE HELMETS INITIATIVE

(Adopted at the fourth plenary session, held on June 5, 2007)

THE MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND HEADS OF DELEGATION OF THE MEMBER STATES OF THE ORGANIZATION OF MEMBER STATES, GATHERED IN PANAMA ON THE OCCASION OF THE THIRTY-SEVENTH REGULAR SESSION OF THE OAS GENERAL ASSEMBLY,

UNDERSCORING the importance that the international community attaches to the development of effective national, regional, subregional, and international mechanisms for dealing with natural disasters, as well as the need for proper coordination to ensure timely and appropriate responses across crises;

RECOGNIZING that the development of the White Helmets Initiative contributes to efforts to alleviate critical situations of hunger and poverty in the Hemisphere, [Canada:], and has assisted populations afflicted by natural and other disasters, by promoting an effective and appropriate transition from emergency aid to recovery, reconstruction, and development;

TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION resolutions AG/RES. 1351 (XXV-O/95), AG/RES. 1403 (XXVI-O/96), AG/RES. 1463 (XXVII-O/97), and AG/RES. 2018 (XXXIV-O/04), AG/RES. 2165 (XXXVI-O/06) and declaration AG/DEC. 45 (XXXV-O/05);

RECALLING that, in the Declaration of Mar del Plata of the Fourth Summit of the Americas (Argentina, November 2005), the Heads of State and Government reaffirmed their commitment to fight poverty, inequality, hunger, and social exclusion; noted with concern the increased intensity of natural and man-made disasters and their devastating impact on human lives, infrastructure, and economies in the Hemisphere; and called for action at the national, regional, and international levels to strengthen disaster management programs;

BEARING IN MIND United Nations General Assembly resolutions A/RES/46/182, "Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance of the United Nations," including the Guiding Principles contained in its annexes, and A/RES/61/220, "Participation of volunteers, "White Helmets", in the activities of the United Nations in the field of humanitarian relief, rehabilitation and technical cooperation for development";

APPRECIATING the establishment and consolidation of the Regional Humanitarian Volunteer Corps Network, with the participation of Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uruguay, and the interest shown by other member states in joining this regional initiative;

UNDERSCORING that the Special White Helmets Fund is in a position to receive voluntary contributions by member states, permanent observers, the international community, and multilateral

organizations, as well as from private sources and individuals that express interest in the White Helmets initiative and its activities;

UNDERSCORING ALSO that, in 2006, the OAS/IDB/WH Program executed humanitarian assistance projects in Ecuador, Honduras, Jamaica, Paraguay, and Uruguay within the framework of the Third Call, and, in Guatemala and Trinidad and Tobago, organized technical assistance workshops to promote the establishment of national humanitarian volunteer corps and their coordination in the Hemisphere;

NOTING that in the second half of 2007 the OAS/IDB/WH Program plans to carry out activities in Bolivia, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Trinidad and Tobago, as well as in the Belize-Guatemala Adjacency Zone;

CONCERNED by the fact that disasters have repeatedly overwhelmed national capacities and have, on occasion, severely strained existing regional and international coordination mechanisms;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the incorporation of the White Helmets Initiative and the Regional Humanitarian Volunteer Corps Network in the Inter-American Network for Disaster Mitigation and the Inter-American Committee on Natural Disaster Reduction (IACNDR) of the OAS; and

CELEBRATING the interest shown by the White Helmets Initiative and the World Food Programme (WFP) in joining forces to enhance food and nutritional security in the Hemisphere, through cooperation agreements, such as the General Cooperation Agreement between the OAS General Secretariat (GS/OAS) and the WFP and the cooperation agreements between the White Helmets of Argentina and the Regional Headquarters of the WFP in Panama and its subsidiary headquarters in Guatemala and Bolivia,

DECLARE:

1. Their continued support for the White Helmets Initiative as a hemispheric mechanism providing human and technical resources for dealing with humanitarian, social, and developmental emergencies in the region, as well as for providing and facilitating effective responses to disaster situations.

2. Their recognition of the work done in the framework of the OAS/IDB/White Helmets Program and in the strengthening of the Regional Humanitarian Volunteer Corps Network with technical assistance projects, missions, and workshops.

3. Their satisfaction at the decision taken by the White Helmets of Argentina to join forces with those of the OAS and the WFP in order to engage in joint activities in support of the most vulnerable sectors and their support for strong cooperation and coordination between the White Helmets and existing UN mechanisms and processes.

4. The need to continue making progress with the development of international programs aimed at reducing hunger and poverty and mitigating the effects of disasters, including the

cooperation of the White Helmets Initiative and the Regional Humanitarian Volunteer Corps Network.

AG/RES. 2312 (XXXVII O/07)

REPORT OF THE FIRST INTER-AMERICAN MEETING OF MINISTERS AND
HIGH-LEVEL AUTHORITIES ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

(Adopted at the fourth plenary session, held on June 5, 2007)

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY,

HAVING SEEN resolutions AG/RES. 2211 (XXXVI-O/06), and CIDI/RES. 187 (XI-O/06), “First Inter-American Meeting of Ministers and High-Level Authorities on Sustainable Development in the framework of CIDI,” and CIDI/RES. 199 (XII-O/07), “Report on the First Inter-American Meeting of Ministers and High-Level Authorities on Sustainable Development in the framework of CIDI;”

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT that in the Declaration of the Fourth Summit of the Americas, held in Mar del Plata, the Heads of State and Government underlined the importance of holding, in the OAS framework, the First Meeting of Ministers and High Authorities on Sustainable Development in the framework of CIDI, encouraged the participation of member states, and called upon the OAS to support the preparatory work necessary to make that meeting a success;

CONSIDERING:

That the First Inter-American Meeting of Ministers and High-Level Authorities on Sustainable Development was held in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, on December 4-5, 2006, with the technical support of the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development (SEDI);

That after a fruitful dialogue, the Ministers and High-Level Authorities on Sustainable Development adopted the Declaration of Santa Cruz + 10 and the Inter-American Program for Sustainable Development 2006-2009 (PIDS); and

HAVING SEEN the report of the First Inter-American Meeting of Ministers and High-Level Authorities on Sustainable Development (CIDI/RIMDS/doc.23/07),

RESOLVES:

1. To thank the Government of Bolivia for hosting the First Inter-American Meeting of Ministers and High-Level Authorities on Sustainable Development on the tenth anniversary of the Summit of the Americas on Sustainable Development, which was also held in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia.

2. To endorse the “Declaration of Santa Cruz + 10” and the “Inter-American Program for Sustainable Development 2006-2009 (PIDS),” which are an integral part of this resolution.

3. To urge the Ministers and High-Level Authorities on Sustainable Development to continue contributing to the achievement of the objectives set forth in the Declaration of Santa Cruz + 10 and to implementation of the Inter-American Program for Sustainable Development 2006-2009 (PIDS).

4. To instruct the General Secretariat, through the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development (SEDI), to collaborate with authorities in the sustainable development sector in implementing the actions and agreements adopted during the First Inter-American Meeting of Ministers and High-Level Authorities on Sustainable Development and to periodically report on this process to the Permanent Executive Committee of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CEPCIDI).

DECLARATION OF SANTA CRUZ + 10

(Adopted at the fourth plenary session held on December 5, 2006)

1. We, the Ministers and High-Level Authorities responsible for the Sustainable Development of the Americas, gathered in the city of Santa Cruz de la Sierra, reaffirm our commitment to advance the objectives of sustainable development, as set out in the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 (Agenda 21 and Declaration of Rio de Janeiro on Environment and Development); the Summit of the Americas on Sustainable Development, held in Santa Cruz de la Sierra in 1996 (Declaration and its Plan of Action); the 2000 United Nations Millennium Summit and its Millennium Development Goals; the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg in 2002 (Declaration and its Plan of Implementation), among others.

2. We reiterate that human beings are at the center of concerns for sustainable development, that they are entitled to a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature, and that poverty alleviation is an integral part of sustainable development.

3. We acknowledge that the vulnerability of small island developing states in the Hemisphere continues to be a major challenge to their sustainable development, among other factors.

CONSIDERING:

4. That the eradication of poverty is a fundamental goal of sustainable development.

5. That combating poverty and reducing inequities are fundamental challenges faced by the Hemisphere today.

6. That the achievement of development goals agreed upon internationally, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, requires a new partnership between developed and developing countries to support national efforts to achieve sustainable development, including sound policies, good governance at all levels, and the rule of law.

