

II CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS OF DEFENSE OF THE AMERICAS

SAN CARLOS DE BARILOCHE DECLARATION

The Second Defense Ministerial of the Americas took place in San Carlos de Bariloche, Argentina, October 7th - 9 th, 1996 at the invitation of Mr. Jorge Dominguez, Minister of Defense of Argentina on behalf of his Government.

During this meeting, Delegations discussed the full range of security concerns and interests of the participating states. Opening statements and these discussions covered issues such as confidence building measures, cooperation in peacekeeping, the impact of crime and drugs on security, the threat posed by the illegal trade in arms and the impact of economic issues on security.

They noted that in view of the far reaching political, social and economic challenges faced by their nations that defense organizations are essential institutions of sovereign states.

In the course of their discussion they :

1. Recalled that the "Santiago Commitment to Democracy and the Renewal of the Interamerican System", adopted by the Organization of the American States General Assembly in Santiago de Chile, in 1991 and the Conference held in Williamsburg,VA, USA, in July 1995, emphasized that representative democracy is a fundamental element for hemispheric security.
2. Stressed the need to deepen inter-American cooperation for the maintenance of peace and the strengthening of hemispheric security, preserving the sovereignty of each state as recognized by international law, and in particular by the United Nations and OAS Charters.
3. Noting the "Santiago Declaration on Confidence and Security Building Measures" adopted by the OAS in November 1995, considered that confidence building measures are appropriate tools, for maintaining peace since they contribute to a better relationship between countries fostering improved levels of transparency, cooperation and information exchange on defense and hemispheric security issues'.
4. Called upon all the nations of the Hemisphere to promote through their active and voluntary participation, the success of peacekeeping operations in conformity with the UN Charter.
5. Took note of the initiatives proposed in this Conference and of the conclusions of the Working Groups.
6. The delegations congratulated and thanked the Government and People of the Republic of Argentina for their warm hospitality and for their successful organization and management of the Second Defense Ministerial of the Americas.