



SPECIAL DECLARATION ABOUT THE DEFENSE OF DEMOCRACY AND CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER IN THE COMMUNITY OF LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN STATES (CELAC)

The Heads of State and Government of the Latin American and the Caribbean countries, gathered in Caracas, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on December 3rd, 2011, within the framework of the Foundational Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States:

We reiterate that our community is founded on the utmost respect for the Rule of Law, the respect for sovereignty, and territorial integrity, the defence of democracy, the peoples' sovereign will, social justice, the respect for Human Rights and fundamental liberties, which are essential requirements for the participation in different organizations of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) and are conquests of the Latin American and Caribbean peoples which cannot be taken away.

We ratify that the full currency of the Rule of Law, the respect for lawfully established authorities as an expression of the peoples' sovereign will, the non-interference in domestic affairs and the defense of democratic institutions are indispensable guarantees for ensuring peace, stability, economic prosperity and

social justice, as well as the effective exercise of Human Rights and fundamental liberties, and that any rupture or threatened rupture of the constitutional order and the Rule of Law in one of the Member States of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States jeopardises its normal development and constitutes a serious event that calls for determined action on the part of the Latin American and Caribbean community.

We reaffirm that democracy, sustainable development, respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development, are interdependent and strengthen one another, and are all equally based on the principles of objectivity, impartiality and universality.

We highlight the importance of commitments made in the field of democracy in the framework of the United Nations and regional instruments. We also bear in mind that democracy is a universal value that is part of the historical heritage of the Rio Group (GRio) and the Latin American and Caribbean Summit on Integration and Development (CALC), which develop in a broad manner the democratic principles we share.

We express our rejection and condemnation of any attempt to alter or subvert the constitutional order and the normal functioning of institutions in any Member State of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States.

We agree:

- To adopt a clause of commitment to the promotion, defence and protection of the Rule of Law, the democratic order, the sovereignty of the peoples, human rights and fundamental liberties, including, among others, the right to life, freedom and security of a person, the non-subjection to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment or treatment, not being arbitrarily arrested, imprisoned or banished, nor subjected to summary and arbitrary execution or enforced disappearance, and to freedom of opinion and speech.

- That, when the constitutional government of a Member State considers that there is a threatened rupture or alteration of the democratic order that affects it substantially, it may notify such situation to the Pro Tempore Presidency, which, with the assistance of the Troika, shall be responsible for disclosing the situation to all Member States, so that they can decide on the adoption of specific, concerted actions of cooperation and the statement of the Latin America and Caribbean Community for the defense and preservation of its democratic institutions.

- In the event of rupture of the constitutional order or of the Rule of Law, the Pro Tempore Presidency, with the support of the Troika, shall convene a Extraordinary Meeting of Foreign Ministries of the Member States, so that, with the full participation of the legitimate

Government affected and in a swift and timely manner, they decide by consensus, taking into account other ongoing efforts, to adopt, among others, the following measures:

1. To conduct diplomatic efforts in the affected State in order to contribute to the restoration of the democratic institutional political process and of the Rule of Law as soon as possible;

2. To prevent the State in which the rupture of the constitutional order or of the Rule of Law has occurred, from enjoying the right to participate in the different bodies and instances and from enjoying the rights and benefits arising from their membership in the Latin American and Caribbean Community, until the constitutional order is restored.

The measures adopted with regard to the events to which this Declaration refers must be consistent with international law and the domestic legislation of the affected State.

- End the measures referred to above when it is determined, on the basis of periodic evaluations of the situation, that the causes giving rise to their adoption have completely disappeared.

Signed in the city of Caracas, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, on December 3rd, 2011.