

DECLARATION OF THE SEVENTH INTER-AMERICAN CONFERENCE OF  
MAYORS AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES

June 28, 2001  
Miami, FL

We, the 510 local officials participating in the VII Inter-American Conference of Mayors and Local Authorities, do make the following declaration:

I) Recalling the Plan of Action of the April 2001 Summit of the Americas of Heads of State and Government and, in particular, the support for the Declaration of the VI Inter-American Conference of Mayors, and the endorsement of the holding of a Meeting of Ministers and High Level Authorities in the framework of the Organization of American States,

1) Applaud the decision of the Organization of American States to hold the Ministerial Meeting in Bolivia on July 29-31, 2001;

2) Urge our national governments to send their key representatives on these issues to this meeting and future ministerial meetings, including representatives of local governments and civil society;

3) We strongly urge the delegations at the ministerial meeting to seriously consider the recommendations of the mayors of the region, contained in the above-mentioned declaration;

4) We propose creating a network of local governments to follow up the resolutions and declarations approved at the Inter-American Conferences of Mayors and Local Authorities and, particularly, relative to the Action Plan approved at the Summit of the Americas of Québec 2001;

5) We appeal to the Ministers and high ranking authorities to continue meeting to discuss these important matters and to initiate dialogue with the local governments and civil society in this context through the participation of the ministerial authorities of the national governments in the Inter-American Conferences of Mayors and Local Authorities.

II) We exhort the Presidents of the Republics of the Americas to initiate, strengthen and consolidate the process of decentralization and the transfer of responsibilities from the centralized power of the national governments to the municipalities, with sufficient and sustainable financial resources, due to the fact that local governments are closer to the citizens and thus better able to facilitate the integral economic, social and political progress of those nations that have not yet reached a full status of general development.

III) To seek from the Presidents of the developed countries, and those in the process of development, an agreement to protect, preserve and improve the environment, as an indispensable strategy of assuring sustainable development for the present generation, and as a way of fulfilling inter-generational obligations.

IV) We call upon the organizers of the Inter-American Conference of Mayors to appoint the following work commissions in preparation for next year's conference: health and environment; investment financing and international cooperation; education and citizenship; safety and community participation; municipal structure and autonomy; and social development and tourism, that will serve as support for the strengthening of local management, and which will gather periodically in different countries, in order to present proposals to the Eighth Inter-American Conference of Mayors and Local Authorities, to render viable solutions to the urgent demands presented by the municipalities.

V) We call upon the Inter-American Development Bank, the World Bank, and the entities for international cooperation to assume the responsibility of working directly with municipal governments and that such cooperation translate into concrete actions to facilitate the sustainable development of the municipalities.

VI) We, the participants in the VII Inter-American Conference of Mayors and Local Authorities of Latin America, gathered in Miami, manifest our solidarity with our Colombian brothers and sisters and call upon the conflicting forces to silence their arms, respect the humanitarian international rights and permit the celebration of the "Copa América" in Colombia. Moreover, we request the release of all those persons that are presently deprived of their freedom. The autonomy and the lives of the Mayors and local authorities in the zones in conflict must be respected as well.

VII) We congratulate the Peruvian Government for the capture of Vladimiro Montesinos Torres, who gravely attempted to undermine the democratic stability of Perú, and extend our sympathy and solidarity to the victims of the recent earthquake in Perú, hoping for their expeditious recovery.