



Caracas Declaration
“In the Bicentenary of the Struggle for
Independence
Towards the Path of Our Liberators”.

1. The Heads of State and Government of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, gathered in Caracas, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on 2nd and 3rd December 2011, within the framework of the III Summit of Latin America and the Caribbean on Integration and Development (CALC) and the XXII Summit of Rio Group, and in the year of the commemoration of the Bicentenary of the Independence of Venezuela, and in memory and homage to the historic and transcendental work of The Liberator, Simón Bolívar, agree:

2. To recognize the valuable contribution of the Permanent Mechanism for Consultation and Political Coordination - Rio Group - created in December 1986, in Rio de Janeiro, to the central issues of the regional and global agenda in accordance with the highest aspirations of our countries; as well as the impetus given to cooperation, integration and development in the region, CALC, created in December 2008, in Salvador de Bahía, Brazil.



3. To reaffirm the Declaration of the Latin American and Caribbean Unity Summit (Riviera Maya, Mexico, 23 February 2010), and, in particular, the decision to constitute the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) comprising the 33 sovereign States of our Region.
4. To welcome the establishment of the open-ended CALC and Rio Group Unified Forum, co-chaired by Chile and Venezuela which carried out the excellent task of drafting the document on the procedures of CELAC, and fulfilling thereby the Caracas Ministerial Declaration of 3rd July 2010.
5. To recognize the significant progress and consensus achieved in the meetings of Ministers of Foreign Affairs held in Caracas from July 2010 to April 2011, as well as the specialized Ministerial meetings in the social, environmental, energetic, financial and commercial areas, within the framework of the Venezuelan Presidency of CALC.
6. Aware of the challenges that the current international economic and financial crisis poses for the future of our Region and for our legitimate aspirations for social inclusion, equitable growth, and sustainable development and integration

7. Convinced that the unity and political, economic, social and cultural integration of Latin America and the Caribbean constitute both a fundamental aspiration of the peoples represented here, and a requirement for the Region to successfully confront the challenges before us.
8. Aware that the commemoration of the Bicentenary of the Independence processes in Latin America and the Caribbean provides a fitting framework for the establishment and implementation of our Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC).
9. Determined to promote and project a unified voice for Latin America and the Caribbean in the discussion of the principal issues, and in the positions of the Region on the relevant global events at international meetings and conferences, as well as in the dialogue with other regions and countries.
10. To recognize that our countries have made progress in regional and sub regional integration processes and in the establishment of various mechanisms over the past decades, reflecting the Region's diversity, plurality and vocation for unity, constituting a solid foundation to build a

community comprising all the States of Latin America and the Caribbean.

11. Conscious of our shared aspiration to build just, democratic and free societies, and convinced that each one of our peoples will choose the ways and means to pursue these ideals, based on their institutions and procedures, and with full respect for the democratic values of the region, the rule of law, and human rights.
12. To ratify our adherence to the Principles and Purposes enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and our respect for International Law.
13. Highlighting the path trod by the Latin American and Caribbean Liberators over two hundred years ago, a path effectively initiated with the Independence of Haiti in 1804, guided by Toussaint Louverture and by virtue of which Haiti became an independent Republic of the region. At the same time, we recall that the Republic of Haiti, led by its president Alexandre Pétion, supported Simón Bolívar on the independence struggles of the territories currently known as Latin America and the Caribbean, and so doing it set the basis for solidarity and integration among the peoples of the region.

14. Inspired by the action of the Liberators and fully incorporating their legacy into the foundational heritage of our Community of Latin American and Caribbean States.
15. Aware that 185 years have elapsed since the grand design of the Liberators was tested, and that the region has now acquired the necessary experience and maturity to address the challenge of unity and integration among the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.
16. Inspired by the Amphictyonic Congress of Panama in 1826, as a fundamental act of the Latin American and Caribbean doctrine of unity, where for the first time our young sovereign nations initiated the discussion on the destinies of our continent for peace, development and social transformation.
17. Acknowledging with appreciation the participation of indigenous peoples and afro-descendant peoples in the struggles of independence and acknowledging their moral, political, economic, spiritual and cultural contributions to the creation of our identities and the construction of our nations and democratic processes.

18. Highlighting the historic role played by the countries of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) in the process of liberation, development and integration in Latin America and the Caribbean and stressing the continued commitment of CARICOM and Caribbean Peoples to contribute to the integral and sustainable development of the region.

19. Exalting the commemoration of the Bicentenary of the Independence, the Latin American and Caribbean countries treasure the memories of our struggles for independence and we reaffirm the integrationist ideas of our Heroes and Heroines.

We declare:

20. Within the framework of the Bicentenary of Independence, we, the 33 Latin American and Caribbean countries have gathered, conscious of the efforts made at the Summit of Latin America and the Caribbean (CALC) of 17th December 2008 in Salvador de Bahia and in the Unity Summit held in Cancun on 23rd February 2010, to launch the Community of Latin America and the Caribbean States (CELAC)

21. In accordance with the original mandate of our Liberators, CELAC must move forward in the process of political, economic, social and cultural integration, based on a wise equilibrium between the unity and diversity of our peoples, so that the regional integration mechanism can become the ideal space to express our rich cultural diversity and also the forum to reaffirm the Latin American and the Caribbean identity, our common history and our ongoing struggles for justice and liberty.

22. That taking into consideration the diverse processes that formed in the Latin American and Caribbean identity, CELAC must become a space that protects the right of all cultures and ethnic groups of the region to existence, preservation and coexistence, as well as the multicultural character of our countries, and plurinational of some of our countries, especially of the native communities recreating and promoting their historical memory, their ancestral knowledge and experience.

