

Charter of the OAS

Signed in Bogotá in 1948, as amended by the
Protocol of Buenos Aires in 1967,
Protocol of Cartagena de Indias in 1985
and Protocol of Managua in 1993

<<http://www.oas.org/EN/PINFO/CHARTER96/chart96e.htm>>

IN THE NAME OF THEIR PEOPLES, THE STATES REPRESENTED AT THE NINTH
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN STATES,

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Resolved to persevere in the noble undertaking that humanity has conferred upon
the United Nations, whose principles and purposes they solemnly reaffirm;

Convinced that juridical organization is a necessary condition for security and
peace founded on moral order and on justice; and In accordance with Resolution IX of
the Inter-American Conference on Problems of War and Peace, held in Mexico City,

HAVE AGREED upon the following

PART ONE **Chapter I** **NATURE AND PURPOSES**

Article 1

The American States establish by this Charter the international organization that they
have developed to achieve an order of peace and justice, to promote their solidarity, to
strengthen their collaboration, and to defend their sovereignty, their territorial integrity,
and their independence. Within the United Nations, the Organization of American States
is a regional agency.

The Organization of American States has no powers other than those expressly
conferred upon it by this Charter, none of whose provisions authorizes it to intervene in
matters that are within the internal jurisdiction of the Member States.

Article 2

The Organization of American States, in order to put into practice the principles on which
it is founded and to fulfill its regional obligations under the Charter of the United
Nations, proclaims the following essential purposes:

- a. To strengthen the peace and security of the continent;
- b. To promote and consolidate representative democracy, with due respect for the
principle of nonintervention;
- c. To prevent possible causes of difficulties and to ensure the pacific settlement of
disputes that may arise among the Member States;
- d. To provide for common action on the part of those States in the event of
aggression;

- e. To seek the solution of political, juridical, and economic problems that may arise among them;
- f. To promote, by cooperative action, their economic, social, and cultural development; and
- g. To achieve an effective limitation of conventional weapons that will make it possible to devote the largest amount of resources to the economic and social development of the Member States.

Chapter II PRINCIPLES

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Article 3

The American States reaffirm the following principles:

- a. International law is the standard of conduct of States in their reciprocal relations;
- b. International order consists essentially of respect for the personality, sovereignty, and independence of States, and the faithful fulfillment of obligations derived from treaties and other sources of international law;
- c. Good faith shall govern the relations between States;
- d. The solidarity of the American States and the high aims which are sought through it require the political organization of those States on the basis of the effective exercise of representative democracy;
- e. Every State has the right to choose, without external interference, its political, economic, and social system and to organize itself in the way best suited to it, and has the duty to abstain from intervening in the affairs of another State. Subject to the foregoing, the American States shall cooperate fully among themselves, independently of the nature of their political, economic, and social systems;
- f. The American States condemn war of aggression: victory does not give rights;
- g. An act of aggression against one American State is an act of aggression against all the other American States;
- h. Controversies of an international character arising between two or more American States shall be settled by peaceful procedures;
- I. Social justice and social security are bases of lasting peace;
- j. Economic cooperation is essential to the common welfare and prosperity of the peoples of the continent;
- k. The American States proclaim the fundamental rights of the individual without distinction as to race, nationality, creed, or sex;
- l. The spiritual unity of the continent is based on respect for the cultural values of the American countries and requires their close cooperation for the high purposes of civilization;
- m. The education of peoples should be directed toward justice, freedom, and peace.

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