



SECOND MINISTERIAL MEETING ON
AGRICULTURE AND RURAL LIFE IN THE CONTEXT
OF THE SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS PROCESS



**“AGRO 2003-2015” PLAN OF ACTION
FOR THE AGRICULTURE AND RURAL LIFE OF THE AMERICAS**

We, the Ministers and Secretaries of Agriculture of the Americas, assembled in Panama City, Republic of Panama (November 11-12, 2003) at the Second Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Rural Life within the framework of the Summit of the Americas process, in fulfillment of the mandates on agriculture and rural life issued by the Heads of State and Government at the Third Summit of the Americas, and in follow up to the Ministerial Declaration of Bavaro, which we approved at our First Ministerial Meeting, held in the Dominican Republic in the year 2001, hereby adopt this AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action for Agriculture and Rural Life of the Americas, including The Hemispheric Agenda 2003-2005.

We based the preparation of the Plan on a systemic concept of agriculture and rural life which encompasses rural territories, agricultural production-trade chains and the national and international context, and an approach to sustainable development which takes into account the differences amongst countries and regions in the hemisphere in production-trade, ecological-environmental, sociocultural and human development, and political-institutional dimensions.

1. THE SHARED VISION 2015

Situated in the year 2015, we observe agriculture and rural life characterized as follows:

National and International Context

1. Macroeconomic policies facilitate effective management of agricultural development that foster and promote the improvement of rural life and allow greater access to efficient services, new and appropriate technologies, improved infrastructure, user-friendly information systems, and transparent markets.
2. Agricultural trade is taking place in an international framework significantly less distorted by subsidies and market access barriers.
3. Agriculture is recognized as a key component of the health and food security systems and of strategic importance to development.

Rural Territories

4. The rural economy comprises both agricultural and non-agricultural activities, based on the coordinated action of the public and private sectors. There are organizations, institutions and enterprises with capacity for innovation. There are efficient support services and improved access to technology for production and trade. It also generates

goods and services with levels of production and productivity in line with national and world markets.

5. Agriculture uses environmentally friendly practices and technologies that address sustainable management of natural resources.
6. There has been a substantial reduction in rural poverty as defined in *Millennium Development Goals*. The quality of life of the inhabitants in rural communities has improved as well as the levels of employment and employment opportunities.
7. The different social and productive groups of the rural sector have democratic mechanisms for reflection and dialogue and have mechanisms for their full participation in the definition and execution of actions aimed at improving rural life.

Agricultural Production-Trade Chains

8. Agriculture encompasses production-trade chains whose links add value. It has mechanisms among the different stakeholders to discuss various aspects of the distribution of global benefits.
9. Agriculture supplies safe, healthy, and high-quality products; it has support services and is efficient and competitive.
10. Production-trade chains use systems and technologies that mitigate the effects of natural disasters and sanitary and phytosanitary emergencies.
11. Production-trade chains have information systems that enhance knowledge and learning processes to facilitate the management of risk involved in agriculture and contribute to the operation of efficient food security systems.

2. THE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

In order to attain the Shared Vision in 2015 and to focus the efforts of the leaders of the Community of Agriculture and Rural Life of the Americas, we reaffirm our commitment, as agreed to in the Ministerial Declaration of Bavaro, with the strategic objectives of **Rural Prosperity, Food Security, the Positioning of Agriculture in the International Scenario and Regional Integration, Agricultural Health and Food Safety** and **Sustainable Development of Agriculture and the Rural Milieu**.

