

DECLARATION OF ASUNCIÓN FOR THE FORTY-FOURTH REGULAR SESSION OF THE OAS GENERAL ASSEMBLY: “DEVELOPMENT WITH SOCIAL INCLUSION”

June 5, 2014

THE MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND HEADS OF DELEGATION OF THE MEMBER STATES OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES (OAS), gathered in Asunción, Paraguay, at the forty-fourth regular session of the OAS General Assembly,

1. REAFFIRMING the provisions of the Charter of the Organization of American States, the Inter-American Democratic Charter, the Social Charter of the Americas, the Declaration on Security in the Americas, and other inter-American instruments on promotion, protection, and observance of human rights, in particular economic, social, and cultural rights;[1]/

2. CONSIDERING that, even though American States have taken measures to achieve the integral development of their inhabitants, to buttress democracy and promote and protect human rights, there still remain challenges in terms of poverty and extreme poverty, food security and nutrition, discrimination, equity, equality and social inclusion, inclusive and quality education, universal health coverage, decent, dignified and productive work, and citizen security;

3. RECOGNIZING that eradicating hunger and poverty, in particular extreme poverty, requires the promotion of public social, economic and environmental policies that encourage, among others, productivity, employment and sustainable and broad-based and inclusive development in our nations;

4. CONCERNED that, in spite of the efforts made by the States, inequity and social exclusion continue, in different measures, to adversely affect our Hemisphere, and that tackling their causes and consequences is an imperative that should further unite the American states to improve conditions for economic and social development and promote fairer, equitable and inclusive societies, giving particular emphasis to the rights and participation of persons in vulnerable situations;

5. CONSIDERING that people’s quality of life and the full enjoyment of their rights and freedoms can be improved by minimizing the incidence and severity of territorial gaps with concrete integral development actions in the areas of education, healthcare, and social inclusion, bearing in mind the well-being of future generations;

6. RECOGNIZING the important contributions that women make to sustainable development and economic growth, including their unpaid work in the home and providing care; and the need for women’s empowerment to eliminate gender inequality and achieve the full enjoyment of their rights;

7. RECOGNIZING the contributions of migrants and their families, as well as their collective and individual potential as agents of development in countries of origin, transit and destination;

8. RECOGNIZING that universal access to quality and inclusive education, with special attention given to individuals and groups in vulnerable situations, strengthens the development of the individual, social inclusion, economic development and democratic institutions;

9. MINDFUL that health is essential for a full and productive life and that public health is an investment that impacts on the quality of life of our society, and taking into account the principles promoted by the Pan American Health Organization's Health Agenda for the Americas 2008-2017;

10. RECOGNIZING that social inclusion, equality of opportunity, equity and social justice are critical to democracy; and that the promotion, protection and effective exercise of human rights, in particular economic, social, and cultural rights, as well as access to justice, and dialogue among all sectors of the population, are essential for the strengthening of democracy;[2]/

11. REAFFIRMING that the basis and purpose of citizen security is the protection of human beings, and that the rule of law, the full respect for human rights, the fight against impunity, and integral development strengthen the conditions of citizen security;

12. EMPHASIZING the important role that public-private partnerships, with the participation of civil society and other social actors, can play in advancing comprehensive development;

13. RECOGNIZING that financial inclusion contributes to greater social inclusion, as well as the reduction of income inequality and poverty;

14. RECOGNIZING that information and communication technologies (ICTs), used in accordance with the universal principles of human rights, are effective instruments for the sustainable development of inclusive knowledge-based societies, the creation of opportunities, the promotion of cooperation among the peoples of the Americas and the exercise of human rights;

15. REAFFIRMING that family farming and small farmers are an important basis for sustainable food production aimed at achieving food and nutrition security, and recognizing the important contribution that family farming can play in eradicating poverty in the attainment of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

16. AWARE that climate change has adverse impacts throughout the Americas, causing deterioration in quality of life and the environment for present and future generations, and that Member States face significant risks from the adverse impacts of climate change,

particularly those vulnerable in accordance with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and require adaptation strategies to counteract such effects;

17. CONVINCED of the importance of promoting public policy, legislative and institutional frameworks for disaster risk reduction in order to reduce the loss of human lives and social, economic and environmental impacts that affect our societies;

