

I MEETING OF THE MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE SIGNATORIES OF THE AMAZON COOPERATION TREATY

Pursuant to the provisions in article XX, second paragraph, of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Bolivia, Mr. Javier Cerruto Calderón, of Brazil, Mr. Ramiro Saraiva Guerreiro; of Colombia, Mr. Diego Uribe Vargas; of Ecuador, Mr. Alfonso Barrera Valverde; of Guyana, Mr. Rashleigh Esmond Jackson; of Peru, Mr. Javier Arias Stella; of Suriname, Mr. André Richard Haakmat; and the Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Venezuela, Mr. Justo Oswaldo Páez-Pumar, as chairs of the Delegations of their respective countries, proceeded to celebrate the I Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Signatories to the Amazon Cooperation Treaty in the city of Belém, Brazil, on October twenty third and twenty-fourth of the year nineteen-eighty.

The complete report of the participating Delegations in the Meeting appears on Annex 1.

FIRST PLENARY SESSION

Prior to the First Plenary Session, a preparatory meeting of the General Committee was held at nine a.m. of October twenty-third, nineteen-eighty, at the Superintendence of Development of Amazonia (SUDAM) headquarters. At ten a.m. at the hall of SUDAM, the Opening Session to the I Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs to the Amazon Cooperation Treaty started, having as a pro tempore chair Ambassador Mr. Ramiro Saraiva Guerreiro, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Brazil, host country to the Meeting.

Immediately thereafter, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Brazil, Ambassador Ramiro Saraiva Guerreiro, was elected Chair of the I Meeting by acclamation. Also appointed by acclamation was the Secretary General and Rapporteur of the Meeting, Ambassador João Hermes Pereira de Araújo, Head of the Department of the Americas, from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brazil.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Brazil, Mr. Ramiro Saraiva Guerreiro, went on to take the floor, formally starting the session's work, and then the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Ecuador, Guyana, Peru and Suriname participated in the discussions, pursuant to the above stated order.

The Agenda of the Meeting was adopted, enclosed as Annex II.

SETTING UP AND OPERATION OF THE COMMISSIONS

Commissions were agreed to be created, charged with the specific subjects below: Draft Regulations on the Meetings of Ministers of Foreign Affairs (Commission A), and Draft Joint Declaration (Commission B). Apart from these, the Ministers decided to create a Drafting Commission and a General Commission made up of Foreign Affairs Ministers.

After completing the work of the Commissions, the Regulations were adopted the text of which appears as Annex III, and the "Declaration of Belém".

SECOND PLENARY SESSION

In the Second Plenary Session, which started to work at three-thirty p.m. on the same day, the Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Venezuela and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bolivia took the floor.

AMAZON COOPERATION COUNCIL

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Peru, Mr. Javier Arias Stella, invited the Amazon Cooperation Council, created pursuant to article XXI in the Treaty, to hold its first meeting in Peru, in July, 1981, in order to discuss cooperation projects among Amazon countries.

The invitation made by Peru was accepted by acclamation.

SPECIAL COMMISSIONS

The Ministers have agreed to carry out sector meetings at the place and time mutually consented by the Parties, before the Amazon Cooperation Council meeting to be held in Peru. These technical meetings, which shall submit their reports to the Amazon Cooperation Council, shall be entitled to create special commissions such as those provided for by article XXIV in the Treaty, referred to such projects as aimed at the creation of a technical cooperation program on regional development, a cooperation program on science and technology, the planning of transportation and telecommunications infrastructure, and to examine the creation of a preinvestment fund.

CLOSING PLENARY SESSION

With the attendance of the President of Brazil, João Baptista de Oliveira Figueiredo, the solemn Closing Session started at Teatro de la Paz, of the I Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Signatories to the Amazon Cooperation Treaty, at three-thirty p.m., on October twenty-four.

The Ministers of Foreign Affairs proceeded to sign the "Declaration of Belem" and this Final Minutes.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Colombia, Mr. Diego Uribe Vargas, went on to give a speech and offered his country as the venue for the II Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs to the Amazon Cooperation Treaty.

This proposal, submitted to the Plenary for consideration by the Chair of the Meeting, was carried by acclamation.

At the initiative of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Worship of Bolivia, Mr. Javier Cerruto Calderón, the I Meeting carried by acclamation a vote of commendation to its Chair, Ambassador Ramiro Saraiva Guerreiro, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Brazil and to the Secretary General and Rapporteur of the Meeting, Ambassador João Hermes Pereira de Araújo.

