

CHILE

MISION PERMANENTE ANTE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS

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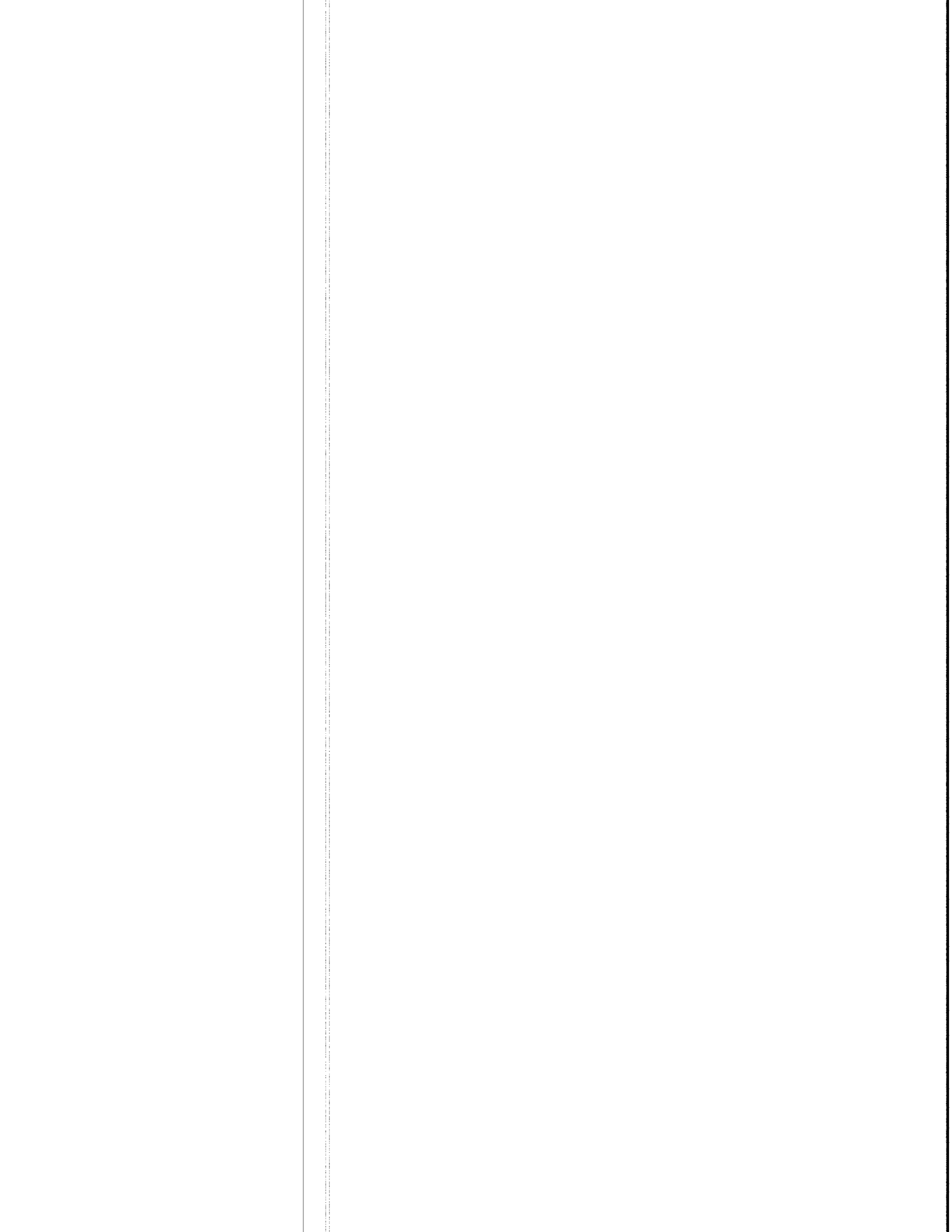
STATEMENT

BY THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF CHILE

H.E. MRS. MARIA SOLEDAD ALVEAR

**AT THE MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY
OF DEMOCRACIES**

New York, 22nd September 2004.



Ladies and gentlemen,

(Implementation of the Seoul Plan of Action)

Since Chile assumed the Chairmanship of the Convening Group of the Community of Democracies, on 31 March 2003, our main objective has been to promote and encourage concrete initiatives and actions by all the countries of the Community with a view to fulfilling the commitments agreed in the Seoul Plan of Action.

Among the most important activities, more detailed information about which is contained in the report that has been distributed, mention may be made of the following:

1. Cooperation with new democracies

In response to the request of the Government of Timor Leste for institutional support for the strengthening of its democracy, the Convening Group agreed to send a mission to that country, from 10 – 14 May 2004, composed of officials actively working in areas related to the office of mayor, office of public prosecutor and police services, to identify areas in which the Community of Democracies could offer its cooperation.

2. Regional and transregional cooperation for democracy

We have also encouraged, supported and sponsored regional and transregional cooperation meetings for democracy. Notable among these was the Regional Conference of the Community of Democracies, held in Bucharest, Romania, on 14 and 15 November 2003.

