



# FOCAL

Canadian Foundation for the Americas

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**Statement to the IV Summit of the Americas  
Mar del Plata, Argentina, November 4-5, 2005**

**SUMMITS AT RISK**

Over the past decade, the Summit of the Americas process has been successful at identifying key regional challenges and setting a common hemispheric agenda. However, there is increasing concern that the process is losing momentum due to regional divisions, competing initiatives and a perception that the Summits are not reaching citizens in tangible ways. A toxic mix of summit fatigue and summit cynicism endangers the summit process, its objectives and its survival.

**As member states gather in Mar del Plata for the fourth Summit of the Americas, we urge them to reaffirm their commitment and pledge to devote renewed energy to a next decade of hemispheric engagement and dialogue with existing inter-American institutions.**

FOCAL believes that Summits of the Americas can and must be made stronger through member states' willingness to:

- ❖ Demonstrate their commitment and accept their responsibility for the viability of the OAS, the main institutional support of the Summit process, and pledge to endow it with the financial and political support necessary to ensure its stability and sustainability.
- ❖ Ensure the transparency and responsiveness of the Summit process by institutionalizing civil society participation on the official summit agenda. We consider participation in the IV Summit to constitute a step backward from established precedent.

With these fundamentals in place, governments can proceed to implement summit mandates with the support of solid institutions and engaged hemispheric partners. To further facilitate the translation of the Mar del Plata Plan of Action into financed strategies, policies and programs that will produce concrete advances in the region, FOCAL recommends that:

- ❖ Individual governments generate national implementation plans that prioritize summit mandates and outline practical strategies to carry out their commitments. These national plans must reflect consultation with the government ministries responsible for implementation. To this end, finance ministers, as well as foreign ministers, should be engaged in the planning process.
- ❖ Governments use indicators and timelines in planning and measuring implementation. Specifically, 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.

- ❖ Using these measurement frameworks, government provide regular and comprehensive reports on the progress made in the implementation towards their goals.
- ❖ Civil society and the private sector be included in collaborative strategies that support governments in implementing summit mandates and monitoring progress, at the national and multilateral level.