7. That we recognize that the needs and responsibilities facing the countries of the Hemisphere today are diverse. Sustainable development does not assume that all the countries are at the same level of development, have the same capabilities, or can necessarily use the same model to attain it. In view of their different contributions to global environmental degradation, states have common but differentiated responsibilities in the global quest for sustainable development. We should make efforts to ensure that the benefits of sustainable development reach all countries in the Hemisphere, in particular those that are less developed, and all segments of our populations. We will give special attention to the small island states, whose environmental vulnerability, especially with regard to natural disasters, is greater owing to their geographic situation, their size, and the scale of their economies, among other factors.

8. That water is fundamental for life and basic for socio-economic development and the conservation of ecosystems, and that, in this regard, its sustainable management must be promoted

with a view to ensuring access to water for present and future generations, taking into account internationally-agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration.

9. That the impacts of natural disasters are devastating and negatively affect the quality of life of affected communities, and the development of all countries of the Hemisphere. That preventive and risk-mitigation measures can increase the resilience and reduce the vulnerability of communities.

10. That climate variability, including El Niño and La Niña phenomena, and the adverse effects of climate change represent an increased risk to all countries in the Hemisphere, in particular developing countries.

11. That sustainable management of the agricultural, forest, and tourism sectors can enhance the capacity of those sectors to provide important economic, social, and environmental benefits that support the livelihood of families and local communities, including indigenous peoples.

12. That the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity benefit from, among others factors, the promotion of sustainable approaches to the agriculture, forest and tourism sectors and that the unsustainable use of natural resources generates a loss in biodiversity.

13. That protected areas, as well as the sustainable interaction of local communities, including indigenous peoples, with biodiversity, play an important role in the conservation of biodiversity.

14. That the economic, social, and environmental benefits resulting from the sustainable management of natural resources, including those arising from the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources can contribute to poverty alleviation, the reduction of inequities and the promotion of equal opportunity in all countries. That regional integration, at the hemispheric, regional, sub-regional and bilateral levels, including trade agreements, has the potential to contribute to sustainable development.

15. That the results of the technical preparatory workshops, held in 2005-2006 and hosted by the Governments of Costa Rica, Jamaica, and Ecuador, and of the workshops with civil society, including indigenous peoples, held in Argentina, Bolivia, the United States, Panama, and Trinidad and Tobago, as well as the virtual forum, have provided valuable input to this Declaration.

DECLARE THAT:

16. We reiterate the commitments assumed in the Rio de Janeiro and Santa Cruz de la Sierra Summits, the Monterrey Consensus, from the International Conference on Financing for Development, the Johannesburg Summit, in particular Chapter X of its Plan of Implementation, and the Mauritius Summit, in relation to: the mobilization of financial and development resources; the transfer of environmentally sound, efficient, and effective technologies; and capacity-building to advance the process of sustainable development, including the objective of poverty eradication.

17. We recognize, value, and respect the participation of indigenous peoples and local communities in the sustainable management of natural resources.

18. We will promote, within the framework of the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources, broad public participation, including representation from the diverse sectors of society, public access to environmental information on a nondiscriminatory basis with regard to gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, political, religious, or other opinion, as well as institutional transparency and the achievement of conditions that favor social development and democracy.

19. We reaffirm our commitment to promote and strengthen policies, laws and regional cooperation and integration mechanisms that advance public participation and democratic governance as important elements of sustainable development. We will promote institutional transparency, gender equity, and equal opportunities for all vulnerable groups.

I. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

20. We recognize that water is a limited natural resource essential for life, and that access to clean water and to sanitation services is indispensable to health and human dignity, as well as to sustainable development.

21. We reaffirm our commitment to strengthen institutional capacities, and to promote cooperation and dialogue among States to support integrated water resources management consistent with domestic law and relevant international law.

22. We recognize the urgent need to evaluate the effects of climate variability and climate change on water resources, as well as to strengthen early-warning capacities for extreme climatic events.

23. We recognize the importance of dialogue and regional cooperation to improve water-quality and quantity monitoring networks in order to promote and protect human health and the environment.

II. DISASTERS

24. We reaffirm our commitment to build upon relevant international commitments and frameworks, including through the development, implementation, and integration of disaster preparedness and management into sustainable development policies, planning, and programming at all levels.

25. We affirm our commitment to strengthening public policies and strategies that reduce the risks of natural disasters through an integrated approach.

26. We underscore the importance of promoting public-private sector partnerships, to help provide reasonable levels of safety, and to strengthen the monitoring and enforcement of appropriate safety standards.

27. We recognize the Inter-American Committee on Natural Disaster Reduction and the Inter-American Strategic Plan for Policy on Vulnerability Reduction, Risk Management and Disaster Response as mechanisms for regional cooperation.

III. SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT, SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

28. We recognize the importance of developing and implementing national forest programs, policies and strategies, as appropriate, that strengthen the capacity of countries to address illegal practices in the forest sector, through the promotion of forest law enforcement, and governance at the national and sub-national levels, and regional and sub-regional levels, as appropriate.

29. We affirm the need to advance policies and initiatives that support sustainable tourism, including the exchange of information, the promotion of educational and awareness programs regarding the conservation of natural and cultural patrimonies, micro-financing opportunities for small-scale enterprises, and other mechanisms.

30. We recognize, in the framework of domestic legislations, that the development and implementation of strategies for managing protected areas as well as their buffer zones and conservation corridors should take into account the active participation of all stakeholders, particularly local communities, including indigenous peoples, in the local socio-political and cultural context.

RESOLVE:

INITIATIVES FOR ACTION

31. To entrust the General Secretariat of the OAS, within the framework of its mandates, and in coordination with other entities and international organizations, with promoting the mobilization of resources and technical assistance, for the implementation of agreed regional and sub-regional programs and projects on sustainable development, including the objective of poverty eradication.

I. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

32. To strive to increase access to clean drinking water and sanitation services for all peoples within the jurisdiction of each member state, on the basis of non-discrimination, solidarity and environmental sustainability.

33. To promote, as appropriate and with the consent of the involved states, the undertaking of studies, plans, programs, projects and joint actions for the protection and sustainable use of surface and ground water resources, wetland ecosystems and associated biodiversity. To this end, existing cooperation mechanisms, at the bilateral, sub-regional and regional levels, will be strengthened, fostering the exchange of information and experiences and the coordination of actions.

34. To advance integrated water resources management, strengthening good governance through, *inter alia*, public participation, institutional transparency, and access to environmental information.

II. DISASTERS

35. To promote initiatives taking into account existing mechanisms that seek to prevent, mitigate, prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters, through regional co-operation, as well as policy and strategy coordination on this matter. Moreover, to promote regional and sub-regional cooperation for the development of people-centered early-warning systems against disasters, thereby contributing to the prevention of negative impacts on vulnerable populations.

36. To strengthen national initiatives and institutions in disaster reduction planning, the adoption and enforcement of construction, rehabilitation and reconstruction practices that increase the resilience of communities and economic sectors to natural disaster impacts. To develop and implement an integrated approach to disaster risk reduction, including hazard mapping, early-warning systems, and sanitation and infrastructure programs.

37. To promote and to strengthen the inclusion of disaster management in development planning processes.

38. To continue with the exchange of information and experience regarding the mapping of risk zones, people-centered early-warning systems, and other technical aspects of risk reduction through the Inter-American Network for Disaster Mitigation, and other mechanisms and initiatives.

39. Enhance the exchange of information and experiences regarding the necessary adjustments to reduce the negative impacts of natural disasters, climate variability, and climate change.

III. SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT, SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

40. To support sustainable agricultural practices and innovations and recognize that they may be enriched by indigenous knowledge and environmentally appropriate technologies.

41. To promote greater coordination among the sustainable agriculture, sustainable forest management and sustainable tourism sectors, through the development of policies that consider *in situ* conservation and integrated land management.

42. To formulate public policies consistent with relevant international commitments regarding the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources, including by appropriate access to genetic resources, and by appropriate transfer of relevant technologies, taking into account all rights over those resources and to those technologies, and by appropriate funding.

43. To recognize and value the importance of traditional knowledge and its potential contribution to sustainable development.

44. To strengthen efforts at the national level towards the protection of ecosystems and the services they provide and the valuation of their contribution to sustainable agriculture, sustainable forest management and sustainable tourism, and to facilitate the regional exchange of information, experiences and lessons learned.

