

MANIFESTO ON DEMOCRACY AND FREEDOM IN THE DIGITAL AND SUSTAINABILITY ERA

After the IX Summit of the Americas, USA, 2022

We, the former Heads of State and Government participating in the Democratic Initiative of Spain and the Americas (IDEA), seven years after the beginning of its activities with the Declaration of Panama adopted at the VII Summit of the Americas, this time, in an international context threatened by the generalization of war, after the IX Summit of the Americas, under contradictory signs, declare the following:

We emphatically condemn the act of aggression carried out by the Russian Federation against the Ukrainian nation and the war crimes and crimes against humanity that are its consequence.

We view with grave concern the effects that the war will have on the world, particularly on the West, all the more so since, in the days leading up to its outbreak, China and Russia, with a view to "international relations entering a New Era" according to the Joint Declaration to which they subscribe, assert that questions of democracy and human rights are "internal affairs of sovereign States". "It is for the people of the country alone to decide whether their State is democratic", is the predicate of the Declaration, calling into question the criterion of universality enshrined in the San Francisco Charter of 1945, namely the principle of the inviolability of the dignity of the human person.

I

New threats to freedom

1. Since the demise of real socialism in 1989, when Humanity enters the Digital and Artificial Intelligence Revolutions, a global trend has been setting in that threatens the values of freedom, experience and freedom of expression.

of democracy, and the finalist sense of the rule of law, as conceived since the end of the Second World War.

2. The COVID-19 pandemic and the recent act of aggression carried out by Russia against Ukraine, make evident the serious disorders that afflict the international order and the States, revealing the incapacity of the universal and regional multilateral organizations to contain such threats against the human race when they come from the actions or omissions of the great powers.
3. The same digital governance that is advancing in all areas of human activity and not only in politics or economics, facilitating the expansion of enterprises and their accelerations such as the global traffic of information and data and the mobilization of the masses, is falling victim to serious interference and manipulations of criminal origin that foster insecurity, threaten transparency and the very governability of our societies as their bonds of trust are broken.
4. The regional and national political and economic agendas are advancing in a preferential manner on the so-called new issues driven by globalization, without, however, any anthropological foundation. Freedom, as a conscientious choice and responsibility for the consequences of its exercise, seek to be isolated from their interdependence with democracy understood as a way of life and with the validity of a constitutional state governed by the rule of law. It is not by chance that of the 193 States party to the current UN, only 21 are recognized as full democracies. So much so that, when the UN approved the exclusion of the Russian Federation from the Human Rights Council for its blatant war crimes and crimes against humanity, a significant proportion of its member states abstained, in addition to those opposed to it.
5. In our 2015 Declaration of Panama, in connection with the VII Summit of the Americas, we stated that "Democracy and its effective exercise, the basis of solidarity among States, consists of respect for and guarantee of human rights, the exercise of power in accordance with the rule of law and its subjection to the principle of alternation, the separation and independence of public powers, political pluralism, free and fair elections, freedom of expression and press, probity and government transparency, among other standards; as stated in the Declaration of Santiago de Chile adopted by the Organization of American States in 1959, later expanded and developed by the Inter-American Democratic Charter of 2001".
6. The Madrid Declaration that we issued as a result of our 2020 Presidential Dialogue also recalls that "Latin America exists. It exists as its own continent,

as an economic bloc, as a region crisscrossed by innumerable common historical, cultural and other ties. The ideals of freedom and democracy continue to be, as we firmly believe, the guide for the construction of a Latin America that makes intelligent and integrated use of its enormous potential.

