



March 7, 2013

Ladies and Gentlemen  
Permanent Representatives  
Organization of American States

In this important effort to strengthen the Inter American Human Rights system, one of the most important collective achievements of the people of our hemisphere, we appreciate the opportunity you have provided us to share with you some reflections. We hope to contribute to this process and that it will result in an Inter American Human Rights system with improved technical capacities, stronger financing, and more efficient operations for the promotion and defense of the fundamental rights and dignity of all of the people in the hemisphere.

These reflections that we share today are the result of both the long-term commitment of former President Jimmy Carter to human rights and democracy in our hemisphere (and who in 1977 signed the American Convention on Human Rights), as well as the rich dialogue in which some of you participated together with the Secretary General, the President of the Inter American Commission on Human Rights, its Executive Secretary and President Carter this past Tuesday, March 5. This dialogue, open to all of the permanent missions before the Organization of American States, was made possible thanks to the hospitality and support of the Washington College of Law of American University and the Due Process of Law Foundation.

President Carter recalled and emphasized that although the Inter American Human Rights system was created during a period in which military dictators prevailed in the hemisphere, democracies also are imperfect and require a system that will help them improve their own efforts to ensure the protection of human rights. Some of the participants brought to mind that their democracies were strengthened thanks to the actions of the Inter American Commission on Human Rights and the Inter American Court of Human Rights.

As a result of the dialogue carried out this past Tuesday, we verified the high degree of consensus and the general satisfaction that exists with the report and the proposals to reform the regulations, policies and practices, elaborated by the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights, in response to the recommendations included in the report prepared by the Special Working Group for strengthening the Inter American Commission of Human Rights, approved by the Permanent Council in January 2012. In the same manner, the Permanent Representatives that participated in this dialogue agreed and reaffirmed that the goal of their governments is to effectively strengthen the special

rapporteurships of the Inter American Commission on Human Rights and not to weaken them.

The Member States also acknowledged and appreciate the good disposition of the IACHR for dialogue to search for solutions for those concerns that still persist in some States. We recognize that the strengthening of the Inter American system in general, and of the Inter American Human Rights system in particular, is an ongoing process. However, we also consider that it is important to close this phase within the established deadlines at the Special Session of the General Assembly scheduled for Friday, March 22.

In addition to the topics that the States prioritized during the reflection process, it is important that the discussion that is to be carried out this month address, in a serious manner, the topics of financing for the Inter-American Human Rights System and the observance of its recommendations and decisions. Any changes that the IACHR implements in its practices and procedures will only have meaning with the member states express commitment to respect its recommendations and to provide the necessary human and financial resources for its operation.

Sincerely,

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