



XII TWELFTH CONFERENCE
OF DEFENSE MINISTERS
OF THE AMERICAS

PORT OF SPAIN, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, OCTOBER 10-12 2016

**“Strengthening Defence and Security Cooperation in the Hemisphere
in an Increasingly Volatile Global Environment”**

DECLARATION OF PORT OF SPAIN

The Ministers of Defence and Heads of Delegation participating in the Twelfth Conference of Defense Ministers of the Americas (XII CDMA) assembled in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, during the period October 10-12, 2016:

COMMITTED to respect for the principles established in the Charter of the United Nations, the Charter of the Organization of American States and the Inter-American Democratic Charter;

COMMITTED ALSO to the Declaration on Security in the Americas, in which Member States affirm, inter alia, that:

- (i) The concept of security in the Hemisphere is multidimensional in scope, includes traditional and new threats, concerns, and other challenges to the security of the states of the Hemisphere, incorporates the priorities of each state, contributes to the consolidation of peace, integral development and social justice, and is based on democratic values, respect for and promotion and defence of human rights, solidarity, cooperation and respect for national sovereignty;
- (ii) The Conference of Defense Ministers of the Americas (CDMA) and other existing fora for consultation on defence matters in the Hemisphere have become appropriate fora for promoting mutual understanding and confidence, dialogue, and transparency in the area of defence;
- (iii) Solidarity among the American states expressed, inter alia, through their security and defence cooperation, contributes to the stability and security of the states and the hemisphere as a whole;
- (iv) Bilateral and sub-regional agreements and cooperation mechanisms in the area of security and defence are essential to strengthening security in the Hemisphere;
- (v) Natural and man-made disasters afflict states of the Hemisphere and cause greater devastation in the most vulnerable states that have not yet developed adequate prevention and mitigation capabilities;
- (vi) New cooperation mechanisms are required to improve and broaden the region's response capability in preventing and mitigating the effects of these disasters;

RECALLING that in the Declaration on Security in the Americas, Member States acknowledge the evolving role of the armed forces in the changing international defence and security environment;

RECALLING ALSO:

The Declarations of the Summits of the Heads of State and Government of the Americas and the democratic principles that inspired the creation of the CDMA;

RECALLING FURTHER:

The principles and purpose of the CDMA as articulated in the CDMA Regulations and the principles and commitments established at previous CDMA's;

COGNISANT THAT:

The purpose of the CDMA is to foster mutual knowledge, analysis, debate and exchange of ideas and experiences on defence and security matters, and any other mechanism of interaction that enables the achievement of its purpose. The expected results of the CDMA are to increase cooperation and integration, and contribute from a defence and security planning perspective, to the development of Member States;

RECOGNISING:

The aims and aspirations of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs) which call on all states and relevant actors to contribute to national development in a manner that would ensure long-term sustainability, their applicability to the principles and purpose of the CDMA, and the evolving role of the armed forces and defence institutions in this regard;

ACKNOWLEDGING:

The impacts of climate change, which may increase the frequency, scale, and complexity of future missions of the armed forces, including defence support to civil authorities, may at the same time undermine the sustainability of critical infrastructure, installations and assets that support activities of the armed forces;

ACKNOWLEDGING FURTHER:

The contributions of CDMA Member States to peacekeeping operations internationally and in the hemisphere, in particular, their support to the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH);

DECLARE:

1. That the hemisphere faces an increasingly diverse, complex and emerging set of threats and challenges, many of which are transnational and affect states in different ways¹;
2. That these threats call for an integrated, coordinated, multi-dimensional approach with full respect for the diversity and sovereignty of states²;
3. That the evolving role of the armed forces and defence institutions is pivotal in confronting current transnational and multidimensional threats and calls for new and creative approaches to strengthen hemispheric security and defence cooperation³;
4. Their commitment to strengthening inter-institutional and inter-governmental coordination and the security and defence regimes across the Americas for the protection of people, and the maintenance of peace and security, giving priority to the respect for human rights, sovereignty and governance of each Member State;

¹ The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela registered its reservation with the reference to “increasingly diverse, complex and emerging set of threats and challenges” in this paragraph.

² The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela registered its reservation to this paragraph

³ The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela registered its reservation with the reference to “current transnational and multidimensional threats” in this paragraph.