45. To facilitate access by local actors in member countries to micro-finance credit systems and other innovative financing systems, such as payment for benefits provided by ecosystems and other initiatives that promote conservation and the sustainable use of natural resources. Likewise, to promote support for research, technical assistance, and access to modern and environmentally sound technology.

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

46. We recognize that democratic governance is a key factor for sustainable development in our Hemisphere. We reaffirm that each country has primary responsibility for its own sustainable development through promotion of good governance at all levels, respect for the rule of law, and effective law enforcement. In undertaking to promote sustainable development within our countries, we acknowledge the fundamental importance of democratic principles and institutions, and transparency.

47. We also recognize that environmental issues are best handled with the participation of all concerned citizens, at the relevant level. At the national level, each individual shall have appropriate access to information concerning the environment that is held by public authorities, including information on hazardous materials and activities in their communities, and the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes. States shall facilitate and encourage public awareness and participation by making information widely available. Effective access to judicial and administrative proceedings, including redress and remedy, shall be provided.

48. We call upon the international community to support national development efforts through mobilization of resources, technical assistance, institutional strengthening, and technology transfer.

49. We will promote national institutional capacity building and the strengthening of national environmental laws to ensure their effective enforcement.

50. We will promote environmental impact assessments in accordance with national law.

51. We will strengthen regional and sub-regional cooperation on sustainable development, particularly regarding environmental education and awareness, the training and enhancement of human resources, and the creation and strengthening of networks and other cooperation mechanisms.

52. We adopt the Inter-American Program for Sustainable Development (PIDS 2006-2009).

53. We will promote the implementation of the Inter-American Program for Sustainable Development in collaboration, as appropriate, with civil society, the private sector and international financial institutions.

54. We entrust the Inter-American Committee on Sustainable Development, in collaboration with other pertinent bodies with coordinating, monitoring, and supporting the implementation of the Inter-American Program for Sustainable Development.

INTER-AMERICAN PROGRAM FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (2006 – 2009)

(Adopted at the Fourth Plenary Session held on December 5, 2006)

I. BACKGROUND

The member states of the OAS recognize that sustainable development requires an integral approach involving economic, social and environmental elements moving in tandem to support development, to reduce poverty and to promote equality, equity, and social inclusion.

OAS member states have defined and reiterated their support for sustainable development in a number of meetings, declarations, and resolutions. In particular, Declarations and Plans of Action have defined the role of sustainable development and the environment in contributing to economic, social, educational, and cultural development.

A number of resolutions adopted since the Summit of the Americas on Sustainable Development, held in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia in 1996, have reiterated the support of OAS member states to the objective of sustainable development.

The Strategic Plan for Partnership for Development 2006-2009, approved by the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI) at its eleventh regular meeting in 2006 (CIDI/RES. 178 (XI-O/06), and adopted by the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth regular session in 2006 (resolution AG/RES. 2201 (XXXVI-O/06) establishes sustainable development and the environment as a priority area of CIDI activity. The Strategic Plan emphasizes, *inter alia*, within that priority area, the importance of:

- Supporting member states in their efforts to integrate environmental protection within policies, regulations, and projects on natural resource management;
- Strengthening the capability of member states to identify and mitigate the risks of natural and man-made disasters, in order to mainstream planning of both areas within economic development policies, working at the sector-specific levels with the private sector and civil society;
- Supporting public-private collaboration in human resource capacity-building in the sharing of scientific information, best environmental management practices, regulatory standards, and enforcement issues, and encouraging the use of information and communication technologies in support of sustainable development;
- Promoting the development of sustainable energy policies and projects, in cooperation with the private sector, in order to expand renewable energy, energy efficiency, and energy security in the region;
- Ensuring that sustainable development policies and projects help reduce poverty, particularly in rural areas, identify and support new competitive and investment opportunities, and create and sustain jobs and livelihoods.

The Declaration and Plan of Action -- adopted at the Summit of the Americas on Sustainable Development, held in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia in 1996 -- reaffirm that human beings are entitled to live a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature.

The Inter-American Program to Combat Poverty and Discrimination (adopted in 1997) outlines actions and policies with respect to social development, emphasizing that social and economic development are part of the same process. Accordingly, OAS member states are committed to promoting human rights, and supporting the exchange of information on such issues, *inter alia*, as modernizing public institutions and social management; strengthening mechanisms for participation of civil society; and promoting and financing social investment.

The Third Summit of the Americas – held in Quebec City, Canada, in 2001 – reaffirmed the commitment of the member states to strengthen environmental protection and sustainable use of natural resources, and focused on several priority areas, including: disaster management; vulnerability assessments of Small Island Developing States; agricultural management and rural development; efficient transportation systems; energy; natural resources management and biodiversity protection; health; hemispheric security; and integrated water resource management.

Member states have reiterated their support for sustainable development in several declarations and resolutions. For example, the Inter-American Democratic Charter -- adopted in Lima, Peru, in September 2001 –establishes values and principles of liberty, equality, and social justice, and recognizes that democracy promotes the preservation and good stewardship of the environment. Article 15 of the Charter encourages member states to implement policies of environmental protection, including application of various treaties and conventions, to achieve sustainable development for the benefit of future generations.

The Hemisphere is facing important challenges related to the management of the environment at national and regional levels to achieve sustainable levels of social and economic development. Since 1992, a number of international meetings have been held with the goal of advancing the sustainable development agenda and underlining the relationship among poverty, inequality, inequity, and social exclusion. Examples include the Earth Summit, held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992; the International Conference on Financing for Development —held in Monterrey, Mexico, in 2002 – at which the “Monterrey Consensus” was adopted; the United Nations World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg in 2002. Commitments and initiatives adopted by the member states at the regional and global levels within the Summit of the Americas process; in the Monterrey Consensus, whose goal is to, *inter alia*, “achieve sustained economic growth and promote sustainable development”; and at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, call for hemispheric action.

The Declaration of Kingstown on the Security of Small Island States, adopted in January 2003 in Kingstown, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, at the Second High-Level Meeting on the Special Security Concerns of Small Island States, notes that small island states have peculiar characteristics which render them especially vulnerable and susceptible to security risks, threats, concerns and other challenges of a multidimensional and transnational nature, involving political, economic, social, health, environmental, and geographic factors.

In the Declaration of Santiago on Democracy and Public Trust: A New Commitment to Good Governance for the Americas, adopted by the OAS General Assembly in 2003, member states established that democratic governance obliges us to focus on the responsible management of public affairs as an essential factor in the sustainable development of our countries with social, ethnic, and gender equity.

Within the broad area of security, environmental security has been linked to sustainable development. The Special Conference on Security, held in Mexico, in October 2003, in its Declaration on Security in the Americas stated that the security threats, concerns, and other challenges in the hemispheric context are of diverse nature and multidimensional scope, and the traditional concept and approach must be expanded to encompass new and nontraditional threats, which include political, economic, social, health, and environmental aspects. To this end, the Declaration recognizes that environmental deterioration affects the quality of life of our peoples and may constitute a threat, concern, or challenge to the security of states in the Hemisphere. Special attention has been given to the small island states, whose environmental vulnerability, especially with regard to natural disasters, is greater owing to their geographic situation, their size, and the scale of their economies, among other factors.

The Declaration of Nuevo León adopted at the Special Summit of the Americas, held in Monterrey, Mexico, in January 2004, emphasized the member states' commitment to increase cooperation and strengthen the institutions responsible for coordinating and implementing measures to reduce the impact of natural disasters on people, and highlighted the belief that ensuring environmental health for the people of the Americas represents an investment for long-term well-being and prosperity.

Mention must be made also of the work carried out at the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Plan of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, held in Port-Louis, Mauritius in 2005.

The Declaration of Mar del Plata of the Fourth Summit of the Americas held in 2005 reaffirms, among others, the commitment of member states to coordinating international efforts in support of sustainable development policies, as well as to promoting greater access for people to health care.

II. MANDATE AND CONTEXT

The objectives of the Inter-American Program are set out broadly in the mandates of the Summit of the Americas (Miami 1994, Santiago de Chile 1998, Quebec City 2001, Monterrey 2004, and Mar del Plata 2005) and especially the Summit of the Americas on Sustainable Development (Bolivia, 1996), as well as the General Assembly, CIDI, CIDS and other resolutions. For example, in 1996, the General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS) established an Inter-American Committee on Sustainable Development (CIDS) as a subsidiary organ of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI). The CIDS is charged with formulating policy objectives in support of sustainable development, and of preparing an Inter-American Program for Sustainable Development (PIDS). In establishing the PIDS, the General Assembly emphasized the importance of ensuring that OAS activities were closely coordinated with developments in other

international organizations. In this regard, the OAS role in implementing all aspects of the PIDS will be consistent with, and complementary to, those of other relevant regional and multilateral entities, particularly with the United Nations.

