



FOCAL

Canadian Foundation for the Americas
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Statement to the Civil Society Forum - September 6-7, Buenos Aires Argentina

Over the past decade, the Summits of the Americas process has been successful at identifying key regional challenges and setting a common hemispheric agenda. However, to remain relevant, summit promises must be transformed into tangible outputs that improve the daily lives of the citizens of the hemisphere.

As member states meet to finalize the Plan of Action for the fourth Summit of the Americas in Mar del Plata, we urge them to make implementation the focus of the next decade in summitry.

Successful and visible implementation of summit commitments will ensure that this and subsequent Plans of Action are a guide for inter-American institutions, national governments and citizens to orient and track efforts to strengthen democracy, improve governance and further economic prosperity and social equity.

I. Improving Implementation

To ensure that the Mar del Plata Summit produces a Plan of Action composed of clear and targeted objectives that will lead to timely implementation and effective follow-up, FOCAL recommends that:

- ❖ The Plan of Action clearly distinguish between national and multilateral responsibilities and assign implementation of mandates accordingly.
- ❖ The Plan of Action include timelines, measurable goals and indicators for mandates. We encourage the use of established monitoring frameworks, including the Millennium Development Goals, the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and the 2002 International Conference on Financing for Development. Where no measurement tool exists, we support the inclusion of civil society in the elaboration and application of new ones.
- ❖ Ministers of Finance be very actively involved in the summit process and endorse Plans of Action to ensure that commitments are grounded in financial reality. There must also be increased coordination with international financial institutions to ensure compatibility and coordination between summit goals, institutional priorities and existing bilateral commitments.

- ❖ Based on Plan of Action mandates, individual governments generate national implementation plans that prioritize summit mandates and outline strategies to carry out their commitments. These national plans must reflect consultation with all of the government ministries involved in implementation.
- ❖ Civil society and the private sector be included in collaborative strategies that support governments as they undertake their responsibility to implement summit mandates and monitor progress at national and multilateral level.

II. Creating Jobs to Fight Poverty and Strengthen Democratic Governance

In an effort to generate decent and secure employment for citizens of the Americas—one of the keys to improved living standards, reduced inequality and democratic participation—the Prime Ministers and Presidents meeting at Mar del Plata must endorse a Plan of Action that commits their government to:

- ❖ Promoting economic growth that integrates social policies and focuses on improving equity.
- ❖ Reducing the informal economy and providing social protection to all workers.
- ❖ Eradicating the use of child labour.

The Plan of Action must also commit governments of the hemisphere to:

- ❖ Ensure that the Plan of Action is put to the service of achieving the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, particularly MDG #1 (reduce extreme poverty and hunger); MDG #2 (achieve universal primary education); and MDG #3 (promote gender equality and empower women).
- ❖ Continue the important work of promoting and protecting democracy in the hemisphere that was begun in Quebec City in 2001 by re-affirming their commitment to the Inter-American Democratic Charter. Governments should act on proposals to strengthen the Charter and generate clear definitions and automatic responses to an “unconstitutional alteration or interruption” of the democratic order.
- ❖ Continue to formalize civil society’s role in and contribution to decisions and process at the national and multilateral level.
- ❖ Reaffirm the commitment made at the Special Summit in Monterrey to cut by at least half the cost of remittance transfers by 2008 and devise strategies to harness the billions of dollars of remittances received in Latin American and the Caribbean each year (US\$45.8 billion in 2004).