5. Their adoption of the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Working Group established pursuant to Article 2 of the Declaration of Arequipa of the XI CDMA pertaining to alternatives for coordination between the CDMA and the Specialised Conferences outlined hereunder⁴:
 - i. The Pro Tempore Secretariat of the CDMA should meet with representatives from each Specialised Conference (Conference of American Armies (CAA), Inter-American Naval Conference (CNI), System of Cooperation Among the American Air Forces/Conference of the American Air Chiefs (SICOFAA/CONJEFAMER)), to receive their input on the development of the thematic agenda for the CDMA;
 - ii. The Pro Tempore Presidency of each Specialised Conference should be invited to deliver a report on the outcome of its conference proceedings to the CDMA and to provide insight on future work programmes;
 - iii. The Pro Tempore Presidency of each Specialised Conference should be invited to take into account the outcome documents of the CDMA;
 - iv. Representatives of the Pro Tempore Presidency of the CDMA and of each Specialised Conference should be invited to attend the meetings of each Conference;
 - v. The Inter-American Defense Board (IADB) could be requested to provide technical support to the Pro Tempore Secretariat of the CDMA in order to facilitate coordination, cooperation and collaboration between the Specialised Conferences and the CDMA; and
 - vi. Specialised Conferences should nominate points of contact to liaise with the Pro Tempore Secretariat with the aim of enhancing the coordination between the Specialised Conferences of the armed forces and the CDMA and provide the necessary reports.

6. Their adoption of the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Search and Rescue established pursuant to Article 7 of the Declaration of Arequipa; as outlined hereunder:
 - i. Recognise and recommend for ratification by CDMA Member States that are yet to do so, all necessary existing international agreements that permit strengthening of the levels of cooperation on search and rescue (SAR), and which facilitate capacity building and the establishment of centres and activation systems dedicated to SAR cooperation;
 - ii. Encourage the implementation of the measures adopted by CDMA Member States in OAS General Assembly Resolution: AG/RES. 2750 (XLII-O/12) – *Existing Mechanisms for Disaster Prevention and Response and Humanitarian Assistance Among Member States* – particularly where such measures strengthen the level of cooperation in the region, and promote specific actions for the preservation of life and provision of humanitarian assistance in the event of accidents and disasters that may occur both at sea and on land in the Americas;
 - iii. Promote the completion of Regional/Sub-Regional SAR capability evaluations, utilising appropriate technical and military support, including the work of the Specialised Conferences already undertaken on the issue of SAR;
 - iv. Invite the Specialised Conferences to brief the CDMA on existing SAR Memoranda of Understanding (MOU)/Cooperation Agreements in the hemisphere; and

⁴ The Republic of Nicaragua registered its reservation to this paragraph.

- v. Request the assistance of relevant hemispheric institutions to conduct the evaluation of SAR capabilities/resources (i.e. information sharing, communication and coordination centres and existing bilateral agreements).
7. Their commitment to strengthening collaboration among CDMA Member States in accordance with cooperation policy and strategy that guides civil-military coordination and in respect for the principles of sovereignty and national legislations, in confronting multidimensional threats, already conceptualised in the Declaration on Security in the Americas of the Organization of American States (OAS) Special Conference on Security held in Mexico in 2003;
8. Their agreement to establish an Ad Hoc Working Group, during the period 2016-2018, which will aim to develop cooperation and coordination mechanisms in the field of search and rescue;
9. Their commitment to encourage Member States to implement the OAS strategy on cyber security to increase transparency, and to foster trust and application of good practices in this domain to preserve a free and open cyberspace;
10. Their acknowledgement of the progress made in the peace process in Colombia and the commitment by all Member States of the CDMA to cooperate and contribute to the success of this process;
11. Their acknowledgement of the progress made in the hemisphere in the area of humanitarian demining, and commitment of States Parties to meet the provisions of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production, and Transfer of anti-personnel mines and their destruction (Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention), and encourage the governments of the region to continue with the tasks of demining, with the goal that the elimination and destruction of mines be realized in the areas that are still affected by this major problem;
12. That they recognise the specific problems and challenges of small island developing states and other developing states in the hemisphere and the possibility of utilising the armed forces in support of civil authorities, in an effort to counter the growing incidents of transnational organised crime, including the illicit trade in small arms, drugs, humans and all other forms of trafficking. Similarly, they recognise the need for the armed forces of the aforementioned states to assist in areas of man-made and natural disasters, border control, cyber security and cyber defence, major event security, critical infrastructure protection, environmental protection and resilience and climate change adaptation.
13. Their agreement to the establishment of an Ad Hoc Working Group, which will be constituted by the host country of the current Conference and the host country of the XIII CDMA and any other interested Member States during the first half of 2017, to examine and exchange experiences on the evolving role of the armed forces in defence and security, the result of which will be reported to the XIII CDMA in 2018;
14. Their commitment to strengthen the mechanisms for the provision of Humanitarian Emergency Assistance with a focus on civil-military collaboration for the use of foreign military and civil defence assets in disaster relief (Oslo Guidelines), in accordance with the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, international humanitarian law and domestic legislation;

