

Fourth Plenary Assembly
Brasilia, Brazil, May 19-21, 2005

Recommendations of Working Group N° 2: Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA)

Approved by the Plenary Assembly May 21st, 2005.

The FTAA Process

Following a debate, we express grave concern that the FTAA as it is currently being negotiated could, without sufficient input from parliamentarians, affect sovereignty, not solve social problems, benefit only large corporations, and affect negatively the agricultural sector.

We also recognize the existence of other ongoing trade initiatives, such as the Andean Community of Nations, Caricom, the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA) and the Southern Community of Nations.

We are not against free trade agreements in general, but are interested in development and agreements that benefit our peoples.

Reflecting the preceding statements, we demand that governments take radical measures to eradicate poverty and offered the following considerations and recommendations:

IV Summit of the Americas, Mar del Plata, Argentina, November, 2005

SUPPORTING the proposed focus of the Fourth Summit of the Americas on continuing to strengthen democratic governance and to confront inequality, hunger and poverty by creating and promoting jobs;

ACKNOWLEDGING the importance of facing the problems and challenges related to inequality and poverty, including extreme poverty;

RECOGNIZING that economic growth is an indispensable and necessary, but not sufficient, condition for reducing high unemployment, informality and lack of job security that afflict our societies;

NOTING that trade, free of barriers, subsidies and unfair practices, combined with stable productive investment flows, can contribute to prosperity;

RECOGNIZING that governments' ability to respond to people's legitimate demand for employment generation is constrained by protectionist measures restricting trade, especially in the agricultural sector;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT that for trade agreements to benefit all in a society, they must be implemented in the context a number of different policies, including labour and social policies, that promote development;



CONCERNED with the difficulty of negotiating trade agreements among countries with significant differences in terms of economic and political power;

RECOGNIZING the potential for internet connectivity to improve the economic situation of the citizens of the Americas;

With respect to certain sensitive topics covered by the Working Group:

Agriculture

COGNIZANT of the utmost importance of Agriculture for most countries in the Hemisphere, and

RECOGNIZING the particular vulnerability, sensitivity, and structural difficulties of the agricultural sectors in developing countries,

CONCERNED with the potential negative effects of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) on the health of people, animals and the environment;

ACKNOWLEDGING the relevance for the developing countries of the World Trade Organization (WTO) Doha Round negotiations, particularly in the areas of agriculture and market access;

Migration

RECOGNIZING that migration is a problem derived from the lack of opportunities in countries of origin;

AWARE that we live in an increasingly interconnected world, of which labour mobility is an integral element;

FIPA and Trade Agreements

In light of our role in ratifying and implementing international trade agreements,

WE, PARLIAMENTARIANS OF THE AMERICAS:

1. **Recommend** that our governments tailor the FTAA and any other trade agreements to allow countries to undertake policies supportive of quality employment, economic development, and social programs.
2. **Recommend** the implementation of policies complementary to trade agreements in order to improve the competitiveness and productivity of our countries, including areas such as education, science and technology, support to small and medium enterprises (SMES), worker retraining, and infrastructure.
3. **Recommend** that the development needs of countries be taken into account and made an integral part of the FTAA negotiations in agriculture, including traditional methods of farming, food security, and rural development.
4. **Recommend** the elimination of agricultural export subsidies and other trade-distorting practices for agricultural products affecting trade in the hemisphere.
5. **Recommend** that sanitary and phytosanitary measures not be applied in a manner that would constitute a means of arbitrary or unjustifiable discrimination between countries or a disguised restriction to international trade.



6. **Recommend** that our countries coordinate to make proposals in the ongoing WTO negotiations that respond to the special conditions faced by developing countries.
7. **Recommend** that immigration policies respect migrant' human rights and their personal security.
8. **Recommend** that the FTAA and other trade agreements consider rules that are fair and equitable and take into account increasing labour mobility.
9. **Reiterate** our call to FIPA to continue their efforts to encourage collaboration among parliamentarians to further the exchange of information and experiences regarding the negotiation, implementation and effects of international trade agreements.
10. **Recognize** the existence of other ongoing trade negotiations in the hemisphere, such as the Andean Community of Nations, the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA), Caricom, Mercosur and the Southern Community of Nations.

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Senator James Kelleher, Canada
Acting Chair of the FTAA Working Group

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Rapporteur

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