After having expressed his satisfaction with the work accomplished and welcomed the success obtained, the Chair of the meeting asked the President João Baptista Figueiredo to pronounce a speech declaring the work of the meeting completed. The Brazilian Head of State stressed the relevance of the meeting that had just been held at Belem, and the significance of the cooperation process starting among the countries in the region.

In witness whereof, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Amazon countries signed these final minutes, in a single copy and in four languages: Spanish, Dutch, English, and Portuguese. Being the four texts equally true and original, they shall be deposited with the Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federative Republic of Brazil, charged with providing all other signatories with certified true copies.

Signed in Belem, on October twenty-four of the year nineteen-eighty.

DECLARATION OF BELEM

The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Suriname and Venezuela,

GATHERED in Belem, on October 23 and 24, 1980, in order to celebrate the First Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Signatories to the Amazon Cooperation Treaty, according to their article XX, second paragraph;

EAGER to witness the speedy implementation of the Amazon cooperation mechanism provided for by the Treaty,

INTENT on promoting and facilitating at the domestic level and through Amazon cooperation the economic and social development of their national Amazonian territories, in order to ensure its effective integration into their corresponding economies,

PERSUADED that, vis-à-vis the specific goals in the geographic area of application, the Amazon Cooperation Treaty contributes a new dimension to the Latin American cooperation process and reaffirms the irreplaceable cooperation need among developing countries,

CONSCIOUS that the development of Amazonia and the preservation of its environment are inseparably entwined and the exclusive responsibility of Amazon countries, with no further limitations than those set forth in article IV of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty, with which all other forms of international cooperation must be harmonized,

DECLARE:

I. The goal of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty is the creation, by way of the joint efforts of Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Suriname and Venezuela, and through the standing clearinghouse provided for by the Treaty, methods of cooperation and information sharing, with a view to celebrating the socio-economic development of the corresponding Amazon territories, preserving their natural resources and strengthening the actions provided for in the relevant national plans.

II. Cooperation shall focus on increasing the standard of living of the signatories to the Treaty and shall make the interests and needs of their Amazon populations a priority, with the goal of achieving their full integration into national development processes, attending to the preservation of their cultural and social values.

III. Indigenous people are the part and parcel in Amazonia, and the source of knowledge and habits on which the local culture and economy are based; thus, they deserve a special attention in current and future planning of the Amazon region in each country.

IV. The use and harnessing of natural resources in each national Amazon territory are a sovereign and exclusive right of each signatory to the Amazon Cooperation Treaty, subject to no further limitations than those provided for in its article IV. The Amazon cooperation process aims at repeating the full use of those rights, heritage and guarantee of development of the Amazon countries' territories.

V. The development of the economic potential of Amazon territories of each country and the preservation of their environment are the comprehensive goals promoted and strengthened in an indivisible manner. Each country shall consolidate these goals by means of a plan driven by the characteristics of such territories, with a selection criterion of favorable areas for economic utilization, as has been the case through positive experiences in various areas in the region.

VI. To this end, Amazon countries driven by their direct and legitimate interest in efficiently protecting the extraordinary wealth and the variety of flora and fauna in the region will attempt at promoting –as they have been doing- the creation of national parks and other conservation units, in accordance with scientific studies on integral ecosystems. Accordingly, once completed an appropriate term for the assessment and consideration, Guyana and Suriname are expected to evaluate their potential accession to the Technical Intergovernmental Committee on the Protection and Defense of Amazon Flora and Fauna, created in 1975, made up so far by Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela.

VII. The efforts made by each signatory country shall be strongly supported with a view towards eliminating illegal traffic of live specimens and wild animals furs, the species of which are

endangered, and towards making industrialized countries where the major consumer markets of said animals and furs are concentrated effectively engage in these efforts.

VIII. Simultaneously with the flora and fauna conservation, promoting the rational use of tropical forests is advisable, as a key driver in regional dynamics. To this end, cooperation by Amazon countries will be fostered in order to carry out joint research activities, information sharing, training of technicians, etc. The use and harnessing of all natural resources in Amazonia is the sovereign and exclusive right of each State therein; thus, any initiative purporting to raise concerns on the sovereignty of the States located in tropical areas is unacceptable, in terms of the use and preservation of their forest resources.