18. CONSIDERING the importance of adopting effective measures that permit countries to overcome the transit challenges they face as landlocked developing countries and reaffirming the will to effectively implement the Almaty Program of Action approved by resolution A/RES/58/201 in the United Nations General Assembly, as well as existing agreements in their transit transport systems;

19. RECALLING the United Nations General Assembly Resolution, A/RES/67/206, highlighting the importance of coordinated, balanced and integrated actions to address the sustainable development challenges facing Small Island Developing States (SIDS); welcoming its designation of 2014 as the international year of SIDS; and noting that countries with low-lying coastal areas face similar challenges to their sustainable development;

20. RECOGNIZING the challenges faced by Member States that are small, vulnerable, highly-indebted and middle-income;

21. BEARING IN MIND UN Resolution A/RES/68/222 approved by the General Assembly on December 20, 2013 “Development cooperation with middle-income countries”, we recognize also that the middle-income countries still face significant challenges in their efforts to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

22. WELCOMING the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Panama Canal on August 15, 2014 an interoceanic passageway that contributes to the economic and sustainable development of the Hemisphere, and whose project to expand the canal will enable greater openness and facilitation of maritime trade in the region;

23. UNDERSCORING that inter-American cooperation for integral development is the common and joint responsibility of member states, within the framework of democratic principles, and that a goal of the Organization of American States, through its Inter-American Council for Integral Development, is to promote cooperation among the member states with a view to achieving their integral development and, in particular, to contribute to the elimination of poverty;

24. MINDFUL of the need to strengthen the coordinated efforts of the OAS with member states and with the institutions of the inter-American system, especially where the goals associated with the promotion and strengthening of integral development are concerned;

DECLARE:

1. TO COMMIT their efforts to eradicating hunger and poverty, in particular extreme poverty, combating inequity, inequality, discrimination, and social exclusion, and increasing equitable access to health services, as well as to quality and inclusive education; priority objectives which should inform actions of the inter-American system.
2. TO STRENGTHEN the capacity of the countries to withstand external shocks so that the progress made in the region in terms of eliminating hunger and poverty, especially extreme poverty, is sustainable.
3. TO RECOGNIZE the work currently underway on the post 2015 development agenda and to request that the General Secretariat incorporate, as appropriate, the results in its programs, projects, and activities.
4. TO ENCOURAGE inter-sectoral public policies on social protection and inclusion to strengthen respect for human rights and the adoption of comprehensive measures for the full and effective participation in society of all persons, in particular those in vulnerable situations; and to prevent, combat, and eradicate all forms of discrimination and intolerance.
5. TO ENCOURAGE the formulation and implementation of comprehensive and inclusive economic and social policies to deepen economic development with equity, foster investment and entrepreneurship, and generate decent, dignified, and productive work in all sectors, so as to reduce income and social inequalities.
6. TO STRENGTHEN efforts to ensure full equity and equality of access, opportunities, participation, and leadership of women in development, in accordance with international commitments adopted by states aimed at achieving full and equal participation for women in all spheres of society.
7. TO UNDERSCORE the need to develop and implement public policies, respectful of human rights, that favor the social inclusion of migrants, encourage exchanges of best practices amongst Member States, and create the necessary conditions for recognizing, optimizing, and maximizing the benefits of migration for the development of the countries of the Americas.
8. TO PROMOTE inclusive professional and technical training, as well as the development of mechanisms for skills certification in order to facilitate job market access and reinsertion; support personal and professional advancement, with an emphasis on innovation; and maximize productivity in the economy and institution building.
9. TO DEVELOP AND STRENGTHEN policies for improving availability, access and quality of health services, and that their delivery is culturally acceptable, and the promotion of healthy lifestyles for the population, particularly for persons and groups in

vulnerable situations, promoting universal health coverage, with emphasis on preventive care programs.

10. TO CONTINUE to promote and uphold democratic principles, human rights, access to justice for all and to foster social dialogue, as essential elements for social, economic, and cultural development, bearing in mind that democracy and integral development are interdependent and mutually reinforcing.

