

AG/RES. 429 (IX-0/79)

DECLARATION OF LA PAZ

(Resolution adopted at the twelfth plenary session
held on October 31, 1979)

The General Assembly of the Organization of American States, at its ninth regular session held in La Paz, Bolivia,

Taking up the important ideas raised at this meeting, and the urgent hope of the peoples of the hemisphere that integral development can be achieved, democratic systems consolidated and inter-American solidarity strengthened,

1. Reaffirms its conviction that observance of the principles and objectives embodied in the Charter of the Organization of American States and a determination to restructure the inter-American system so that it can become a dynamic and creative structure will help achieve peace, justice and broad inter-American cooperation for integral development.

2. Reiterates that the principle of nonintervention is basic to inter-American relations and that these relations are strengthened by ideological pluralism.

3. Also reaffirms the principle of peaceful settlement of international disputes, of fundamental importance for harmonious co-existence, understanding and cooperation, urge the member states to settle their disputes by peaceful means, and offers them its most determined support in these efforts.

4. Expresses its satisfaction with the progress the nations of this hemisphere have made in achieving independence, and reaffirms its determination to aid in the continuing process of decolonization of the region so as not to defer the exercise of the legitimate right of peoples to forge their own destiny.

5. Stresses the importance for the member states to re-establish or improve democratic systems of government in which the exercise of power derives from the legitimate and free expression of the popular will in accordance with the unique characteristics and circumstances of each country.

6. Reiterates that full respect for human rights is basic to co-existence with dignity and freedom for all the peoples of the Americas, and in this connection, acknowledges and encourages the important work being done by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

Expresses its condemnation of the practices of torture and terrorism.

7. Stresses the need to devote maximum efforts to broadening and strengthening détente throughout the world, thus preventing the tensions among the great powers from extending into Latin America and the Caribbean.

8. Declares its profound concern over the lack of progress in disarmament efforts, particularly nuclear disarmament, among the military powers of the world. Reiterates its conviction that universal reduction of arms expenditures will lessen the danger of war and might also allow for an increase in allocations of resources to the financing of economic and social progress in the developing countries.

9. Declares that member states should continue their efforts to democratize international relations through real and effective participation by all the developing countries in decision-making, particularly as regards matters that interest or might affect them.

10. Emphasizes that strengthening the democratic system requires dynamic and stable economies, and therefore, it is essential that member states eliminate all forms, measures or provisions--economic or of any other character--that restrict market access of products, particularly those from developing countries, or that destabilize the prices of raw materials. Also affirms that it is essential that member states refrain from taking new restrictive measures that could harm the developing countries and aggravate the serious economic and social problems they face. Notes further the need to improve the operations of the consultation and negotiation mechanisms of the Organization and to observe the provisions upon which these mechanisms are based, so as to establish a productive dialogue among the member states.

11. Emphasizes that it is important for the member states to promote economic and social development projects in Latin America and the Caribbean that are aimed at making comprehensive structural changes and that, by stimulating a democratization founded on sound, broad-based institutions that have the full participation of the people, could enable a machinery for development cooperation to operate. In this connection, notes with interest the initiative announced by the member countries of the Andean Group towards establishment of a Fund for Peace for this purpose.

12. Emphasizes the need for the member states to pledge their best efforts to alleviate and overcome the grave difficulties that some countries of the region face because of geographic characteristics or lack of basic resources, in achieving full economic and social development.

13. Emphasizes that the appropriate organs of the Organization of American States can contribute to the exchange of views and, if so agreed

in particular cases, can facilitate coordination that might contribute to positive accomplishments in other international forums where the economic problems affecting the region are discussed.

14. Considers that better coordination among the various organs of the OAS and improved methods of operation are urgently required, in order to avoid duplication of effort and unnecessary expenditures, as well as to make proper use of their expertise.

15. Reaffirms that regional and subregional integration and cooperation among all Latin American and Caribbean countries are the most effective means of achieving accelerated harmonious and balanced development and of strengthening their capacity for joint action toward establishing a new international economic order.

Therefore pledges its support for the efforts in this connection being carried out by the systems for cooperation and integration of the area, and

DECIDES:

In recognition of the hospitality extended by the people and government of Bolivia, to name this document "Declaration of La Paz."