General Assembly resolution AG/RES. 1440 (XXVI-O/96), resolution CIDI/CIDS/RES.1 (III-O/02), AND Article 95 of the OAS Charter provide that CIDI formulate a strategic plan involving policies, programs and projects in support of integral development. In this context, the OAS will:

- a) Serve as a hemispheric forum to promote dialogue and coordinate progress in the area of sustainable development;
- b) Support the exchange of information relating to sustainable development, and facilitate the exchange of experiences among countries, institutions, and organizations; and
- c) Act as a partner in cooperation among stakeholders involved in sustainable development in those areas in which the OAS General Secretariat has a comparative advantage.

In addition, member states recognize that the Inter-American Program should contribute to the implementation of plans of action and recommendations set out in Agenda 21 adopted at the Earth Summit, held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, the Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, adopted in Johannesburg in 2002, as well as declarations and plans of action adopted in a variety of international and regional conferences, including, *inter alia*, the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, held in Bridgetown, Barbados, in 1994.

At the Summit of the Americas on Sustainable Development, the Declaration of Santa Cruz de la Sierra and the Plan of Action for the Sustainable Development of the Americas (the Plan of Action of Santa Cruz) were adopted. The Plan of Action proposes a range of initiatives to be carried out by governments, individually and collectively.

The First Inter-American Meeting of Ministers and High Level Authorities, held in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, in December 2006, adopted this Inter-American Program for Sustainable Development 2006-2009, and in the “Declaration of Santa Cruz + 10” called for its implementation.

III. STRATEGIC AREAS OF ACTION

The objective of the Inter-American Program for Sustainable Development is to serve the interests of member states by reaffirming strategic priorities of action for the period 2006 to 2009, within the overarching framework of sustainable development.

The Inter-American Program for Sustainable Development will carry out its priority activities in the following areas:

3.1 Sustainable agriculture and the sustainable management of forests and other natural resources

Sustainable agriculture and the sustainable management of forests and other natural resources require an integral approach to the various themes that comprise this area and the identification of successful opportunities through cooperation in regard to environmental management at the project and policy level.

The OAS will take the following actions in this area:

- a. Serve as a regional forum for:
 - i. Advancing the dialogue in integrated approaches to alternative land uses and planning.
 - ii. Facilitating the adoption of strategies and integrated policies, in coordination with other institutions such as the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Commission on Sustainable Development of the United Nations (CSD), the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), multilateral technical and financial cooperation agencies, such as the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the World Bank, the Permanent Secretariats of the United Nations Conventions on Biological Diversity and to Combat Desertification, and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) and the Ramsar Regional Center for the Western Hemisphere (CREHO), and others as appropriate, to address the needs of access to, transfer of, and incorporation of appropriate production technologies and sustainable management of the natural resources in our region, as well as improving the quality of life of the poorest rural segments of society. Special emphasis should be given to areas and countries affected by processes of desertification, within the framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.
- b. Promote the exchange of information for:

Supporting the governments in their establishment of an inter-American network for sharing of information and best practices related to sustainable agriculture, the sustainable management of forests, and other related topics, taking into account the experience and activity of other multilateral, regional and national initiatives and programs in this area, such as the Sustainable Development Network Programme (SDNP-UNDP).

c. Provide cooperation for:

Developing action plans and/or carrying out, at the request of member states, projects for the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources including protection of watersheds and sensitive biodiversity resources.

3.2 Water Resources, Land, and Health

The Inter-American Program has the objective of improving water resources management practices in order to assure quality water for human consumption and ensure its sustainable use for the current and future generations without damaging the environment. The Program also calls for the OAS to cooperate with various institutions, organizations and agencies in the Inter-American and United Nations systems to provide support to the member states, particularly in integrated water resource management. The development of actions related to integrated water resources management builds on the experience that the OAS has acquired over the past decades working in water resource management throughout the Hemisphere.

Land degradation is recognized as one of the major global environmental and sustainable development challenges of the 21st century. The Inter-American Program, working in coordination with other regional and international organizations, supports and promotes integrated and cross-sectoral approaches to address land degradation issues within the framework of sustainable development, assisting governments, when requested.

The countries of the Hemisphere have emphasized that one of the pillars of human development is equitable access to health services. Efforts must be made to develop care and promotion strategies to prevent and minimize the negative impacts to the environment and human health.

The OAS will take the following actions in this area:

- a. Serve as a regional forum to:
 - i. Support, with the consent of States concerned, mechanisms for inter-governmental dialogue and cooperation in the development of policies, strategies, and for integrated water resource management, in accordance with relevant international laws, and integrated land management.
 - ii. Facilitate and strengthen the dialogue to address the problems that create linkages between environmental degradation and health, in support of the Health and Environment Ministers of the Americas (HEMA) initiative, with the participation of the Pan-American Health Organization, and the United Nations Environment Programme.

- iii. Support initiatives in full collaboration with the Pan-American Health Organization to integrate actions related to provide good quality water and sanitation for the population.
 - iv. Promote cross-sectoral approaches to integrated water resources management in accordance with relevant international law, and land use planning, integrating the ecological, economic, and social dimensions in program and project design.
- b. Promote the exchange of information to:
- i. Support actions to encourage the dissemination and exchange of information and experiences in water resources management and land tenure and management among the countries of the Hemisphere, by strengthening information mechanisms and networks.
 - ii. Support and promote special meetings such as World Water Forums, and the Inter-American Dialogue on Water Management at the hemispheric level, as well as support subregional meetings to facilitate discussion among water authorities and the society concerned with water management.
 - iii. Share best practices, disseminate information, and facilitate discussions related to strengthening policy, institutional, and legal frameworks, to address water and land resource degradation problems, and the linkages between environmental degradation and health issues.
 - iv. Strengthen the policy dialogue between the Pan American Health Organization and the OAS to foster promotion of initiatives related to water and health.
- c. Provide cooperation to:
- i. Support member states in the formulation and execution of strategic action programs for integrated water management to promote sustainable development.
 - ii. Establish, among member states, mechanisms for integrated water resources management, taking into consideration public participation in the decision-making process.
 - iii. Support member states in their efforts to strengthen institutional capacity and policy, regulatory and legal programs related to the implementation of integrated water resource management and land management practices, including rehabilitation of ecosystems.

- iv. Support activities of member states in the formulation and implementation of programs and projects oriented to addressing threats to health caused by environmental degradation, including threats to water quality that entail problems associated with hazardous wastes and persistent organic pollutants.
- v. Support member states in the design and implementation of programs and projects for sustainable fisheries management and sustainable aquaculture development.
- vi. Support member states in advancing the development of programs and institutional policies that enable the recognition of wetlands as indispensable ecosystems in the recharge of aquifers, in the conservation of biodiversity, and the supply of quality water, as well as the strengthening of actions that ensure the ecological wealth of wetlands.

3.3 Natural Hazards Risk Management

One fundamental component in sustainable development is the support provided to reduce vulnerability to natural hazards through an integrated approach and thus avoid disasters or mitigate their effects on people, infrastructure and the natural resources base, which support economic development. Activities such as assistance with policy formulation, hazard and vulnerability assessments, training in disaster mitigation techniques, and formulation of mitigation measures for development investment projects are carried out as part of ongoing technical cooperation programs with collaborating national, regional, and international institutions. In this sense, the commitments adopted by the Permanent Council and the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI) through its Joint Consultative Body of the Committee on Hemispheric Security and the Permanent Executive Committee of CIDI (CEPCIDI), in compliance with resolution AG/RES. 2114 (XXXV-O/05) and 2184 (XXXVI-O/06), will be taken into account, in particular in the areas related to systematic risk management, including risk identification, risk reduction, and risk transfer. Commitments assumed in the *Declaration of Hyogo*, adopted at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, held in Kobe, Japan, January 2005, will also be taken into account. Support will be focused and given to national and regional initiatives on issues of prevention, mitigation, and attention to disasters through an integrated approach, which would include organizations on civil protection and disaster management and development planning agencies.

