

Feverish Dreams

I could find no explanation for the euphoria expressed by some of the participants at the Port of Spain Summit.

I put in a lot of effort and I read the famous Declaration of the Commitment approved at that "Summit of the Americas". I had heard the press conference that was presided over by the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, Patrick Manning, which was also attended by the illustrious Stephen Harper, the Prime Minister of Canada, and the presidents of Mexico and Panama, Felipe Calderon and Martin Torrijos respectively. According to them, this Summit has been the most extraordinary ever held.

Some kind of miracle should have been worked out, I said to myself. The philosopher's stone has just been discovered. Why should we worry for one more second? No one should think that this happened out of mere chance. Don't we know how to read and write? It was the OAS which saved us all; it has been so stated in 13 out of the 97 subparagraphs contained in the 67 pages of the final declaration.

I will only use six of the eight pages of this reflection to also acknowledge the glories of the OAS:

The countries that signed the Declaration reaffirm the principles and values of the UN Charter, the OAS Charter, the Inter-American Democratic Charter, the Monterrey Consensus on Financing for Development and the Millennium Declaration and express their determination to intensify their struggle against poverty, hunger, social exclusion, discrimination and inequality and to promote social inclusion and cohesion in order to improve the living standards of their peoples and attain development and social justice.

Likewise, they reaffirm the importance of promoting cooperation among States in a fraternal way in different spheres of inter-American relations, in conformity with the essential principles and purposes of the OAS Charter and recognizing their social, political and economic diversity.

They further stated that they have given instructions to their ministers, particularly those responsible for finances, planning and social development, to begin or strengthen the review of all national programs for social protection and inclusion and the eradication of poverty. They call upon the OAS, the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) and other relevant finance and development regional and sub regional institutions so that they support these efforts within the scope of their respective mandates.

They call upon the Ministers of Labor so that, within the context of the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor of the OAS, in cooperation with the consultative organs of workers and employers, and with the support of the ILO, as appropriate, so that they support a working program to attain these objectives at the Sixteenth Inter-American Conference of Labor Ministers to be held in the year 2009.

The countries that signed the Declaration call upon the Ministers of Education so that, with the support of the OAS, specialized regional and international institutions as well as the civil society organizations, they could develop strategies aimed at making quality secondary education available to all youths by the year 2015 at the latest, specially to the most vulnerable groups and those with special educational needs.

They further stated that they will increase their efforts to prevent and combat all aspects of the international problem of drugs and other related crimes by strengthening international cooperation and adopting a comprehensive and balanced approach, based on the principle of common and shared responsibility, in conformity with the principles enshrined in the UN Charter, the OAS Charter,

international law and their applicable legal frameworks.

The countries signing the Declaration request the General Secretariat of the OAS to submit to the next Summit of the Americas a report on the progress attained in the compliance with the commitments entered into at the meetings of Ministers of Public Security of the Americas and the meetings of Ministers of Justice or other ministers, attorneys or General Attorneys of the Americas... The Declaration seeks to promote greater cooperation in these meetings, as well as the work of the OAS in support to meetings of Ministers of Public Security of the Americas and the meetings of Ministers of Justice of the Americas. The countries that signed the Declaration expressed their gratitude over the continued technical support offered by the OAS to all those issues which are discussed at these meetings.

The countries will encourage the work of the OAS in the design of a new comprehensive and hemispheric strategy to promote inter-American cooperation in coping with criminal gangs.

The countries that signed the Declaration renewed their commitment to combat poverty, inequality, hunger, and social exclusion in order to improve the living conditions of their peoples and strengthen democratic governance in the Americas, and committed to uphold and fully implement the principles contained in the Inter-American Democratic Charter.

The countries reiterated their support to the goals contained in the Social Charter of the Americas and its Plan of Action, which are intended to offer all citizens more opportunities to benefit from sustainable development with equity and social inclusion. They encouraged the OAS to conclude the drafting of these instruments, and pledge to work in the interest of concluding negotiations and adopting these documents before the end of 2009.

They recognize the important role played by the OAS in the peaceful settlement of their differences, its participation in the promotion of a culture of democracy, peace, dialogue and non-violence in the region, and the role it played in the implementation of the Inter-American Democratic Charter.

The countries that signed the Declaration will see to it that yearly national reports about the actions carried out and the progress achieved in pursuing the specific goals identified in the Summit of the Americas continue to be submitted to the OAS.

Why should we be surprised to see that, thanks to the support and inspiration of such a meritorious institution, in the last subparagraph of page 67 of the Declaration it is reaffirmed that the Heads of State or Government of the Americas agree that this document should be known as "The Declaration of the Commitment of Port-of Spain", and that it will be so approved on April 19, 2009?

Is it so that the OAS is a guarantee to the sovereignty and integrity of Latin American peoples? It always has!

Did it ever interfere in the internal affairs of any country in the hemisphere? It never has!

Is it true that it has always been a docile instrument of the United States? It never has!

Did any Latin American or Caribbean die because of its own fault? Not a single one of them did! Those are slanders, fabricated by the Castroist-Communist, which have emanated from Cuba, a country expelled from the OAS because its government proclaimed Marxism-Leninism in a country where there was never an election, where no one is entitled to vote or being elected, which lives under the rule of a tyranny that has blatantly confronted a country so weak, defenseless and poor as the United States for half a century. If Cuba does not rectify its position, the selfless and noble government of the United States will not sell a single aspirin to Cuba. The OAS is a guarantee of the democratic rights of the long-suffering Cuban people.

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A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Fidel Castro', is positioned in the upper left area of the page.

Fidel Castro Ruz

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1:46 p.m.

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