IX. One of the broadest priorities in the Treaty shall be allocated to the cooperation in the field of research, especially to the development of science and technology appropriate for tropical conditions. Information sharing will be particularly promoted with equivalent areas in Africa and Asia. The fact that this area appears to be ideal for developing nations to test their capacity to put an end to their cultural and technological dependence in terms of industrialized centers will be highlighted, establishing the criteria and standards to be followed in the course of research activities, according to their own values and needs. Scientific research will supply a safe criterion to gear policies for economic and social development and for the preservation of the environment, at the same time submitting these activities to an ongoing assessment targeted at the review and refinement of methods and techniques. To such ends and purposes, member-States will charge the Amazon Cooperation Council with the drafting and coordination of a broad joint research program on science and technology, to be distributed among the leading scientific research institutes in Amazon countries, according to the sectors defined by the Special Commissions created by this meeting.

X. The Amazon Cooperation Council will be charged with the preparation of a cooperation program on the development of national Amazon territories and with enabling the communication among Signatories of the experiences and national methods in the areas of project planning, financing and execution. The Amazon Cooperation Council is equally charged with examining the creation of a Preinvestment Fund aimed at financing the preparation of common interest projects. The Council will also be charged with examining the suggestions that, on this issue, are submitted by the governments. To that end, the cooperation of international agencies such as the IDB, the World Bank, UNDP and the SELA, among others, will be searched for.

XI. In the future just like in the past, the Amazon River system may play, in a more effective manner, a role similar to that of rivers and channels networks in other continents, as the linking factor among Amazon countries. For that, the Amazon Cooperation Council shall undertake a systematic and comprehensive study of the potential of those rivers, of their intrinsic interaction with other components in the Amazon geographic complex, of the need to have port facilities, of the demarcation and correction of river courses. That study will take into account not only physical conditions of seaworthiness, but also the aspects of economic feasibility, such as current and future traffic needs, projections on the generation of bulk loads compatible with the peculiarities of river transportation, and the possibility of harnessing the river in any other way. This study shall specially focus on the development of the existing means and the solution of problems and hindrances to river connections in certain areas with the Atlantic.

XII. The Amazon Region owns enough natural resources, both renewable and non renewable, that can be used for its harmonious development. Its various rivers, besides providing natural transportation means, communication and contact among countries in the region, are also a source of energy. To this effect and in accordance with article V in the Treaty, Signatories recommend the Amazon Cooperation Treaty undertaking studies relating to water resources in the Amazon Region.

XIII. The Amazon Cooperation Council shall promote the coordination of national plans for implementing an appropriate physical structure of transportation and telecommunications enabling the interconnection of Amazon countries and their capitals, in terms of article X in the Treaty. This planning, to be conducted in a consultative manner by the governmental technical sectors from the parties, shall take into account the huge Amazon distances, the possibility of having new technologies in the field of river, land and air transportation, as well as the experiences of some countries in providing the area with an efficient network of transport and telecommunications.

XIV. In order to promote a better knowledge and raising awareness on the need for cooperation among Amazon countries' populations, the Amazon Cooperation Council will prepare proposals aimed at stimulating the exchange in the area of tourism, among them according to article XIII.

XV. A clear understanding of the reality of each Amazon territory and of their differences and characteristics in terms of the rational use of their natural resources for agricultural, industrial, livestock and hydro electrical applications will be facilitated to the extent that Amazon countries reach scientific and technological levels that reinforce their solvency and autonomy. With this goal, and in order to better perceive the Amazon reality, universities in member-states will be encouraged to establish centers or subjects on Amazon studies, as is already the case in some of them, and to promote the strengthening of contacts among said study centers, teachers, researchers, artists, exchange of interns and spreading of publications on Amazon issues.

XVI. Given the size of the Amazon challenge and of the means available for the countries in the region, it is understood that the programs to be outlined insert themselves into a vast horizon, in a true agenda for the present and the future, starting from proposals that will be positive as long as they are realistic and enforceable.

XVII. Persuaded that the ideas and principles collected in this Declaration may be a source of inspiration and guidance for the Amazon cooperation process that is coordinately starting, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs gathered in Belem reaffirm their faith and trust in the fate of Amazonia as basis for the construction of wealthy and developed societies and as rapprochement factor, not only between the countries in the area but also at the service of the unit and the integration of Latin America.

Made in the city of Belem, on October twenty four of the year nineteen-eighty, in Spanish, Dutch, English and Portuguese.