

# **2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Regional Meeting of the National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights of the Americas**

**November 19-21, 2000  
Mexico City, Mexico**

## **Statement to Create a Network of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights of the Americas**

Representatives of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of the Human Rights of the Americas, representatives of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and observers representing other interested organizations met in Mexico City, Mexico; November 19 to 21, 2000.

The representatives of National Institutions:

Reaffirming their commitment to the universal and indivisible rights declared in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments which recognise that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights and are entitled to equal protection against any form of discrimination and abuse of power.

Encouraging all states in the Americas to ratify all relevant United Nations and regional human rights instruments to which they are not yet a party and to ensure the full implementation of all instruments which they have already ratified.

Welcoming growing interest shown world-wide in the establishment and strengthening of independent and pluralistic National Institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights.

Recognising the need of such human rights institutions to strengthen and promote the process of democratisation and guarantee the Rules of Law.

Reaffirming the important role that National Institutions play in the promotion and protection of human rights, the prevention of their violation and the assurance of effective redress when those rights are violated.

Recognising the importance of full conformity with the Principles Relating to the Status and Functioning of National Institutions for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights (the Paris Principles).

Agreeing that, at the international level co-operation is essential to ensure the effective promotion and protection of human rights, and

Recognising the benefits of regional co-operation, including through such mechanisms as a Network of National Institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights in the Americas, including the Caribbean, that conforms with the Paris Principles:

Therefore, the representatives of National Institutions of the Americas, hereby:

1. Approve the establishment of a Network of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights (NIs) of the Americas, which is here meant to include the Caribbean.
2. Agree that such a Network of NIs of the Americas, with the end result of establishing and maintaining a culture of human rights in the region and encouraging greater respect for implementation of human rights by governments, would further and expand their mutual support, co-operation and joint activity through:
  - information exchanges
  - training and development for institution members and staff
  - development of joint positions on issues of common interest
  - undertaking joint projects
  - sharing expertise
  - periodical regional meetings
  - regional seminars on common themes and needs
  - mutually assisting and co-operating promptly and effectively with respect to requests from other National Institutions regarding violations of human rights of their nationals present in a country that has a National Institution.
3. Agree that the Network of NIs of Americas will work in close Co-operation with existing governmental and non-governmental organizations, particularly with those already established in the Americas and involved in the promotion and protection of human rights in the region.
4. Agree to prepare, over the course of the next 6 to 12 months, a draft proposal of the statutes of the Network of NIs of Americas that will include the responsibilities, functions and organisational forum that a Network of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights of the Americas will assume.
5. Further agree on the need to have a permanent secretariat to Network and accept with gratitude the proposal that, on an interim basis, the National Commission of Human Rights of Mexico will provide this secretariat function.
6. Agree that the Network of NIs of Americas develop a close co-operation and where possible partnership with the Organization of American State (OAS), taking particular advantage of the current reform process of the Inter-American system, and the April 2001 Summit of the Americas which will be held in Quebec City, Canada.

7. Call upon Governments, UN and non-UN related international organisations and other appropriate institutions to provide the appropriate assistance and financial support necessary to firmly establish and contribute to the future work of the Network of National Institutions of the Americas.
8. Welcome the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights emphasis on the importance of creating and strengthening of independent National Institutions as one of her major priorities in the Americas and agree to work closely with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and request the High Commissioner to facilitate close co-operation between National Institutions of the Americas region, including by ensuring that necessary resources and funds are available for work relating to these National Institutions in keeping with the ECOSOC decision of July 1998; and recent decisions of the Commission of Human Rights.
9. Call for a memorandum of understanding between the Network of NIs of Americas and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights as a basis for their future co-operation.

In recognition of the National Institutions of the Americas agreement to all of the above, their representatives hereby attach their signatures this 21<sup>st</sup> day of November, 2000 in Mexico City, Mexico.

**Defensor del Pueblo de la República  
Argentina**

**Comisionado Nacional de los  
Derechos Humanos de Honduras**

**Defensor del Pueblo de la República  
Bolivia**

**Comisión Nacional de Derechos  
Humanos de México**

**Canadian Human Rights Commission**

**Defensoría del Pueblo de la República de  
Perú**

**Defensor del Pueblo de la República  
de Ecuador**