11. TO STRENGTHEN a multidimensional approach in their citizen security policies that contributes to integral development and social justice, that promotes community participation to contribute to reducing and preventing violence and crime in all its forms, taking into account that development and security are interlinked and mutually reinforcing.

12. TO STIMULATE AND STRENGTHEN public-private partnerships, with the participation of other stakeholders, in order to eliminate poverty, in particular extreme poverty, and advance comprehensive development of the Americas, taking into consideration the role of the State and corporate social responsibility.

13. TO STRENGTHEN public policies for the planning, creation, and modernization of physical infrastructure for transportation, energy, and connectivity, given the strategic role that they play in driving economies, generating employment, and promoting sustainable development.

14. TO REITERATE the need to adopt public policies for fair, equitable, and non-discriminatory access to basic public services, including safe drinking water and basic sanitation, as necessary measures to achieve integral development. Likewise, to promote and foster comprehensive public policies aimed at meeting housing needs among the poorest and most vulnerable segments of the population.

15. TO ENCOURAGE the promotion of financial inclusion policies that enhance access to and the use of affordable and quality financial services and strengthen the financial capability of excluded or underserved households, micro- and small businesses, cooperatives and other units of production as well as the promotion of financial education programs.

16. TO REAFFIRM that the expansion of access, appropriation and use of information and communication technologies (ICTs), under the principles of equity, universality and availability, in a framework of global cooperation and respect for human rights, contribute to poverty reduction, sustainable development, and social inclusion that facilitates access to information, education and freedom of expression. In this context, to underscore the role of the bodies of the inter-American system in the promotion and adoption of innovative and reliable ICTs in the Americas, reducing the digital divide.

17. TO PROMOTE inter-sectoral policies and strategies to encourage sustainable development and achieve food and nutrition security, by strengthening family and

smallholder farming, which should take into account production and supply of local products, including highly nutritional products.

18. TO CONTINUE AND TO STRENGTHEN our efforts towards the achievements of commitments made in the area of sustainable development and climate change to counter the adverse effects of climate change; build the capacity of the states, populations, and vulnerable ecosystems to adapt to climate change; and step up efforts to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions, in accordance with the principles, objectives and provisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

19. TO STRENGTHEN public policies on comprehensive disaster risk management that promote the participation of all levels of government and society, and which contribute to the improvement of quality of life of individuals and to sustainable development.

20. TO GIVE necessary support to the condition of landlocked developing country in the implementation of effective mechanisms to allow for the overcoming of their vulnerabilities and problems stemming from this situation, allowing the freedom of transit through the territory of transit states by all means of transport in a manner consistent with applicable international laws, international conventions and bilateral agreements requesting the preparation of a report from the General Secretariat on the difficulties and advances in this respect.

21. TO ENCOURAGE all member states, the Inter-American system and all other stakeholders to take advantage of the International Year of Small Island Developing States, to promote actions at all levels, including through international, regional and subregional cooperation, as appropriate, aimed at the achievement of sustainable development of Small Island Developing States, including countries with low-lying coastal areas".

22. TO PROMOTE AND STRENGTHEN effective cooperation and partnership building strategies amongst the States, as well as with relevant international institutions, with the objective of promoting sustainable development with social inclusion, consistent with national priorities and interests.

23. TO PROMOTE cooperation among member states with a view to achieving their integral development, and to contribute to the elimination of poverty, in particular extreme poverty. To this end, to entrust the OAS General Secretariat to support the coordination of cooperation efforts through existing mechanisms and instruments, and to generate synergies with institutions of the Inter-American System and take necessary steps to establish greater coordination, as appropriate, amongst the OAS, IDB, ECLAC and PAHO.

FOOTNOTES

1. ... The United States believes that civil and political rights are as important as economic, social and cultural rights to achieving development with social inclusion; all individuals rely on civil and political rights so that they can participate actively in the development of policies and programs to address poverty and discrimination and to provide for education, health care, food security and decent work. In particular, the exercise of civil and political rights plays the central role in strengthening democracy. Further, we understand the resolution's reaffirmation of prior documents to apply to those who affirmed them initially.

2.

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Idem.

[1]. The United States is committed to the promotion and protection of and respect for human rights, and reiterates that all human rights are universal, indivisible and interdependent and interrelated. ...

[2]. Idem.