The OAS will take the following actions in this area:

- a. Serve as a hemispheric forum to support national, regional and hemispheric actions to:

- i. Promote sustainable development by reducing the vulnerability of economic and social infrastructure to natural hazards in national development plans.
 - ii. Promote sustainable public/private natural hazard risk management mechanisms that substantially lessen loss of life, prevent and reduce potential damage, and shorten the effects of the disaster recovery period.
 - iii. Improve public awareness and decision-making in development planning by disseminating hazard-prone area maps.
 - iv. Foster catastrophe loss protection in the region by supporting the efforts of development lending institutions and the insurance industry to improve natural hazard risk management.
 - v. Encourage private sector and civil society involvement in community-based disaster preparedness and prevention activities.
 - vi. Support the implementation of OAS General Assembly and CIDS resolutions on natural hazards vulnerability reduction.
 - vii. Promote the strengthening of early warning systems that are people-centered, in particular, systems whose warnings are timely and understandable to those at risk, which take into account the demographic, gender, cultural, and livelihood characteristics of the target audiences.
 - viii. Consider the characteristics and special needs of the Small Island Developing States and other vulnerable countries in relation to adapting to the adverse impacts of climate change and of climate variability and, in this sense, grant them, as deemed appropriate, special attention in terms of facilitating financial resources, technology transfer, and capacity-building.
- b. Encourage the exchange of information to:
- i. Facilitating the interpretation of natural hazard information.
 - ii. Reducing natural hazard vulnerability through emergency preparedness, planning, investment, and scientific research.
 - iii. Reducing or eliminating the destructive effects of recurring hazardous events on people and their economic and social infrastructure through the application of appropriate risk reduction measures.

- iv. Supporting established networks for the exchange of experiences and methods in the forecasting and mitigation of natural hazard events.
- c. Provide cooperation to:
 - i. Promote community-based prevention, preparedness, mitigation and response in cases of disaster.
 - ii. Identify natural hazard assessments and the evaluation of financial, economic and physical risk.
 - iii. Promote hazard-resistant building practices and standards.
 - iv. Assist in the implementation of vulnerability and risk audits of lifelines and critical facilities in order to promote life safety and loss reduction.
 - v. Foster the study of the use of vulnerability reduction incentives and hazard mitigation in the property insurance industry.
 - vi. Facilitate technical training and information dissemination.
 - vii. Support the incorporation of natural hazards mitigation goals and objectives in national development plans, the adoption of appropriate building codes and zoning procedures, and the preparation, strengthening and implementation of regional disaster reduction plans.
 - viii. Support the coordination of international and national activities aimed at the preparation of sector vulnerability profiles and investment plans to reduce vulnerability to natural disasters.

3.4 Conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity

Biodiversity plays a critical role in the sustainable development in the countries of the region. It is a key component of the fight against hunger and other manifestations of poverty. It is essential to the well-being of humanity and the world as a whole. To avoid the loss of biodiversity, efforts must be made for formulating public policies consistent with relevant international commitments regarding the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources, including by appropriate access to genetic resources, and by appropriate transfer of relevant technologies, taking into account all rights over those resources and to technologies, and by appropriate funding, with due consideration for both the benefits and risks of biotechnology. Efforts will also be made for recognizing and valuing the importance of traditional knowledge and its potential contribution to sustainable development.

The OAS will take the following actions to encourage the development and coordinated work in this area taking into account the relevant instruments, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the Convention on Desertification (UNCCD) and the Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and other relevant regional and multilateral mechanisms.

- a. Serve as a regional forum for:
 - i. Promoting integrated approaches to land use that mainstream conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity into the land-use planning and land management process.
 - ii. Promoting discussion of biodiversity at the inter-American level in order to advance strategies for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.
 - iii. Promoting networks such as Inter-American Biodiversity Information Network (IABIN) and other actions and activities that facilitate sharing information and the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and otherwise support the achievement of the objectives in the conventions listed above. In addition, to explore the development of the Western Hemisphere Migratory Initiative (WHMSI), in a manner that reflects the interests and priorities of all member states.
 - iv. Facilitating the adoption of strategies, and integrated policies, to address the needs of access to, transfer of, and incorporation of appropriate production technologies and sustainable management of the natural resources in our region, on mutually agreed terms, as well as improving the quality of life of the poorest rural segments of society, in coordination with other organizations, and promote dialogue to avoid duplication of efforts. Special emphasis should be given to understanding linkages between the processes of desertification and biodiversity, ecosystem functions and services, water-related issues, and climate change.
 - v. Strengthening the capacity of member states to promote sustainable forest management and to address illegal practices, according to national legislation, through the promotion of forest law enforcement and governance at the national, sub-national, regional and sub-regional levels, including through collaboration with inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations, and the private sector, as appropriate.

- vi. Supporting the effective implementation and enforcement, at the national and sub-national levels, of laws, policies and regulations that address illegal trade in endangered species and protection of wild flora and fauna, including through the implementation of CITES, as well as the promotion of strategies to address the loss of habitat for wildlife.
- b. Promote the exchange of information for:
- i. Supporting the governments in the management of an Inter-American Biodiversity Information Network to promote compatible standards and inter-operable means of collection, communication, and exchange of information relevant to decision-making and capacity building on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.
 - ii. In coordination with governments, identifying gaps in knowledge and new fields of interest, as well as a research agenda to support conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.
 - iii. Improving regional cooperation for biodiversity management through the sharing of experience and expertise in protected areas and natural habitats.
 - iv. Creating and strengthening the capacity to address critical issues at a regional level such as invasive species, migratory species, amphibian declines, wildlife trafficking, and the spread of wildlife and zoonotic diseases, among others.
 - v. Developing the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS) and building capacity in member countries to participate actively in the development of data layers and assessment of environmental information as it relates to sustainable development and protection of human health and biodiversity.
- c. Provide cooperation for:
- i. Carrying out regional, sub-regional, and bilateral projects for the management and sustainable use of biological diversity, including wildlife and forests, and formulating strategies and considering coordinated action plans for managing natural ecosystems and biological resources shared by two or more countries.
 - ii. Supporting countries, upon joint agreed request, in identifying new protected areas in the region, and formulating plans for the management of protected areas and buffer zones with similar characteristics, and for establishing, restoring or consolidating

biological corridors, as jointly agreed by those countries where the Protected Area would be located.

- iii. Promoting integrated soil management and measures to combat desertification through sustainable development projects and integrated regional studies for such purposes as reversing significant degradation and erosion, in conformity with the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.
- iv. Assisting member states, at their request, in strengthening activities in support of the development of environmental legislation to conserve biodiversity and water resources and to combat desertification.
- v. Strengthening technical and institutional capacity for the conservation and sustainable use of plants, animals, and ecosystems.
- vi. Building cooperative initiatives at a hemispheric, regional, and sub-regional level among environmental, natural resource, and law enforcement authorities to enhance the capacity to detect and effectively respond to illegal transboundary trade in wild flora and fauna to strengthen implementation of obligations under CITES.

3.5 Coastal Zone Management and Adaptation to Climate Change

A key component of the Inter-American Program is the support to countries and sub-regional and regional institutions in their efforts to respond to the adverse effects of climate change, particularly sea-level rise, in coastal and marine areas through vulnerability assessment, adaptation planning, and capacity building. In this context, the OAS will promote measures to counter the adverse effects of climate change in the the socio-economic fields.

The OAS will take the following actions in this area:

- a. Promote the exchange of information in order to:
 - i. Formulate policies and options for cost-effective response and adaptation to the impacts of global climate change.
 - ii. Enable the further integration and linkages between initiatives and projects addressing adaptation to climate change, and mitigation of natural disasters.
 - iii. Establish databases and information systems to allow key regional and national institutions to acquire, analyze, store, and disseminate data on climate change and the impacts on natural and man-made systems.
 - iv. Increase knowledge on the impact of climate change and greenhouse gas emission on socio-economic sectors and natural resources.

- b. Provide cooperation in order to:
 - i. Establish and operate sea level/climate and coral reef monitoring networks.
 - ii. Develop appropriate methodologies for coastal vulnerability and risk assessment and mapping.

3.6 Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Promotion

The Inter-American Program considers the development and use of renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies and systems as key components of sustainable development.