7. At the conclusion of our 2021 Presidential Dialogue, we observed that the political struggle is leading to a cultural and social fragmentation that hinders dialogue at the global level and compromises the intellectual heritage of the West. In the face of the unavoidable challenges of digital technology and artificial intelligence or robotics, and in the face of the delirium of power that accompanies not a few rulers in this agonal hour, we recall that it is necessary to recover at all levels the very dimension of the human and the transcendent meaning of existence within the life of the citizenry.
8. The IX Summit of the Americas met this time under the theme "Building a sustainable, resilient and equitable future". Costa Rica had publicly called for "strengthening democratic institutions as a fundamental pillar for economic recovery", and the OAS Secretary General recommended "addressing the transformations required by the region by promoting inclusive and sustainable development", particularly given the context of the global crisis generated by COVID-19. It has concluded encircled by the dictatorships of the 21st century and with no evident resilience.
9. Since our aforementioned Madrid Declaration, we have warned that "the temptation could arise - there is no doubt that the enemies of freedom on the continent and their extra-continental allies do so with open contempt for human dignity - to use the pandemic as an alibi to slow down, paralyze or postpone the institutional and economic agenda". Meanwhile, China and Russia demand the international community not to interfere in such issues, those of democracy and human rights, for, as they believe, they "undermine the stability of the world order".
10. In the midst of the great revolutions of knowledge that seem to oppose science or technical reason to human reason, a misunderstood freedom can put an end to freedom itself, by underestimating the value of the dignity of the person. In the global environment, there is a strong movement within our nations that considers the ethical values of democracy and the imperatives of the constitutional rule of law to be dispensable. After all, the international community and order are the face of the very States that form it and have them as subjects. Consequently, the struggle for the universal defense of human rights within the inexcusable framework of democratic institutions and under the rule of a constitutional state governed by the rule of law, becomes agonal for the Western world and is the basis of unity in the diversity of cultures.

II

Towards authentic growth in freedom and dignity

11. We believe that taking up the challenge of growing in freedom is now not only possible, it is necessary and imperative. "That principle of freedom that grows as the centuries grow, and that progresses in man, is the mother idea of all civilization, is the immortal spirit of all our history" in the West, says the Hispanic historian Emilio Castelar y Ripoll (1832-1899) and it is a criterion that we share.
12. In the Madrid Declaration on Growth in Freedom, we have stated that "the Latin American agenda for the future, based on the defense of democracy, the rule of law, personal freedom and economic and institutional stability, should not only not be postponed but accelerated as much as possible, even to avoid the serious challenges that are currently posed to democratic institutions in many of [our] countries.
13. We must repeat with emphasis, this time, that Latin America must play a role in the global agenda. Latin America needs time and resources to overcome the setback caused by the pandemic and the global economic and social effects of Russia's cruel war against Ukraine. It needs opportunities to consolidate its institutional improvements which, in the more developed countries, were difficult to achieve and then consolidate; but it needs to fight openly against corruption, drug trafficking and organized crime, economic informality and the lack of legal security, as heavy burdens that are perpetuated in several of our countries.
14. In order to win the future with stability, Latin America must design a regional strategy for democratic growth that sustains the indispensable institutional and citizen counterweights; that allows its countries joint access to international financial and cooperation mechanisms, prioritizing priorities; that strengthens its integration and intra-regional trade, making use of the shortening of value chains and supported by legal certainty. Not forgetting, as an inalienable line, the construction of social, economic and political platforms guided by the idea of leaving ideological myths behind, forging achievable utopias, animated by an ethical attitude that springs from freedom and universally shared human values.

III

15. For the West, in short, the pandemic and the war must be and be seen as an opportunity for the amendments delayed since 1989 in the wake of the collapse of the Iron Curtain. Also, and above all, spurred on by the teachings of the Ukrainian people, victims of the resurrection of another absolute evil, to reclaim the ethical values that are the foundations of our culture and the responsible exercise of freedom, relaxed over the three decades that ended with COVID-19 and that find their most tragic paradigms in Cuba, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Venezuela.

October 25, 2022

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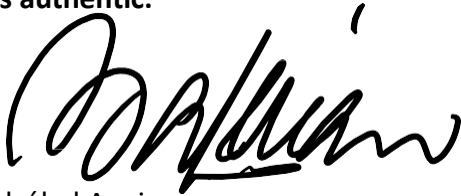
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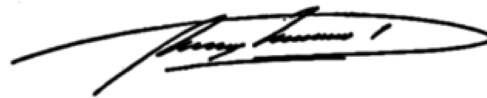
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