3. THE HEMISPHERIC AGENDA: Chapter 2003-2005

To advance toward Rural Prosperity, Food Security and Sustainable Development of Agriculture and the Rural Milieu we pledge, as called for by the Heads of State and Government during the Third Summit of the Americas (Plan of Action - Section 10 - Mandate 1), to promote, together with the stakeholders of the agricultural sector and others associated with the development of agriculture and rural life, the following strategic actions:

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

PRODUCTION-TRADE DIMENSION

1. Support a real and meaningful reform in agriculture by strengthening the multilateral rules governing agricultural trade, as agreed in Doha, including substantial improvements in market access; reductions of, with a view to elimination of, all forms of export subsidies, and substantial reductions in trade-distorting domestic support. Support the establishment of free trade areas in the hemisphere and in other regional or sub-regional forums. Support and participate in capacity building and technical assistance that contributes to these objectives.
2. Assign high priority to regional policies on animal and plant health and on food safety, strengthening national and regional systems, and reaffirming their commitment to the competent organizations recognized by the WTO Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures and the relevant international organizations (Codex Alimentarius, the World Animal Health Organization (OIE), the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC)) and regional organizations.
3. Foster economic and social conditions conducive to the development of agribusinesses, the generation of employment, the integration of production-trade chains and their participation in the international context.
4. Promote micro, small and medium scale rural enterprises, cooperatives and community groups engaged in agricultural production, agroindustry and rural services.
5. Promote cooperatives as a way to improve production and marketing organization and to improve rural income.
6. Support programs that encourage internal and external private investment in the rural milieu, promoting the adoption of legal measures that provide investors with security.
7. Foster the establishment of priorities and the revitalization of research capabilities by coordinating among farmers, research centers and agricultural services, and facilitate access to innovative technologies that are adaptive and practical with direct links to production, processing and marketing systems.
8. Facilitate access to new technologies to improve productivity; and establish a hemispheric mechanism to advance better understanding of the science and safety of biotechnology products, including the development of a data base. Consider the development of biotechnology and its use in agriculture with a sustainable strategic vision.
9. Support actions to comply with international agricultural health standards.

ECOLOGICAL-ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSION

10. Promote organic agriculture, as well as regulations for the production, oversight, quality certification and trade of organic products.

11. Collaborate with the appropriate domestic authorities on the updating of environmental regulations for agriculture and strengthen public-private coordination for environmental management.
12. Encourage active participation of agricultural and rural community leaders in national discussions related to international negotiations on the environment and sustainable development.
13. Encourage the establishment of a hemispheric network specialized in early warning and agrometeorological monitoring for the mitigation of natural disasters through the joint efforts of public and private institutions in the hemisphere.

SOCIO-CULTURAL AND HUMAN DIMENSION

14. Promote rural development programs that include gender equity, including multicultural considerations, where applicable, and special attention to different age groups to improve the living conditions of the rural population.
15. Promote agricultural and rural training and recommend to the competent authorities the evaluation and accreditation of agricultural education.

POLITICAL-INSTITUTIONAL DIMENSION

16. Strengthen the mechanisms for cooperation among countries in the areas of technical assistance, knowledge, information and experience which contribute to the modernization of agriculture and rural life.
17. Develop additional opportunities for cooperation and collaboration with agricultural and non-agricultural stakeholders and with civil society and to ensure that agricultural institutions have sufficient capacity to pursue these objectives.
18. Strengthen regional and hemispheric interaction among and between agricultural ministries and international organizations.

RURAL TERRITORIES

PRODUCTION-TRADE DIMENSION

19. Promote conditions that will stimulate, in the rural milieu, the development of needed infrastructure, competitive enterprises, and greater investment to improve rural life.
20. Promote innovative types of financial and non-financial services, and risk management for the rural milieu.
21. Promote food security through increased productivity, greater market access through improved distribution and the production of safe, nutritious foods, as well as the

production and consumption of products that offer greater competitive advantages, taking into consideration social and economic issues.

22. Improve rural connectivity and access to information through the creation of information network systems within communities.
23. Promote increased coordination among farmers, research centers and agricultural public and private services to establish priorities and implement actions in the areas of research and technology transfer.