The OAS will take the following actions in this area:

- a. Serve as a regional forum for:
 - i. Organizing and implementing the Renewable Energy in the Americas Initiative (REIA), which builds collaborative partnerships to accelerate the use of renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies throughout the Americas.
 - ii. Participation in renewable energy and energy efficiency partnerships launched at the World Summit for Sustainable Development (WSSD).
 - iii. Promoting policy and regulatory measures to advance the use of renewable energy and energy-efficiency technologies in the Americas.
 - iv. Developing and accessing innovative financing mechanisms suited to the technical characteristics of renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies and appropriate to the social and economic needs of the demographically diverse end-users.
 - v. Identifying and promoting renewable energy and energy efficiency project opportunities in the Americas.
 - vi. Sharing information on renewable energy and energy efficient technologies and delivering technical assistance and training on matters related to sustainable energy development.

3.7 Capacity Building and Institutional Strengthening for Sustainable Development and Environmental Management

The exercise of democracy promotes the preservation and good stewardship of the environment. Democratic governance requires the development of responsible management of public affairs as an essential factor in the sustainable development of the member states, and the promotion of civil society participation. Governance and environmental management place priority in identifying best practices, developing technical skills at the institutional and local levels to assess and manage linkages among environmental, social, and economic issues, which are the components of sustainable development. The OAS will collaborate with the development of integral policies that take said components into account. In that regard, the OAS will work towards the development and strengthening of environmental law, in support of sustainable development priorities established by the member states. Environmental management will consider at the outset and in an adequate manner the protection of those communities that depend on the natural resources for their economic subsistence.

The OAS will take the following actions in this area:

- a. Serve as a regional forum to:
 - i. Facilitate dialogue towards the consideration of technical, social and economic issues in environmental management, including the rights that may derive from those of the traditional indigenous knowledge, stressing that they are issues related to the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the Convention on Biological Diversity, that deal specifically with the topic.
 - ii. Facilitate the exchange of information and experiences in environmental law and policies, in particular, through the governmental experts designated by the member states to participate in the activities of the Inter-American Forum on Environmental Law (FIDA).
 - iii. Continue collaborating through FIDA in cooperative efforts towards developing and strengthening environmental laws, policies, and institutions, and in cooperation with member states, reinforce instruments or incentives of environmental compliance utilized by the member states in the establishment of their policies and legislation.
 - iv. Exchange information concerning environmental cooperation activities in the territory of the member states and develop a list of relevant programs and projects funded by cooperation partners in the Americas.
- b. Promote the exchange of information to:

- i. Foster collaboration with public, private, and civil society organizations interested in the law and environmental policy.
 - ii. Foster collaboration among experts on environmental law and policies.
 - iii. Support the development and implementation of national and international environmental policies.
 - iv. Support member states in complying with the commitments acquired through environmental agreements and in making decisions related to sustainable development, taking into account the environmental, economic and social dimensions.
 - v. Generate profiles of best practices for sustainable development and environmental management of trade transportation corridors in coordination with regional infrastructure integration strategies.
- c. Provide cooperation to:
- i. Develop capacities in support of good environmental management especially in the areas of environmental policies, legislation, regulations and standards.
 - ii. Support member states in the incorporation of environmental policies into their development plans.
 - iii. Build capacity, through technical and analytical support, upon request of member states, to undertake environmental impact assessments to minimize economic, environmental, and social externalities.
 - iv. Support the development of environmental legislation in member states.

IV. COOPERATION AND FINANCING

We entrust the General Secretariat of the OAS, within the framework of its mandate, and in coordination with other entities and international organizations, to promote the mobilization of resources and technical assistance, for the implementation of agreed regional and sub-regional programs and projects on sustainable development, including the objective of poverty eradication.

V. IMPLEMENTATION AND FOLLOW-UP

The General Secretariat, through the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development and its Department for Sustainable Development, in coordination with and with the assistance of the competent specialized offices and units, will support the activities that arise from the program.

Member States recognize the multi-disciplinary and inter-sectoral nature of sustainable development and the environment. Accordingly, the Program implementation shall emphasize close, ongoing cooperation and coordination with multilateral and regional organizations that are charged with implementing programs, projects, and policies of relevance to the priorities identified herein. Moreover, the Program implementation shall take into account developments in other bodies, and identify synergies with international and regional organizations, the private sector, civil society, community groups, research bodies and others in order to ensure that measurable progress is made. In order to ensure that the implementation of the Program proceeds in an efficient, cost-effective, and cooperative manner, a programmatic monitoring and evaluation system shall be established.

The Department for Sustainable Development will present to the Permanent Executive Committee of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CEPCIDI) an annual work program based on the guidelines of the CIDI strategic plan. In addition, the Department of Sustainable Development will prepare semester progress reports on the implementation of this Inter-American Program for Sustainable Development. In its annual work program the Department of Sustainable Development will, *inter alia*, monitor and evaluate the implementing of the Inter-American Program, and define a strategy for mobilizing funds to support the financing of the Program. The annual work program will include provision for monitoring the implementation and evaluating the results of the Program. A comprehensive ample evaluation of the impact will be undertaken in the final year of the Program, in accordance with the existing resources available for this purpose. The Department shall also present reports on the implementation of the program to the Inter-American Committee on Sustainable Development or other appropriate sectoral meetings, which can propose updates to the Program.

There are three sources of funds to support the implementation of the Program: the regular budget, the Sector Account for Sustainable Development and Environment of the Special Multilateral Fund of CIDI (FEMCIDI) and external funds. There is a relationship among these three funding sources, and the extent of the regular budget and FEMCIDI to raise and manage external funds. Its purpose is also to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in serving the needs of the member states in their execution of mandates in the area of sustainable development.

The resources in the sectoral Account for Sustainable Development and Environment of FEMCIDI should be used to implement activities arising from the Program. Accordingly, member states are encouraged to present multinational projects following these criteria, and the Department for Sustainable Development is to support member states that so request in the formulation of such projects, and shall cooperate with those member states in the search for additional external funding sources for its execution.

Moreover, the Department for Sustainable Development will provide support for the design and implementation of pilot projects to promote effective participation in innovative programs designed to promote sustainable development and environmental issues.

AG/RES. 2314 (XXXVII O/07)

NATURAL DISASTER REDUCTION, RISK MANAGEMENT, AND ASSISTANCE
IN NATURAL AND OTHER DISASTER SITUATIONS

(Adopted at the fourth plenary session, held on June 5, 2007)

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY,

HAVING SEEN the Annual Report of the Permanent Council to the General Assembly, in particular the section on the work of the Committee on Hemispheric Security pertaining to natural disasters and risk management (AG/doc. /07);

DEEPLY CONCERNED:

By the devastation in several member states caused by diverse natural disasters, including floods and droughts caused by El Niño, a cyclical phenomenon associated with warm water currents in the Pacific Ocean, landslides, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, and hurricanes which have resulted in losses suffered by their populations, including the tragic loss of life, substantial damage to their economic and social infrastructure, and the resulting negative impact on their development objectives and on their poverty eradication efforts, exacerbated by the diversion of financial resources to disaster response and away from sustainable development; and

The conclusions and recommendations of the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), also referred to as AR4 and published in 2007, whose summary for policymakers was adopted at the 10th meeting of Working Group I, in Paris, in February 2007 and which is pending approval by the Plenary;

The findings in that same report on climate change and sustainable development suggesting that a way to increase adaptability is to introduce climate change impact considerations in development plans, including measures for adaptation of land-use planning and infrastructure design;

REAFFIRMING the importance of urgently reducing the vulnerability of member states to natural hazards through the development of domestic natural disaster reduction strategies, mutual assistance, technical cooperation, land-use planning, and improvement of building codes;

RECOGNIZING the need to include a gender perspective in the Organization's activities related to natural disaster reduction and risk management;

CONSIDERING that effective natural disaster reduction and mitigation is dependent on a high degree of preparedness, effective mobilization, and coordination of the governments of the countries affected at all levels, as well as of the private sector and nongovernmental, community, and civil society organizations;

RECOGNIZING:

The important role of the Committee on Hemispheric Security (CSH) in coordinating cooperation among the organs and mechanisms of the Organization related to the various aspects of security and defense in the Hemisphere, including natural and man-made disasters, in the framework of the Declaration on Security in the Americas;

The Inter-American Committee on Natural Disaster Reduction (IACNDR), in accordance with its Statutes, and the Inter-American Emergency Aid Fund (FONDEM), as one of the principal regional instruments for assisting member states in preparing for, responding to, and reducing vulnerability to natural and other disasters, and as the advisory body to FONDEM and to the states parties to the Inter-American Convention to Facilitate Disaster Assistance;