The America –Africa Dialogue on Democracy, held on 5 and 6 June 2003, in Coral Gables, Florida, brought together representatives of African and American countries and established an important and innovative connection for the development of democratic principles and values between the two regions.

For their part, the Heads of State and Government of the Rio Group countries, meeting in Cuzco, Peru, on 23 and 24 May 2003, on the occasion of the XVII Summit, recognized in the Declaration of Cuzco that only democratic Governments with adequate levels of good governance are able to fully satisfy the legitimate demands of their peoples.

Mention should also be made of the Seminar on Political Parties and Democratic Governance, organized in Santiago on 19 March 2004 by the Governments of Chile and Italy to promote the role of political parties in democratic governance.

Also very important was the Seminar on Good Government Practices for the Protection of Human Rights, held in Seoul, South Korea, on 15-16 September 2004.

3. **The non-governmental process**

For its part, civil society organized in Lisbon, Portugal, from 19 to 21 January 2004, the Non-Governmental Forum of the Community of Democracies to prepare for the participation of non-governmental organizations in the Santiago Ministerial Conference.

4. **Meetings of the Convening Group**

We have also held seven meetings at the level of ambassadors and high officials of the 10 members of the Convening Group, alternately in Washington and Santiago.

These meetings held to coordinate and promote the actions and initiatives of the Community of Democracies have been open, on a number of occasions, to the participation of other countries of the Community, as well as to representatives of the non-governmental process and of UNDP.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

(The Democratic Caucus in the United Nations)

On 26 September last year, an Enlarged Meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Convening Group of the Community of Nations was held at United Nations Headquarters. At that Meeting, the Ministers reached important agreements that were contained in a Press Communiqué.

Based on the agreements reached at that Ministerial Meeting and in conformity with the provisions of the Warsaw Declaration and Seoul Plan of Action, we have promoted a dynamic action by the Democratic Caucus at the United Nations, both in Geneva and in New York.

In Geneva, a number of meetings of the Convening Group have been held with a view to identifying draft resolutions related to the objectives promoted by the Community of Democracies, which has resulted in the adoption of three important resolutions by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, in April 2004. A Joint Communiqué was also issued, highlighting the objectives and principles behind the action of the Community in the United Nations.

In New York, the Convening Group has been actively engaged in activities, in coordination with other participating countries in the Community of Democracies, aimed at identifying areas for joint action. On 17 November 2003, for example, the Permanent Representative of Chile, on behalf of the Convening Group, made a statement in support of the Resolution on New and Restored Democracies. Also, on 10 December, a statement was made on the occasion of the commemoration of the 55th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the tenth anniversary of the Vienna Declaration.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our work at the United Nations this past year has been one of the great achievements of the Community of Democracies and marks outstanding progress towards fulfillment of the objectives that we set in Warsaw and Seoul. We are confident that at this fifty-ninth session of the United Nations General Assembly the countries of the Community of Democracies will continue, from the United Nations, to support and promote declarations and resolutions for democracy and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms that guarantee democracy.

(Ministerial Conference in Santiago)

The Third Ministerial Conference of the Community of Democracies will be held from 4 to 6 May 2005, in Santiago, Chile.

I am confident that this will be a relevant opportunity to expand and strengthen the activities for the promotion of democracy at the global and regional levels, within a framework of cooperation and inclusion of a growing number of countries that base their action on democratic principles.

The Conference, firstly, will permit a review to be carried out of the action taken by governments, international organizations and civil society under the Seoul Plan of Action.

Secondly, it will be an especially appropriate occasion to strengthen regional and transregional cooperation for democracy, both through existing institutions and organizations and through new projects.

Finally, it will serve to send a strong message about the value of democracy in the world today and to reiterate our commitment to supporting processes of transition to democracy, to the strengthening of institutions and democratic processes, and to those fighting for democracy.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Among the important results that we hope to achieve at the Santiago Conference is the decision on the role, system of rotation and possible enlargement of the membership of the Convening Group.

I take this opportunity to invite you to reflect together on these matters, under the premise that all participating countries are the Community of Democracies and that the Convening Group is an instrument to facilitate the action of all members.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

(The future of democracy)

We are confident that the 2005 Santiago Conference will be an opportunity to make more universal the values of democracy in this XXI century.

We hope that there will be more democratic countries and that existing democracies will become stronger.

We need to ensure that this Conference has the broadest representation and we therefore invite all countries to contribute to the UNDP fund to support the participation in the Third Ministerial Conference of those that need assistance.

Chile, a country that in this generation has experienced the horrors of dictatorship and which has succeeded, with the efforts of all its citizens, to rebuild its democracy, will welcome you with open minds and will stand fully ready to work to ensure that together we can promote new and larger initiatives for the strengthening of democratic regimes and open societies that promote the participation and well being of free men and women.

We await you in Santiago.

Thank you very much.