



RESOLUTION ON HAITI

Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas (COPA)

Brasília, Brazil, from March 22 to March 26, 2004

DEEPLY preoccupied by the ongoing serious political crisis in Haiti, the polarization affecting the country's political situation, and the devastating impact of extreme poverty on the Haitian people;

CONCERNED by the human rights violations and the weakening of Haitian democratic institutions that have occurred during the last several years;

NOTING that the impasse in which Haiti finds itself is due to the impossibility of settling the political crisis stemming from the elections of May 2000 and of ending the endemic insecurity prevailing in the country;

CONSIDERING the political instability in the country that has led to the departure abroad of the democratically elected President, Mr. Jean-Bertrand Aristide;

CONSIDERING the end of the term of office of the members of the Haitian Chamber of Deputies and Senate, as well as the article of the Haitian constitution that prescribes the organization of elections for their successors by direct suffrage;

CONSIDERING the formal request by the SENATE OF THE REPUBLIC OF HAITI for the re-establishment of a lasting democracy in Haiti within the framework of interparliamentary co-operation;

CONSIDERING that the Charter of the Organization of American States (OAS) recognizes that representative democracy is an indispensable component of stability, peace, and regional development;

CONSIDERING the commitment, repeated time and time again, of the Heads of State and Government of the Americas to defend democracy should there be a sudden, irregular interruption of the political, institutional, and democratic process or of the legitimate exercise of power by a democratically elected government in one of the Member States of the Organization of American States;

REAFFIRMING the principles of the Inter-American Democratic Charter, which proclaim, in Articles 1 and 3, that "[t]he peoples of the Americas have a right to democracy and their governments have an obligation to promote and defend it" and that the "[e]ssential elements of

representative democracy include, inter alia, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, access to and the exercise of power in accordance with the rule of law, the holding of periodic, free, and fair elections based on secret balloting and universal suffrage as an expression of the sovereignty of the people, the pluralistic system of political parties and organizations, and the separation of powers and independence of the branches of government.”

PRAISING the various mediation and conflict reduction endeavours of the last few months, particularly those of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM);

EMPHASIZING the authorization, by the United Nations Organization, of the deployment of a Multinational Interim Force for the purpose of facilitating, among other things, the establishment of the conditions for security and stability in the country and the provision of humanitarian assistance to Haitian people in need of it, particularly through the action of regional and international organizations;

REITERATING that the Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas (COPA) subscribes to non-intervention and the self-determination of peoples as fundamental principles of international law and recognizes and supports respect for constitutional order and the promotion of democracy;

We, the members of the Executive Committee of the Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas (COPA), meeting in Brasilia on March 23 and 24, 2004,

DEPLORE the loss of human life and the material damages resulting from the current crisis and condemn the criminal activities and elements that defy the rule of law;

CALL ON all Haitians to renounce the violence that compromises security and the establishment of a peaceful political climate in this country;

REQUEST of all Haitian political parties and civil society representatives that they restart the national dialogue in an atmosphere of calm, and work together to pacify the political situation, foster social peace, promote the country’s development, and the respect for human rights;

REQUEST that the interim multinational force assure the protection of the members of the Haitian parliament who at this time are legitimately completing their term of office, so that they may discharge their constitutional duties;

CALL ON the Haitian authorities and all political parties and civil society representatives to work towards implementing, within a reasonable timeframe, the minimum conditions—in particular the establishment of a Permanent Electoral Council—required for holding fair, free, and transparent presidential and parliamentary elections; and offer COPA’s cooperation in the form of an electoral observation mission should these conditions be met;

WE COMMIT to working towards a rapprochement of all parties by sending, at a time convenient to the Haitian authorities, a mediation and reconciliation mission directed by the Presidency of COPA.