



Rio Group Calling to advance the agenda on natural disasters and climate change and declaration of solidarity with Colombia, Costa Rica and Panama

The frequency, magnitude and intensity of meteorological phenomena, in conjunction with the geographic conditions and the impact of climate change, make our region highly vulnerable, which is a cause of concern for our States. We are aware that the severity of the impact generated by these events affects our populations, particularly those sectors least favored, causing economic losses, damages to housing, and to production and infrastructure vital to our development.

Facing this, the governments of Rio Group reiterate our commitment, at a regional and global level, in order to reach an effective response of the international community to the climate change issue, as well as to agree on the establishment of mutual help mechanisms, to reduce the risk of natural disasters, reinforcing the public policies of civil protection, and of adaptation to climate change, particularly those of preventive nature.

At the same time, we call upon States and international organizations to reinforce their cooperation toward the region and to contribute to the implementation of our policies in issues related to responding to natural disasters and to climate change, especially those issues associated to the mitigation of effects on vulnerable population.

Within this context, Rio Group wishes to express to the people of Colombia, Costa Rica and Panama, its consternation for the considerable damages caused by the intense downpour which took place in the Caribbean coasts during the last days, causing the death of several persons in Colombia and Panama, as well as an elevated number of homeless and quantifiable damage in the infrastructure of those three countries.

Rio Group raises its vows for the prompt return to normality of Colombian, Costa Rican and Panamanian societies, and at the same time conveys its condolences to the relatives of the victims of such climatologic phenomena.

Mexico City, December 1st, 2008.