

been totally consistent with the democratic standards and legal underpinnings that sustain it, Resolution 1080 is a valuable tool that should be perfected and used in future with greater rigour.

The *Washington Protocol* of 1992 amended the OAS Charter to include a democracy clause whereby when a legitimate government is overthrown by force, the government that has usurped power can be suspended from the OAS.

Furthermore, based on the unhappy experience with a long authoritarian government that Peru recently lived through, the OAS-approved Resolution 1753, if successfully applied, can become the seed of a new mechanism to prevent and react to situations that seriously threaten democratic life and the rule of law, even if they do not take the form of a traditional military coup.

International solidarity, the appropriate reaction by the inter-American system and the application of diplomatic sanctions, where necessary, such as those established in the *Washington Protocol*, are invaluable complementary factors. But they only achieve their true worth when internal forces decide to forge their own democratic destiny, as was the case in Peru.

Potential threats to democracy make it necessary to strengthen the OAS's institutional resources to protect and deepen democracy and the rule of law.

Therefore, Peru believes that it reflects the aspirations of all the peoples and governments of the Americas when it calls upon the heads of state and government meeting in Quebec City to give a mandate to their foreign ministers to prepare and approve an inter-American democracy charter.

An inter-American democracy charter would be a coherent systematization of the series of rules and mechanisms to promote and protect democracy that exist in the inter-American system and in our different regions and subregions. It would also be an option for strengthening them and adapting them to address new challenges.

The democracy charter we propose should also provide greater political impetus for the rules of the inter-American system, which make democracy an essential and indispensable requisite for belonging to the regional cooperation system.

It will also be fundamental to develop the functional and conceptual linkages that exist between human rights and democracy.

Apart from being a political system that ensures the exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms, democracy is, in itself, a human right. Therefore, in the development of international law on this continent it has become a duty of states. Demands that states carry out this duty, assumed in the free exercise of their sovereignty, cannot be interpreted as undermining the principle of non-intervention.

The inter-American democracy charter must necessarily provide suitable mechanisms for coping with new threats against democracy.