15. Their renewed commitment to the promotion and integration of applicable international humanitarian law and human rights in the doctrine, education, training, usage of equipment and operational procedures of the Armed and/or Security Forces, as appropriate;
16. Their agreement to create an Ad Hoc Working Group, in accordance with Article 45 of the CDMA Regulations, to facilitate dialogue on the development of a framework for a Hemispheric Defence and Security Cooperation Policy, commencing with Humanitarian Emergency Assistance focused on Integrated Risk Management and Prevention. This Group will analyse: the proposals put forward by the Republic of Chile in respect of the possible establishment of an Inter-American System of Military Cooperation in matters of Defence for Disasters and Catastrophes; the proposal of the United Mexican States to offer training in the area of Civilian Protection; the action protocols and lessons learnt during recent Humanitarian Assistance operations carried out in the hemisphere; activities and existing agreements on the subject in various fora of the OAS; and, other existing mechanisms in the hemisphere. This working group would be led by the host country of the XIII CDMA, with participation of other voluntary members and competent institutions. The first meeting will be held during the first half of 2017, and will report to the XIII CDMA to be held in 2018;
17. Their renewed determination that Member States should prevent, combat and eradicate illicit trafficking in, the illegal use of, and the proliferation of small arms and light weapons consistent with the aims of the Inter-American Convention Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunitions, Explosives, and Other Related Materials (CIFTA), the United Nations Program of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, and for those Member States that have ratified those Conventions and Agreements, their reaffirmation of the importance of promoting universal participation in the Inter-American Convention on Transparency in Conventional Weapons Acquisitions (CITAAC) and in the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT);
18. That they reiterate the region's commitment to combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery and will pursue universal implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 and encourage endorsement of the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI)⁵;
19. That they recognise the role of the defence and security sector in support of civil authorities to assist in environmental protection and climate resilience;
20. Their commitment to support national efforts and actions, as appropriate, to increase energy and water security, adopt innovations in areas such as energy efficiency, new technologies and renewable energy sources, which will increase the resilience of the defence and security installations and help mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change;
21. That the defence and security institutions recognise the importance of active participation of civil society and other stakeholders to advance public policies in environmental protection and climate resilience through education and management of natural resources;
22. That the defence and security sector increase the capacity of their defence and security installations as appropriate, in order to mitigate or adapt to climate effects on defence institutions and operations;

⁵ The Federative Republic of Brazil registered its reservation to the reference to PSI in this paragraph.

23. Their commitment to encourage the development of training programmes in the defence and security sector to mitigate the impact of the environment on force capability and health;
24. That they recognise the need for hemispheric cooperation in order to mitigate any impacts of insect vector borne diseases on defence and security personnel through the collaboration with relevant health research institutions;
25. Their establishment of an Ad Hoc Working Group on the role of the defence and security forces with regard to environmental protection and climate resilience, to meet before the XIII CDMA, which will be constituted by the host country of the current Conference and the host country of the XIII CDMA and any other interested Member States by the second half of 2017, in order to share the best practices to reduce defence and security forces' impact on the climate and the environment, and to reduce the impact of climate change on the defence and security forces.
26. Their support for the continued participation of the defence sector in United Nations peace and humanitarian assistance operations, as required;
27. That they reiterate their willingness and commitment to progressively include gender considerations as a cross-cutting issue in defence and security policy-making, in the pursuit of achieving greater integration of women in the armed forces of the hemisphere, and in keeping with Goal 5 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 of 2000 on Women, Peace and Security. To this end, they agree to form an Ad Hoc Working Group that will be constituted by the host country of the current Conference and the host country of the XIII CDMA and any other interested Member States by the second half of 2017, to consider how to promote integrating gender issues;
28. That they welcome the appointment of the United Mexican States as the host country for the XIII CDMA to be held in 2018 and the offer of the Republic of Guatemala to host the XIV CDMA in 2020;
29. That they welcome the convening of the XII CDMA which is being held in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) for the first time, as a testament of the commitment of this region to cooperate on defence and security matters; and
30. That they express their sincere gratitude to the Government and People of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago for their hospitality over the course of this Ministerial meeting.

Reservation of the Republic of Nicaragua

“The Government of the Republic of Nicaragua does not support the present Declaration, because it goes beyond the CDMA’s character as a political forum and its sole purpose of promoting the exchange of ideas and experiences on defence and security matters. The CDMA was not created to coordinate the Specialised Hemispheric Military Conferences, nor to develop operational mechanisms.

Similarly, Nicaragua expresses its reservation to the amendments to the CDMA Regulations, since they violated the procedures established for their adoption, and their content contravenes the nature of this political forum. Nicaragua expresses its concern over the risks involved in reforming the CDMA, which would affect the processes of stability and dialogue advocated by Heads of State and Government in the various international political fora, in support of peace, security, institutionality and the development of peoples.

The Government of Nicaragua reaffirms its commitment to peace, security, respect for sovereignty of States and support for mechanisms of dialogue and consensus for stability in the Hemisphere”.