Based on the values and principles of the above paragraph and picking up the Rio Group practice, CELAC will promote the development of instruments in order to ensure their compliance.

23. That recognizing the right of each nation to build freely and peacefully its own political and economic system, in the framework of the corresponding institutions according with the sovereign mandate of its people; the processes of dialogue, exchange and political negotiation carried out by CELAC must be done taking into account the following common values and principles: respect for International Law, peaceful settlement of disputes, and the prohibition of the use and the threat of use of force, the respect for self-determination, respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, the non-interference in the internal affairs of each country, the protection and promotion of human rights and democracy.
24. Based on the values and principles above and collecting the Rio Group's practice, the CELAC will promote the development of tools to ensure compliance with these.
25. That it is necessary to continue unifying efforts and capacities to boost the sustainable development of the region, focusing on the expanding process of political, economic, social and cultural cooperation and integration, so as to contribute to the consolidation of a multi-polar

and democratic world which is fair, balanced and at peace, as well as free of the scourge of colonialism and military occupation.

26. That it is necessary to deepen cooperation and the implementation of social policies to reduce the existing internal social inequalities with the aim of consolidating nations that are able to achieve and exceed the Millennium Development Goals.
27. The need to move forward on the basis of our principles for the strengthening and consolidation of Latin American and Caribbean cooperation, in the development of our economic complementarities and South-South cooperation as an axis of integration in our common space, and as an instrument to reduce our asymmetries.
28. That CELAC, as the only mechanism for dialogue and consensus that unites the 33 countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, is the highest expression of our will for unity in diversity, where henceforth, our political, economic, social and cultural ties will strengthen on the basis of a common agenda of welfare, peace and security for our peoples, with a view to consolidation of our regional community.

29. That the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), bearing in mind the historical heritage of the Rio Group and CALC, will promote action plans for the implementation of the mandates and the fulfillment of the commitments embodied in the Salvador de Bahia and Cancun Declarations, the Montego Bay Action Plan and the Caracas Work Programme.

Highlighting the historical process of our nations, the Heads of State and Government of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean decide:

30. To adopt, under the principles of flexibility and voluntary participation in the initiatives, the declarations and documents adopted in the specialized ministerial meetings on Social Development and Eradication of Hunger and Poverty, held in Caracas on March 24th and 25th 2011; monitoring and evaluation meeting of the progress made on the Ministerial Environment Forum, held in Caracas on April 28th and 29th 2011; Ministerial Meeting on Energy, held in Caracas on May 12th and 13th 2011; Ministerial Meeting on International Financial Crisis and Foreign Trade, held in Caracas on May 18th and 19th 2011; Meeting of regional and sub-regional Integration Mechanisms in Latin America and the

Caribbean within the framework of CALC on October 25th and 26th 2010; meeting of regional and sub-regional integration mechanisms in Latin America and the Caribbean in the economic-commercial field, held in Montevideo on April 6th and 7th 2010; meeting of regional and sub-regional integration mechanisms in Latin America and the Caribbean in the production field, held in Caracas on May 5th and 6th 2011; meeting of regional and sub-regional integration mechanisms in Latin America and the Caribbean in the social and institutional field, held in Caracas on June 10th and 11th 2011; meeting on conclusions of regional and sub-regional integration mechanisms in Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Caracas on June 11th 2011; Coordination meeting on regional initiatives in the infrastructure field for the physical integration of Transport and Telecommunication, as well as border integration, held in Mexico on March 24th and 25th 2011; Regional meeting of International Mechanisms on Humanitarian Assistance, held in Panama on May 30th and 31st 2011; regional meeting on migrant protection, held in Peru on June 26th and 27th 2011.

31. To launch CELAC as a representative mechanism for political consultation, integration and cooperation of Latin America

and Caribbean States, and as a common space to ensure the unity and integration of our region

32. To reaffirm that the common purpose of integration, unity and cooperation within CELAC is based on legacy of the shared principles and adopted by consensus at the Summit of Latin America and the Caribbean on Integration and Development (CALC), as well as of the Permanent Mechanism for Consultation and Political Coordination of the Rio Group, which after their fruitful work formally cease their functions in order to pave the way for CELAC.
33. To incorporate the Caracas Action Plan 2012 into this Declaration with the aim of bring into reality our political commitment to defending our unity, integration, cooperation, complementarity and solidarity.
34. To approve the “*CELAC Statute of Proceedings*”, as an integral part of this Declaration, thus setting up definitely the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC).
35. They invite the Pro-Tempore Chairmanship of CELAC to implement, during its Presidency, the Caracas Action Plan, particularly in the

social, environmental, energy, economic and cultural areas, and other priority areas established in the Caracas Action Plan. Likewise, they entrust the Ministers of Foreign Affairs to submit proposals to allocate the necessary financial and material resources, supported by the criteria of maximum effectiveness and austerity established in the procedures document of CELAC

36. To commit the willingness of our Governments to guide the regional mechanisms and organisms, to promote among themselves communication, cooperation, articulation, coordination, complementarity and synergy, where appropriate, and through their respective executive bodies, in order to contribute to the achievement of the integration goals set forth in this declaration, ensuring the efficient use of resources and the complementarity of efforts.
37. To reaffirm the invitation to host the CELAC Summit in the Republic of Chile in 2012.
38. To host the 2013 CELAC Summit in the Republic of Cuba.



39. To welcome the holding the CELAC Summit for the year 2014 in the Republic of Costa Rica.

40. Done at Caracas the birthplace of the Liberator Simón Bolívar, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, on December 3rd, 2011.