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Apr 21 2009

ALBA

Cumaná, Venezuela

We, the Heads of State and Government of Bolivia, Cuba, Dominica, Honduras, Nicaragua and Venezuela, member countries of ALBA, consider that the Draft Declaration of the 5th Summit of the Americas is insufficient and unacceptable for the following reasons:

- The Declaration does not provide answers to the Global Economic Crisis, even though this crisis constitutes the greatest challenge faced by humanity in the last decades and is the most serious threat of the current times to the welfare of our peoples.

- The Declaration unfairly excludes Cuba, without mentioning the consensus in the region condemning the blockade and isolation to which the people and the government of Cuba have incessantly been exposed in a criminal manner.

For this reason, we, the member countries of ALBA believe that there is no consensus for the adoption of this draft declaration because of the reasons above stated, and accordingly, we propose to hold a thorough debate on the following topics:

1. Capitalism is leading humanity and the planet to extinction. What we are experiencing is a global economic crisis of a systemic and structural nature, not another cyclic crisis. Those who think that with a taxpayer money injection and some regulatory measures this crisis will end are wrong. The financial system is in crisis because it trades bonds with six times the real value of the assets and services produced and rendered in the world, this is not a "system regulation failure", but a integrating part of the capitalist system that speculates with all assets and values with a view to obtain the maximum profit possible. Until now, the economic crisis has generated over 100 million additional hungry persons and has slashed over 50 million jobs, and these figures show an upward trend.

2. Capitalism has caused the environmental crisis, by submitting the necessary conditions for life in the planet, to the predominance of market and profit. Each year we consume one third more of what the planet is able to regenerate. With this squandering binge of the capitalist system, we are going to need two planets Earth by the year 2030.

3. The global economic crisis, climate change, the food crisis and the energy crisis are the result of the decay of capitalism, which threatens to end life and the planet. To avert this outcome, it is necessary to develop and model an alternative to the capitalist system. A system based on:

- solidarity and complementarity, not competition;
- a system in harmony with our mother earth and not plundering of human resources;
- a system of cultural diversity and not cultural destruction and imposition of cultural values and lifestyles alien to the realities of our countries;
- a system of peace based on social justice and not on imperialist policies and wars;
- in summary, a system that recovers the human condition of our societies and peoples and does not reduce them to mere consumers or merchandise.

4. As a concrete expression of the new reality of the continent, we, Caribbean and

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Latin American countries, have commenced to build our own institutionalization, an institutionalization that is based on a common history dating back to our independence revolution and constitutes a concrete tool for deepening the social, economic and cultural transformation processes that will consolidate our full sovereignty. ALBA-TCP, Petrocaribe or UNASUR, mentioning merely the most recently created, are solidarity-based mechanisms of unity created in the midst of such transformations with the obvious intention of boosting the efforts of our peoples to attain their own freedom. To face the serious effects of the global economic crisis, we, the ALBA-TCP countries, have adopted innovative and transforming measures that seek real alternatives to the inadequate international economic order, not to boost their failed institutions. Thus, we have implemented a Regional Clearance Unitary System, the SUCRE, which includes a Common Unit of Account, a Clearance Chamber and a Single Reserve System. Similarly, we have encouraged the constitution of grand-national companies to satisfy the essential needs of our peoples and establish fair and complementary trade mechanisms that leave behind the absurd logic of unbridled competition.

5. We question the G20 for having tripled the resources of the International Monetary Fund when the real need is to establish a new world economic order that includes the full transformation of the IMF, the World Bank and the WTO, entities that have contributed to this global economic crisis with their neoliberal policies.

6. The solutions to the global economic crisis and the definition of a new international financial scheme should be adopted with the participation of the 192 countries that will meet in the United Nations Conference on the International Financial Crisis to be held on June 1-3 to propose the creation of a new international economic order.

7. As for climate change, developed countries are in an environmental debt to the world because they are responsible for 70% of historical carbon emissions into the atmosphere since 1750. Developed countries should pay off their debt to humankind and the planet; they should provide significant resources to a fund so that developing countries can embark upon a growth model which does not repeat the serious impacts of the capitalist industrialization.

8. Solutions to the energy, food and climate change crises should be comprehensive and interdependent. We cannot solve a problem by creating new ones in fundamental areas for life. For instance, the widespread use of agricultural fuels has an adverse effect on food prices and the use of essential resources, such as water, land and forests.

