

Annex X. OASGA Resolution 1842: Human Rights Defenders

Human Rights Defenders in the Americas, Support for the Individuals, Groups and Organizations of Civil Society Working to Promote and Protect Human Rights in the Americas ¹

General Assembly Resolution 1842 (XXXII-O/02)

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY,

HAVING SEEN the report presented by the Permanent Council on the topic "Human Rights Defenders in the Americas: Support for the Individuals, Groups, and Organizations of Civil Society Working to Promote and Protect Human Rights in the Americas," in keeping with resolution AG/RES. 1818 (XXXI-O/01);

CONSIDERING that, at its thirty-first regular session, through the aforementioned resolution AG/RES. 1818 (XXXI-O/01), it instructed the Permanent Council, to continue to examine this matter in the context of the dialogue on strengthening and enhancing the inter-American human rights system and to present a report on implementation of the resolution;

CONSIDERING FURTHER:

That, in the context of the dialogue on the functioning of the system and pursuant to the mandates contained in resolution AG/RES. 1818 (XXXI-O/01), on November 15, 2001, the Committee on Juridical and Political Affairs of the Permanent Council held a meeting at which it considered the topic;

That the participants at that meeting included not only a representative of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, but also the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders, who gave a presentation on the treatment of this issue in her area of competence; and

That the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) has expressed its concern over the situation of human rights defenders in the region, and has recommended to the member states that they should take the necessary steps to protect the lives, personal safety, and freedom of expression of those who work to ensure respect for fundamental rights, in accordance with the collective commitment expressed in resolutions AG/RES. 1671 (XXIX-O/99), AG/RES. 1711 (XXX-O/00), and AG/RES. 1818 (XXXI-O/01);

BEARING IN MIND the practice of the IACHR in this area and the measures it has taken to protect the fundamental rights of defenders; and, in particular, the decision taken on December 7, 2001, by the Executive Secretary of the Commission to

¹ Organization of American States General Assembly document, AG/RES. 1842 (XXXII-O/02), June 4, 2002.

establish an operational unit on human rights defenders, taking into account the mandate issued in resolution AG/RES. 1818 (XXXI-O/01);

RECALLING:

That, at the Third Summit of the Americas, held in Quebec City, Canada, the heads of state and government reiterated in the Declaration that their “commitment to full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms is based on shared principles and convictions” and reaffirmed in that Plan of Action that they will “seek to promote and give effect to the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Defenders”; and

That the OAS General Assembly has previously made similar statements on this subject reiterating its recommendation that the member states “grant the necessary guarantees and facilities to enable nongovernmental human rights organizations to continue contributing to the promotion and protection of human rights, and that they respect the freedom and safety of the members of such organizations”;

RECOGNIZING the important work, at both the national and regional levels, of human rights defenders in the Americas, as well as their valuable contribution to the protection and promotion of fundamental rights and freedoms;

CONCERNED over the persistence in the Americas of actions that directly or indirectly prevent or hamper the work of individuals, groups, or organizations working to promote and protect fundamental rights; and

AWARE of the need to promote respect for the essential aims, principles, and standards set forth in inter-American and international instruments on this matter,

RESOLVES:

1. To reiterate its support for the work carried out, at both the national and regional levels, by human rights defenders; and to recognize their valuable contribution to the protection, promotion, and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the Hemisphere.
2. To condemn actions that directly or indirectly prevent or hamper the work of human rights defenders in the Americas.
3. To urge member states to step up their efforts to adopt the necessary measures, in keeping with their domestic law and with internationally accepted principles and standards, to safeguard the lives, personal safety, and freedom of expression of human rights defenders.
4. To invite member states to publicize and enforce the instruments of the inter-American system and the decisions of its bodies on this matter, as well as the United Nations Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognised Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

5. To invite the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to continue to pay due attention to the situation of human rights defenders in the Americas and to consider, *inter alia*, preparing a comprehensive study on the matter and to give due consideration to this situation at the level it may judge appropriate.
6. To continue the dialogue and cooperation with the United Nations, in particular with the office of the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General to Report on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders, through the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and the Permanent Council.
7. To instruct the Permanent Council to follow up on this resolution and to report on its implementation to the General Assembly at its thirty-third regular session.
8. To direct that the mandates in this resolution be executed in accordance with the resources allocated in the program-budget and other resources.