The commitments made by member states to meet the natural disaster risk reduction goals of the Hyogo Framework for Action, adopted at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction (Kobe, Japan, January 18 - 22, 2005), including the important role of regional organizations in helping to achieve those goals;

The efforts of subregional intergovernmental organizations, such as the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA), the Coordination Center for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America (CEPREDENAC), and the Andean Committee for Disaster Prevention and Assistance (CAPRADE), in support of implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action; and

The need to continue strengthening the Organization's planning and management activities so as to respond more effectively to the frequent natural disasters in the Hemisphere;

RECALLING:

Its prior resolutions on natural disaster reduction and risk management [AG/RES. 2184 (XXXVI-O/06) and AG/RES. 2114 (XXXV-O/05)], on natural disaster reduction [AG/RES. 2024 (XXXIV-O/04), AG/RES. 1955 (XXXIII-O/03), and AG/RES. 1885 (XXXII-O/02)], and on OAS natural disaster reduction mechanisms [AG/RES. 1803 (XXXI-O/01) and AG/RES. 1755 (XXX-O/00)]; and

The commitment undertaken by the member states, set forth in the Plan of Action of the Fourth Summit of the Americas, held in Mar del Plata, Argentina, in November 2005, to substantially improve the capacity at national, regional, and hemispheric levels for risk mitigation; to implement early warning systems; to enhance disaster recovery, reconstruction, and resilience capabilities in collaboration with relevant regional institutions; and to explore with relevant international and regional institutions the coordinated development of effective public-private catastrophic risk insurance systems;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT:

That the First Inter-American Meeting of Ministers and High Authorities of Sustainable Development, held in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, on December 4 and 5, 2006, expressed in the Declaration of Santa Cruz + 10 that the impacts of natural disasters are devastating and negatively

affect the quality of life of affected communities and the development of all countries of the Hemisphere and that risk prevention and mitigation measures can increase the resilience and reduce the vulnerability of communities;

That at that same meeting, the General Secretariat, through the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development and its Department of Sustainable Development, established the Inter-American Network for Disaster Mitigation (INDM);

That the 34 member states have been invited to designate their national operational focal points to coordinate and serve as national liaisons with the competent governmental, nongovernmental, and private organizations, within their national territories, for all INDM-related matters;

That in most countries the national operational focal points for the INDM are the government agencies responsible for natural disaster preparedness, prevention, and mitigation; and

That the General Secretariat, through the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development and its Department of Sustainable Development, cooperated with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in organizing the Regional Forum of the Americas on Laws, Standards, and Principles Relating to International Disaster Response (IDRL), held in Panama in April 2007; and

NOTING:

The ongoing coordination initiatives of the General Secretariat, through the Office of the Assistant Secretary General and the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development and its Department of Sustainable Development, with international financial institutions, and the important work of the organs, agencies, and entities of the inter-American system in matters related to natural disasters, in their areas of competence,

RESOLVES:

1. To reiterate the mandates set forth in resolution AG/RES. 2184 (XXXVI-O/06) and to continue to accord high priority to the topic of natural disaster reduction, risk management, and assistance in natural and other disaster situations.

2. To request the member states to continue attaching importance to climate variability, including the El Niño and La Niña phenomena, and the adverse affects of climate change, which represent additional risks for all the countries in the Hemisphere, especially for developing countries.

3. To instruct the General Secretariat, through the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development and its Department of Sustainable Development:

- a. To cooperate with member states and to coordinate its efforts with the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA), the Coordination Center for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America (CEPREDENAC), the Andean Committee for Disaster Prevention

and Assistance (CAPRADE), relevant United Nations agencies, and other national centers in the member states , in order to implement the Hyogo Framework for Action; and

- b. To work closely with the appropriate national, regional, and international agencies on increasing the resilience of local communities and the most vulnerable sectors, with emphasis on developing and implementing risk self-assessment tools and systems; reducing the vulnerability of physical infrastructure, principally in the housing and education sectors; and increasing the ability to adapt to climate variations, considering climate change scenarios, and including zoning, vulnerability maps, and planning for land use and tenancy; and
- c. To work closely with the private sector, with international, regional, subregional, and national natural disaster preparedness and response agencies, and with nongovernmental emergency response organizations in eliminating obstacles to humanitarian assistance and to risk transfer, with particular emphasis on strengthening the necessary legal frameworks.
- d. To compile and disseminate information on diverse regional and international experiences regarding insurance-related aspects of disaster prevention and mitigation, especially agricultural insurance for family-run small-scale farms or tenant farmers' plots, in order to benefit the most vulnerable sectors.

4. To recognize the Inter-American Network for Disaster Mitigation (INDM) as the permanent hemispheric mechanism for strengthening practical cooperation among intergovernmental agencies in the area of disaster reduction, especially by sharing technical information and best practices.

5. To request the IACNDR, with support from the INDM, to update the Inter-American Strategic Plan (IASP) for Policies on Risk Reduction, Risk Management, and Disaster Response; and to urge the member states to establish near-term implementation timeframes for its recommendations, in accordance with the domestic laws in effect in their countries.

6. To request the Permanent Council, with support from the INDM, to convene, for the first half of 2008, a meeting of high-level national authorities on natural disaster reduction and risk management, with the participation of the private sector, of subregional, national, and international agencies and organizations, and of nongovernmental, community, and civil society organizations.

7. To urge each state party to the Inter-American Convention to Facilitate Disaster Assistance to designate a national coordinating authority pursuant to the terms of the Convention, taking into consideration the functions of the national operational focal points of the INDM, and to notify the General Secretariat of that designation.

8. Once again to invite those member states that have not already done so to give consideration to signing and/or ratifying the Inter-American Convention to Facilitate Disaster Assistance, as the case may be, and to adopt the measures necessary for its effective implementation.

9. To request the General Secretariat, through its Department of Sustainable Development, to work on strengthening the technical capacity of member states in the areas addressed in the Inter-American Convention to Facilitate Disaster Assistance.

10. To request the IACNDR and the General Secretariat to submit a joint annual report to the Permanent Council on the fulfillment of the mandates of the General Assembly and the Statutes of the IACNDR.

11. To instruct the Permanent Council and the General Secretariat to carry out the activities mentioned in this resolution within the resources allocated in the program-budget of the Organization and other resources.

12. To request the Permanent Council to report on the implementation of this resolution to the OAS General Assembly at its thirty-eighth regular session.

13. To request the Secretary General to forward a copy of this resolution to the United Nations Secretary-General and to the competent subregional agencies.

AG/RES. 2347 (XXXVII O/07)

INTER-AMERICAN MEETING ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND ENVIRONMENTAL
ASPECTS
RELATED TO THE AVAILABILITY OF AND ACCESS TO DRINKING WATER

(Adopted at the fourth plenary session, held on June 5, 2007)

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY,

RECALLING that the Inter-American Democratic Charter recognizes that a safe environment is essential to the integral development of the human being, which contributes to democracy and political stability;

BEARING IN MIND the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and Agenda 21, as well as the Declaration of Johannesburg on Sustainable Development and its Plan of Implementation;

RECOGNIZING that economic development, social development, and environmental protection are interdependent pillars of sustainable development^{1/} and that the eradication of poverty is a fundamental goal of sustainable development;^{2/}

BEARING IN MIND that the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) states that “[a]round 1.2 billion people, or almost one-fifth of the world’s population, live in areas of physical water scarcity, and 500 million people are approaching this situation”;^{3/}

RECOGNIZING that, in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, the Heads of State and Government decided “to halve, by the year 2015, ... the proportion of people who are unable to reach or to afford safe drinking water”;

RECALLING that paragraph 8 of the Declaration of Santa Cruz + 10 recognizes that water is fundamental for life and basic for socioeconomic development and the conservation of ecosystems, and that, in this regard, its sustainable management must be promoted with a view to ensuring access to water for present and future generations, taking into account internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration;

RECALLING ALSO that paragraph 22 of the Declaration of Santa Cruz + 10 recognizes “the urgent need to evaluate the effects of climate variability and climate change on water resources, as well as to strengthen early-warning capacities for extreme climatic events”;^{4/}

^{1.} Paragraph 7, UN resolution 57/253, and paragraph 2, Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

^{2.} Paragraphs 2 and 7, Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, and paragraph 4, Declaration of Santa Cruz +10.

^{3.} FAO Newsroom: Focus on the Issues, 2007: Coping with Water Scarcity.