9. We condemn the discrimination against migrants in any of its forms. Migration is a human right, not a crime. Therefore, we request the United States government an urgent reform of its migration policies in order to stop deportations and massive raids and allow for reunion of families. We further demand the removal of the wall that separates and divides us, instead of uniting us. In this regard, we petition for the abrogation of the Law of Cuban Adjustment and removal of the discriminatory, selective Dry Feet, Wet Feet policy that has claimed human losses. Bankers who stole the money and resources from our countries are the true responsible, not migrant workers. Human rights should come first, particularly human rights of the underprivileged, downtrodden sectors in our society, that is, migrants without identity papers. Free movement of people and human rights for everybody, regardless of their migration status, are a must for integration. Brain drain is a way of plundering skilled human resources exercised by rich countries.

10. Basic education, health, water, energy and telecommunications services should be declared human rights and cannot be subject to private deal or marketed by the World Trade Organization. These services are and should be essentially public utilities of universal access.

11. We wish a world where all, big and small, countries have the same rights and where there is no empire. We advocate non-intervention. There is the need to strengthen, as the only legitimate means for discussion and assessment of bilateral and multilateral agendas in the hemisphere, the foundations for mutual respect between states and governments, based on the principle of non-interference of a state in the internal affairs of another state, and inviolability of sovereignty and self-determination of the peoples. We request the new Government of the United States, the arrival of which has given rise to some expectations in the hemisphere and the world, to finish the longstanding and dire tradition of interventionism and aggression that has characterized the actions of the US governments throughout history, and particularly intensified during the Administration of President George W. Bush. By the same token, we request the new Government of the United States to abandon

interventionist practices, such as cover-up operations, parallel diplomacy, media wars aimed at disturbing states and governments, and funding of destabilizing groups. Building on a world where varied economic, political, social and cultural approaches are acknowledged and respected is of the essence.

12. With regard to the US blockade against Cuba and the exclusion of the latter from the Summit of the Americas, we, the member states of the Bolivarian Alternative for the Peoples of Our America, reassert the Declaration adopted by all Latin American and Caribbean countries last December 16, 2008, on the need to end the economic, trade and financial blockade imposed by the Government of the United States of America on Cuba, including the implementation of the so-called Helms-Burton Act. The declaration sets forth in its fundamental paragraphs the following:

"CONSIDERING the resolutions approved by the United Nations General Assembly on the need to finish the economic, trade and financial blockade imposed by the United States on Cuba, and the statements on such blockade, which have been approved in numerous international meetings.

"WE AFFIRM that the application of unilateral, coercive measures affecting the wellbeing of peoples and hindering integration processes is unacceptable when defending free exchange and the transparent practice of international trade.

"WE STRONGLY REPEL the enforcement of laws and measures contrary to International Law, such as the Helms-Burton Act, and we urge the Government of the United States of America to finish such enforcement.

"WE REQUEST the Government of the United States of America to comply with the provisions set forth in 17 successive resolutions approved by the United Nations General Assembly and put an end to the economic, trade and financial blockade on Cuba."

Additionally, we consider that the attempts at imposing the isolation of Cuba have failed, as nowadays Cuba forms an integral part of the Latin American and Caribbean region; it is a member of the Rio Group and other hemispheric organizations and mechanisms, which develops a policy of cooperation, in solidarity with the countries in the hemisphere; which promotes full integration of Latin American and Caribbean peoples. Therefore, there is no reason whatsoever to justify its exclusion from the mechanism of the Summit of the Americas.

13. Developed countries have spent at least USD 8 billion to rescue a collapsing financial structure. They are the same that fail to allocate the small sums of money to attain the Millennium Goals or 0.7% of the GDP for the Official Development Assistance. Never before the hypocrisy of the wording of rich countries had been so apparent. Cooperation should be established without conditions and fit in the agendas of recipient countries by making arrangements easier; providing access to the resources, and prioritizing social inclusion issues.

14. The legitimate struggle against drug trafficking and organized crime, and any other form of the so-called "new threats" must not be used as an excuse to undertake actions of interference and intervention against our countries.

15. We are firmly convinced that the change, where everybody repose hope, can come only from organization, mobilization and unity of our peoples.

As the Liberator wisely said:

Unity of our peoples is not a mere illusion of men, but an inexorable decree of destiny. —
Simón Bolívar

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