ECOLOGICAL-ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSION

24. Increase understanding of the environmental impact of conventional agricultural systems, and of production systems suited to agroecological systems.
25. Promote access to, and adoption of, agricultural, forestry and fisheries practices that are environmentally sound, including agroecological and organic alternatives.
26. Foster better understanding, facilitate dialogue and work towards hemispheric consensus with regard to the links between agriculture and biodiversity within the framework of national and international agreements.
27. Strengthen national and local capabilities to mitigate natural disasters.
28. Foster sustainable agriculture with an expanded agroecological and innovative vision based on land use planning, diversification and non-food uses of agricultural products.
29. Foster dialogue and collaborate with other sectors related to rural life for the development of activities that link agriculture with other non-agricultural activities such as agro-tourism, eco-tourism and environmental services.

SOCIO-CULTURAL AND HUMAN DIMENSION

30. Support public-private interaction and coordination in order to improve national capabilities for strategic action, dialogue and negotiation.
31. Improve the agricultural education system and promote the improvement of education of the rural population.
32. Promote appropriate social protection measures for economically vulnerable rural families.
33. Promote the participation of the rural population and consider its cultural diversity in the design and application of rural development strategies.
34. Promote policies that support access to resources such as land, credit, market information and other services.

POLITICAL-INSTITUTIONAL DIMENSION

35. Support the participation of rural communities in decisions that affect their lives and the environment in which they live, specifically to develop their capabilities, leadership skills and their ability to participate in government programs.

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION-TRADE CHAINS

PRODUCTION-TRADE DIMENSION

36. Promote the strengthening of linkages in agricultural production-trade chains, and the expansion of infrastructure for development.
37. Promote research, development and marketing programs for products that recognize added value use of national raw materials.

ECOLOGICAL-ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSION

38. Promote environmental management in the links of the production-trade chains.

SOCIO-CULTURAL AND HUMAN DIMENSION

39. Promote the development of entrepreneurial capabilities among different social and cultural groups in the rural communities.

POLITICAL-INSTITUTIONAL DIMENSION

40. Promote institutional frameworks to facilitate dialogue and negotiation among all participants in the production-trade chains.

4. IMPLEMENTATION AND FOLLOW-UP

The “AGRO 2003-2015” Plan of Action reflects the intention of member countries to work towards the shared vision with the understanding that national governments have the primary responsibility for implementing the shared agenda and recognition that each national government will undertake the Plan of Action consistent with international commitments and agreements.

1. The 2003-05 Hemispheric Agenda is the first of six two year agendas by means of which the “AGRO 2003-2015” Plan of Action will be implemented. National governments will deliver reports on their progress in implementing each two-year agenda to the Ministerial Meeting on Agricultural and Rural Life which takes place at the end of that two-year period, and use these reports to up-date the agenda for the next period.
2. We recognize the efforts of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the International Food Policy Research

Institute (IFPRI) and the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE) in support of this process. We urge them to continue their efforts and renew our call, as set out in paragraph 20 of the Ministerial Declaration of Bavaro, to the other institutions of the Summit of the Americas process, international financial organizations (Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI), Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), Andean Development Corporation (CAF) and World Bank) and cooperating governments, to join this effort to coordinate their strategies with a view to implementing the shared agenda of the "AGRO 2003-2015" Plan of Action.

3. Moreover, we entrust the delegates to define appropriate measurements for this Plan of Action.

Signed in Panama City, Republic of Panama on the twelfth of November of the year two thousand and three.

Antigua and Barbuda
Winston D. Burleigh



Argentina
Miguel Santiago Campos



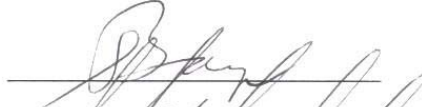
Bahamas
V. Alfred Gray



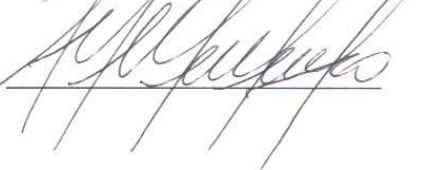
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Erskine Griffith



