PROMOTION OF NON-CONVENTIONAL EDUCATION INITIATIVES AND COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAMS TO IMPROVE THE WELLBEING AND SAFETY OF THE YOUTH OF THE HEMISPHERE


HAVING SEEN:

The Inter-American Democratic Charter;

NOTING:

That the quality of education is an essential ingredient for personal development and active civil life;

That comprehensive education in the 21st century should ensure the incorporation of youth cultures and consider different socio-cultural contexts and the knowledge, values of indigenous peoples and other groups that have been historically excluded; the development of specific policies for inclusion and youth citizenship; and, the development of creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship;

That the OAS is developing an inter-departmental youth strategy;

That this strategy is a result of the OAS commitment to strengthening and institutionalizing youth participation in democratic societies throughout the Hemisphere, as well as at the OAS where they may collaborate in a variety of activities;

That through this commitment the OAS has been developing non conventional educational initiatives, aiming to provide leadership training, such as the Model OAS General Assembly Program (MOAS) and Model Permanent Council; the Internship Program; the Online Civil Education Program; the Young Scholars Program of the Inter-American Program on Education for Democratic Values and Practices; the Capacinet Project; Ignite the Americas; Orchestra Program for Youth at Risk (in the Caribbean) the Young Electoral Observers Program; Training Courses for Young Political and Social Leaders on Democratic Institution, Values and Practices,
among other programs targeting youth, developed by the General Secretariat of the OAS and affiliated trusts;

That the OAS is also involved in promoting the inclusion of and equal opportunities for youth such as the programs developed by YABT (business labs and others) and the Trust for the Americas (POETA program and others);

CONSIDERING:

That this moment presents an opportunity for the OAS to declare its commitment and responsibilities to non conventional education initiatives to improve the livelihood of youth in the hemisphere;

RECALLING

Article sixteen of the Inter-American Democratic Charter which states that “Education is key to strengthening democratic institutions, promoting the development of human potential, and alleviating poverty and fostering greater understanding among our peoples. To achieve these ends, it is essential that a quality education be available to all including girls and women, rural inhabitants, and minorities;”

The Declaration of Medellin “Youth and Democratic Values” which states the commitment of member states to “adopt policies and program to ensure the social, economic, and cultural inclusion of young people, bearing in mind their vulnerability to diverse problems such as poverty, crime in all its forms, violence, drug addiction, illicit drug use, trafficking in persons, high drop-out rates, and unemployment, and to increase the quality and coverage of social services aimed at improving the quality of life of youth and promoting healthy lifestyles;”

The Declaration of Quito "Better Opportunities for the Youth of the Americas: Rethinking Secondary Education" that states "the need to promote measures for youth outside the school system in order to foster their integration into society in both educational and work settings;"

DECLARES:

1. To recognize the importance of the installation of democratic values in hemispheric youth as
stated in the "Declaration of Medellin: Youth and Democratic Values," in which all member
states made a "commitment to promote a favorable economic, social, and cultural environment
enabling young people to develop fully."

2. That the OAS will strive to foster the active, positive role of youth in a democratic society in
order to uphold its stated goal of promoting the consolidation of democratization processes by
enriching the educational opportunities for youth that encourage the development of their
livelihood and life skills to empower young people and to increase their social, economic, and
political inclusion.

3. That the OAS is committed to the continuing-implementation of non-conventional education
initiatives to supplement general education such as:
   a. Encouraging the promotion of programs that involve the creation of groups targeted
      at-risks youth to provide youth to provide job-training programs that iniquely focus on
      technical skills;
   b. Encouraging the initiatives in such programs to recognize the cultural diversity of
      youth involved and distinguish and appreciate each unique heritage that can establish
      a foundation of youth understanding on which to develop a solid democracy
   c. Ensuring that there is active participation of the youth in the afore-mentioned
      programs

4. To continue working for the betterment of youth through the promotion of non-conventional
educational initiatives such as youth-led community service programs which not only serve to
strengthen the commitment of youth to democracy but also function as a mechanism for
preserving the safety of these youth in the face of the many dangers and temptations modern life
poses to young people the world;

5. The importance of such non-conventional education initiatives that combat youth gang
violence and drug crime by addressing the underlying consequences of poverty including
inadequate access to education, poor learning environments, and political disenfranchisement;

6. That associated programs of the OAS should exemplify democratic values and promote youth
leadership in the order to involve young people in democratic systems, to promote their trust in democratic institutions, and to provide them with opportunities within these institutions;

7. These associated programs should strive to provide community service opportunities that promote positive youth involvement in local issues and foster the strong communities that are the crucial foundation of any democratic society;

8. To encourage member states to contribute to the support and consolidation of programs and policies that seek to incorporate the youth directly into democratic processes, including roles in local government and youth policy committees in which they are given the opportunity to participate in public policies;

9. To encourage member states to cooperate and exchange information and ideas with other member states in order to improve the development of youth policies.

10. To encourage member states to create opportunities for youth organizations to collaborate in the implementation of youth policies and programs.