^{4.} Declaration of Santa Cruz + 10, paragraph 22.

RECALLING AS WELL that the strategic areas of action of the Inter-American Program for Sustainable Development (2006-2009) (PIDS) include the topic of water resources;

BEARING IN MIND the report of the Commission on Sustainable Development on its 13th session (2004-2005), referring to the three subject areas of water, sanitation, and human settlements;

BEARING IN MIND ALSO the Human Development Report 2006: Beyond Scarcity: Power, Poverty, and the Global Water Crisis; as well as the interrelation between water, health, sanitation, human settlements, and climate change issues;

UNDERSCORING the importance of the countries of the Hemisphere taking steps to promote education, awareness, and broader participation by the different sectors of society in the conservation and sustainable use of water resources;

NOTING the special meeting of the Permanent Council on opportunities for cooperation in developing legal and institutional frameworks in response to the region's environmental challenges, held on February 23, 2007;

NOTING ALSO that member states have appointed national focal points on integrated management of water resources to foster cooperation, information exchange, and discussion of experiences on related topics;

BEARING IN MIND the Inter-American Dialogues on Water Management; and

CONSIDERING that resolution AG/RES. 1440 (XXVI-O/96) notes the importance of sustainable development as a conceptual framework within which the OAS should work as a forum for concerted action, including technical cooperation; and authorizes the Department of Sustainable Development of the General Secretariat to carry out any environmental and sustainable development mandates assigned to it,

RESOLVES:

1. To reaffirm the commitments undertaken in the Declaration of Santa Cruz + 10 and in the Inter-American Program for Sustainable Development (2006-2009) (PIDS) with respect to integrated water resource management.
2. To expedite efforts, in the context of realities and national laws, to achieve the objective of halving the proportion of people who are unable to reach or to afford safe drinking water, on the basis of nondiscrimination, equality, equity, solidarity, and environmental sustainability.
3. To create awareness among the different sectors of society of the importance of the conservation and sustainable use of water.

4. To promote technical cooperation to facilitate access to appropriate, low-cost, ecologically sustainable technologies for water use and supply^{5/} and to strengthen the capacity of local communities to make sustainable use of water resources.

5. To instruct the Permanent Council and the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI), in coordination with the General Secretariat, to convene, for the first quarter of 2008 and in connection with World Water Day, an inter-American meeting on the economic, social, and environmental aspects of the availability of, and access to, safe drinking water, with a view, *inter alia*, to:

- a. Fostering dialogue, among national authorities responsible for integrated water resource management in member states, on national policies, experiences, and best practices concerning the availability of, and access to, safe drinking water; and
- b. Promoting and reinforcing bilateral and regional cooperation on integrated water resource management.

6. To instruct the General Secretariat to include on the agenda for the upcoming meeting of focal points on integrated water resource management, to be held in August 2007, the preparation of the proposed agenda for the meeting mentioned in the preceding paragraph, for consideration by CEPCIDI.

7. To request CIDI to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth regular session on the implementation of this resolution.

^{5/} CSD. Report on the thirteenth session: Resolution 13/1 (doc. E/2005/29, p. 13).

AG/RES. 2349 (XXXVII O/07)

WATER, HEALTH, AND HUMAN RIGHTS

(Adopted at the fourth plenary session, held on June 5, 2007)

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY,

BEARING IN MIND the obligations of the states parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, with regard to human rights and water;

NOTING the progressive realization of the rights referred to in Articles 10 and 11 of the Additional Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights in the Area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Protocol of San Salvador), in which the states parties recognize the right of every person to health and the right to live in a healthy environment and have access to basic public services;

BEARING IN MIND FURTHER the obligations of the states parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights with respect to progressive realization of the rights recognized in its Article 11, paragraph 1, and Article 12, paragraph 1, respectively, and that every person has the right to an adequate standard of living for himself/herself and his/her family and to enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health;

NOTING General Comment No. 15 of the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), entitled "The right to water [arts. 11 and 12 of the International Covenant (U.N. Doc. HRI/GEN/1/Rev.7 at 117 (2002))], which considers the relationship between human rights and water as a limited natural resource and a public good fundamental for life and health, indispensable for leading a life in human dignity;

REAFFIRMING the commitment of member states to achieving the internationally agreed upon objectives of integrated water resources management (IWRM) and access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation, including those agreed to in Agenda 21, the Millennium Declaration, and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development;

REITERATING the commitment of member states to the decisions adopted by the thirteenth session of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-13) in April 2005, on policy options and practical measures to facilitate implementation of commitments in the areas of water, sanitation, and human settlements;

TAKING NOTE of the Fourth World Water Forum, held in Mexico City, Mexico, from March 16 to 22, 2006;

TAKING NOTE ALSO of the Report of the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation (2006), which states that 50 million people in Latin America and the Caribbean lack access to safe water and 125 million lack access to adequate sanitation services;

TAKING NOTE FURTHER of the decision of the thirteenth session of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (2005), which emphasizes, *inter alia*, that:

- a. A substantial increase of resources from all sources, including domestic resources, official development assistance, and other resources will be required if developing countries are to achieve the internationally agreed development goals and targets, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg Plan of Implementation), and
- b. Governments have the primary role in promoting improved access to safe drinking water, basic sanitation, sustainable and secure tenure, and adequate shelter, through improved governance at all levels and appropriate enabling environments and regulatory frameworks, adopting a pro-poor approach and with the active involvement of all the stakeholders;

UNDERSCORING the importance of the involvement, as appropriate, of other relevant actors, including civil society and other social groups, such as women, youth, and indigenous peoples, in the planning and management of water services and in decision-making processes;

BEARING IN MIND the holding of the special meeting that the Permanent Council held on February 23, 2007, concerning “Opportunities for Cooperation in the Development of Legal and Institutional Frameworks for Addressing Environmental Challenges in the Region”;

RECOGNIZING that each state is responsible for formulating policies that foster and help to build capacities and cooperation at all levels to lessen the vulnerability associated with the risk of suffering natural disasters, including water-related disasters; and recalling that each state is also responsible for adopting effective measures to protect its population, infrastructure, and other national assets from the impact of natural disasters, including implementation and follow-up to the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters;

REITERATING the importance of regional and subregional international cooperation and of partnerships in support of these national efforts;

RECOGNIZING that water resource management should take into account the importance of wetland ecosystems, and underscoring, accordingly, the commitments made in the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands;

RECOGNIZING ALSO that access to safe drinking water should be provided, in accordance with the principles of nondiscrimination, equality, justice, solidarity, equity, and sustainability; and

TAKING NOTE of Principle 2 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, which established that “States have, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law, the sovereign right to exploit their own resources pursuant to their own environmental and developmental policies, and the responsibility to ensure that activities within their jurisdiction or control do not cause damage to the environment of other States or of areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction,”

RESOLVES:

1. To recognize and emphasize that water is essential to the life and health of all human beings and that access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation is indispensable for a life with human dignity.

2. To reaffirm the sovereign right of each state to establish rules and regulations on water use and water services in its territory.

3. To underscore that water is a natural, limited, and vulnerable resource that has economic value and that also performs an environmental, social, economic, and cultural function, and that efforts must be made to ensure that all sectors of the population have access to safe drinking water and sanitation services.

4. To recognize and respect, in accordance with national law, the ancestral use of water by urban, rural, and indigenous communities, in the framework of their habits and customs on water use, emphasizing as well the importance of this resource as an energy source.

5. To urge member states to develop government policies that envisage the participation of civil society in water resource management and in planning options for improving their drinking-water and sanitation services, with respect for the rule of law, bearing in mind, among other considerations, the needs of urban, rural, and indigenous communities, facilitating to that end access to specialized know-how and information on integrated water resource management in a democratic, transparent, and equitable manner.

6. To foster actions to address the effects of climate variability and change on water resources, the supply of safe drinking water, and sanitation, with particular emphasis on preventing risks associated with environmental management, as well as the degradation of water basins and wetlands.

7. To continue promoting, directly or through relevant international organizations, mechanisms that contribute to the improvement of water quantity and quality and to the conservation and sustainable use of transborder water resources and the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands, in accordance with the domestic legal framework and applicable international law.

8. To instruct the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI) to establish a Working Group to prepare a special meeting and to continue to take action to implement strategies and establish hemispheric plans of action that will further access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation in accordance with the provisions of this resolution, the Millennium Declaration, and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

9. To request CIDI to present a report on this subject to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth regular session.