Belize
Servulo Baeza



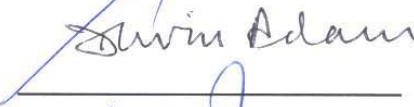
Bolivia
Diego Montenegro Ernst



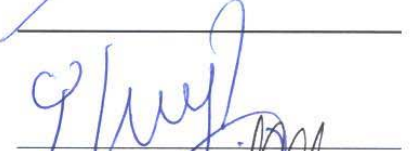
Brazil
Edilson Guimarães



Canada
David Adam




Chile
Jaime Campos Quiroga



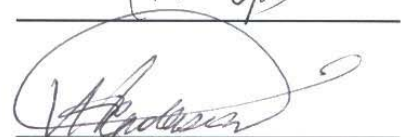
Colombia
Carlos Gustavo Cano



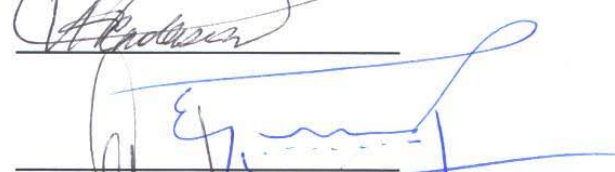
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Rodolfo Coto Pacheco



Dominica
Vince Henderson



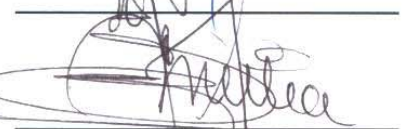
Dominican Republic
Eligio Jáquez



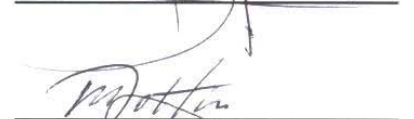
Ecuador
Sergio Seminario



El Salvador
Salvador E. Urrutia Loucel



Grenada
Malachy Dottin



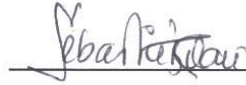
Guatemala
Carlos Sett Oliva



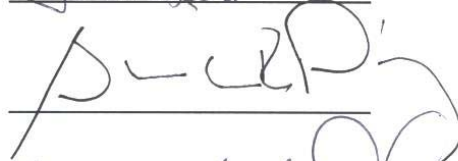
Guyana
Satyadeow Sawh



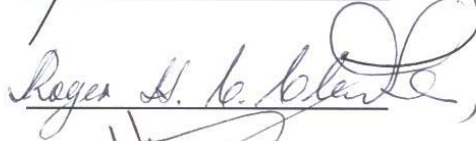
Haiti
Sébastien Hilaire



Honduras
German Pérez D'estephan



Jamaica
Roger Clarke



Mexico
Victor Manuel Villalobos Arámbula



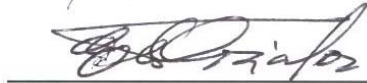
Nicaragua
José Augusto Navarro Flores



Paraguay
Antonio Ibáñez Aquino



Peru
Francisco González García



St. Kitts and Nevis
Cedric Roy Liburd



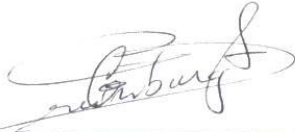
St. Lucia
Calixte George



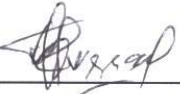
St. Vincent and the Grenadines
Philmore Isaacs



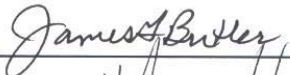
Suriname
Gerrit Arno Breinburg



Trinidad and Tobago
Trevor W. Murray



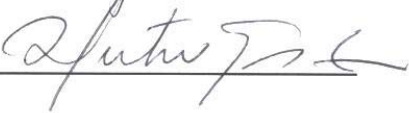
United States of America
James G. Butler




Uruguay
Martín Aguirrezabala



Venezuela
Héctor Garzón





Lynette M. Stanziola
Minister of Agricultural Development
Chairperson of the Second Ministerial Meeting
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Honorary Witnesses



Mireya Moscoso
President of the Republic of Panama



Harmodio Arias
Minister of Foreign Affairs of Panama



Chelston W. D. Brathwaite
Director General of IICA