

TRANSLATION-----

I. The Commissioners to the International Whaling Commission (IWC) from Argentina, Brazil, Mexico and Peru met on 1 November 2006 in the city of Buenos Aires together with the representatives of the Commissioners from Chile and Panama. Representatives of the governments of Ecuador, Guatemala and the Dominican Republic and diplomatic observers from the Embassies of Colombia, Uruguay and Venezuela also participated. The meeting stated the need to strengthen the activities of the Commission, especially those regarding the non-lethal use and conservation of whales at international level and in the region.

II. In the framework of the regional consultations agreed upon in the “Buenos Aires Declaration”, the Latin American Member States present at the meeting decided to analyze the most important issues of the Commission and to strengthen the coordination of their policies in respect of it.

III. The Commissioners and the representatives of the Member States of the region agreed:

1. The non-lethal use of cetaceans is a permanent commitment of the countries of the Latin-American region represented at this meeting, as stated in the “Buenos Aires Declaration”.
2. High quality and well managed implementation of whale watching tourism promotes economic growth and social and cultural development of local communities, bringing educational and scientific benefits, whilst contributing

to the protection of cetacean populations. The development of whale watching tourism and non-lethal scientific research should be supported and encouraged by countries of the Latin American region. In this regard, all regional cooperation initiatives in this field which make it possible to disseminate experiences and share knowledge between the Latin American countries are specially valued.

3. To systematically assess the socio-economic benefits of non-lethal activities of coastal communities.
4. To reaffirm that the right of coastal communities to benefit from the non-lethal use of cetaceans has for them the same importance as aboriginal subsistence whaling has for other communities.
5. To promote in international bodies, in relation to the objectives of the Commission (IWC), the coordinated participation, consultations and active cooperation of the countries of the region with interests in the protection, conservation and non-lethal use of cetaceans.

IV. The meeting, wishing to encourage new and constructive approaches at multilateral level in order to present consensus criteria to the Commission, recognized the importance of the following:

1. That the next meetings of Commissioners prior to the annual Assembly should have a common space for analysis, consensus building and support to the competence of the Commission (IWC). To this end, the Commissioners will jointly follow up on the meetings called, their actual holding and attendance at them, taking into account the increasing importance of non-lethal use of cetaceans and the need to adapt the IWC to the highest standards of environmental law, including an effective enforcement regime reflecting the best international practices in the matter.
2. To reiterate their firm commitment to the moratorium on the hunting of cetaceans, in the current context, and the urgent need, in this scenario, for approval of the South Atlantic and South Pacific Whale Sanctuaries by the Commission in order to guarantee the existence of whaling free areas for non-lethal management of cetacean population in the Southern Hemisphere.
3. To continue, jointly and in coordination, the follow-up and rejection of lethal commercial and research activities by any state which are contrary to multilateral commitments reached in the framework of the Convention.
4. Scientific whaling under Special Permits should be terminated and scientific research limited to non-lethal methods with a view to creating appropriate conditions for dialogue within the Commission (IWC).

5. To continue with the work carried out during the “Cetacean Killing Methods and Animal Welfare Workshop”, which took place at the 58th Meeting of the IWC.
6. Promotion of broader participation of developing countries in the IWC on the basis of sovereign equality, and particularly of its researchers in the Scientific Committee.
7. To reiterate the validity and strengthen the work of the Conservation Committee in the Commission and to request the full participation of all States Parties.
8. To transmit to the IWC and the International Maritime Organization all the information gathered regarding collisions between cetaceans and vessels.
9. A joint follow-up of budgetary issues and in the study of the structure of financial contributions to IWC. To explore decisions within the Commission to allow the full participation of those countries that may have temporary difficulties in the payment of their contributions, especially those in arrears.
10. To analyse the convenience, in the current situation, of changing the IWC Secretariat Headquarters.

V. The Commissioners, representatives and observers present welcomed the development of the meeting, and thanked Argentina for its kind hospitality. With the

Commission (IWC) Member countries taking due note of the agreements reached the following was decided:

1. To keep the “Buenos Aires Group” permanently informed and in consultation on the issues studied and, in general, through the IWC activities.
2. The convenience of holding periodical meetings to follow up its activities and consider possible new meetings of the Group in alternative venues.
3. To initiate negotiations towards the signing of a Latin American agreement on the non-lethal use and conservation of cetaceans.
4. To acknowledge the importance of Civil Society joining the activities of the Latin American Commissioners.
5. To thank Chile for hosting the 60th IWC annual meeting in 2008 and to support Portugal’s candidature.

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