



## LABOUR AND ENVIRONMENT STANDARDS

### Recommendation 22

*“That Canada promote the injection of clauses within the FTAA Agreement that would tie countries’ access to the benefits from FTAA membership to proven respect for democratic rights.”*

Canada is a consistently strong supporter and promoter of democracy. Heavily involved in supporting young and emerging democracies, Canada has gained a solid reputation and is increasingly called upon to assist in various aspects of the democratic process. Canada has participated widely in electoral observation missions mounted by such international organizations as the Organization of American States (OAS), the Commonwealth and La Francophonie. The Government believes that the focus of effort should be on the importance of implementing the human rights enshrined in existing instruments. In so doing, Canada is in fact promoting democracy and the rights and institutions that underpin a democratic society.

Since its inception in 1994, the Summit of the Americas process has been based on the tenets of democracy and economic integration, and on the recognition of a mutually reinforcing relationship between the promotion and protection of democracy and the liberalization of the economy. At Quebec City in April 2001, Summit Leaders took a further step to entrench this relationship in the hemispheric integration process by endorsing a democracy clause that establishes respect for the maintenance and strengthening of the rule of law, and strict respect for the democratic system, as essential conditions for participation in the Summit process. Leaders also invited the governors of the Inter-American Development Bank to take the clause into consideration in the activities of the Bank. Further, Summit Leaders endorsed the development of an Inter-American Democratic Charter to complement the democracy clause and “to reinforce OAS instruments for the active defence of representative democracy.” Article 19 of the Charter reflects the language of the Quebec Summit initiative, which tied participation in the Summit process to respect for democracy. OAS foreign ministers adopted the Charter in Lima, Peru, on September 11, 2001. The Charter has already proven to be a necessary instrument, as it was invoked for the first time on April 13, 2002, following an attempted coup in Venezuela.

Canada understands that the Inter-American Democratic Charter is political in nature and that the “right to democracy,” mentioned in Article 1 of the Charter, is the right of individuals to the elements of democracy as set out in relevant international instruments. Canada acknowledges that states have the obligation to promote and defend the individual human rights that constitute the elements of democracy. The term “democratic rights,” as

