The Ministers of the Public Administration and State Reform and Heads of Delegation of the Ibero-American countries, meeting at the initiative of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers of Portugal and the Latin American Centre for Development Administration (CLAD), on 27-28 July 1998, in Lisbon, Portugal:

- Have come together in the First Ibero-American Conference on Public Administration and State Reform, in order to discuss and present guidelines and lines of cooperation in respect of “The Prospects for State Reform in the new Geography of Power: Globalisation, Regional Integration and Local Power”; “Managerial Administration in Ibero-America: Balancing Efficiency and Equity” and “The Role of International Cooperation in Redesigning the State for the Future”;

- Have followed up on the concerns expressed in successive summit conferences at Bariloche, Viña del Mar and Margarita Island, in the sphere of Public Administration and State Reform;

- Express their feeling that State reform processes, which have ranked high among presidential concerns for almost two decades, have been strongly conditioned by market liberalisation, globalisation of the economy, increased interdependence among countries, their own regional integration, the redesigning of public policy, the redefinition of State/Civil Society relations and the political and administrative decentralisation processes. The arrived at a consensus regarding the principles stated below and agreed to submit them to the next Summit Conference of Heads of State and Government, to be held in Oporto on 17-18 October 1998.

THE PROSPECTS FOR STATE REFORM IN THE NEW GEOGRAPHY OF POWER, GLOBALISATION, REGIONAL INTEGRATION AND LOCAL POWER

1. In the context of the broad opportunities generated by the globalisation process, the transformations needed to enhance competitiveness and render it compatible with State Reform in order to ensure democratic governance are highly relevant. In this regard, the States must formulate a country project in which the various sectors may work together towards a development strategy aimed at attaining economic, social and environmental achievement.

2. Economic globalisation and the transnational nature of political, economic and social phenomena demonstrate the futility of dealing with public issues solely from the internal point of view of each country. Thus, it is essential to strengthen the integration culture and
establish coordination mechanisms among the States. Within this same spirit, the advisability of developing supranational institutions with a strong technological capacity, flexible organisational design, a service culture for integration and excellence in human resources should be considered.

3. State Reform inescapably assumes the need to structure a State that is committed to economic well-being, political freedoms and social cohesion. Its aim would be to achieve not only the effectiveness of state institutions and agencies at the various levels of government, but also the conditions necessary for efficient performance of the private sector. Together with the development of social networks, this would ensure sustained economic growth and sustainable development, as well as the greatest possible distribution of power in society.

The State should consider its citizens as the focal point for action, with a view to improving their living standards through social equity, equal opportunity, a fair distribution of wealth, the eradication of poverty and social exclusion and the promotion of education and health.

4. The new trends will necessarily lead to the reformulation of State participation in the direct production of goods and services under the principle of subsidiarity, in such a way that the regulatory and promotional function of civil society’s interests may prevail. The establishment of a new organisational architecture to render it more flexible and transparent is the logical corollary of this line of action.

State Reform is a comprehensive process that should entail not only the efforts of the executive branch, but also those relating to the legislative and judicial branches. Its purpose is to strengthen institutional capacity and legitimacy, inter alia, through transparency and social control in order that the regulatory framework governing the socio-economic and political activity of our countries may be made more rational and efficient. In this context, it is also essential to fight corruption in all its forms and recover the ethical values in the exercise of public service.

5. The political and administrative decentralisation processes are an integral part of State Reform as a means for ensuring closer ties between public institutions and citizens, more adequate meeting of the latter’s needs and more active participation of civil society in the public sphere.

Decentralisation is a complex and dynamic process that should be in line with the realities of each country. The strengthening of regions and municipalities will inevitably lead to a redistribution of resources in political, institutional and economic terms. To this end, the decentralisation process requires the cooperation and consensus of the various levels of administration, with the objective of optimising public policy.
6. The relevance of the Public Administration’s role lies in its capacity to effectively and efficiently embody State functions, bearing in mind the impact of its performance on the furthering of participatory democracy, on economic, social and cultural development and in meeting the needs of individuals and the community.

The administration has not always responded appropriately to such challenges. It has, instead, become cumbersome, deficit generator, and been inefficient, wasteful and even an obstacle to normally meeting the needs of citizens/clients/users. It is now essential to evaluate a new strategy for management and modernisation of the Administration and the Civil Service.

7. Implementation of a new culture for the State/citizen relationship highlights the importance of creating and developing mechanisms for the control and participation of citizens/users in preparing the final product of administrative activity, the simplification of administrative procedures. While also achieving consolidation of the right to information and multiplication and professional improvement of the public customer service system.

8. The introduction of a new public management culture, aimed at achieving efficiency and effectiveness, requires setting out clear and quantifiable objectives, which should be assumed as a frame of reference for quality administration.

It also implies imbuing the culture with flexibility, the capacity to interpret signs of change, rapid response and adaptability to daily transformations.

Moreover, the establishment of mechanisms for evaluating the performance of services, either through inspections or through regular use of management audits, is a necessary measure for simultaneously safeguarding the public interest and that of the subjects of administrative action.

9. Professional improvement and motivation of civil servants is the key factor that allows for coordination of the remaining factors that intervene in administrative production and activity.

The following are guidelines leading to a human resource management policy that will bear in mind the new realities: an ongoing training and development policy for public managers; the creation of structures for dynamic and open professional careers; the implementation of systems for inter-departmental and inter-professional mobility, and the institutional establishment of mechanisms for evaluating performance leading to a merit system.

10. In order to accompany the technological revolution with a new, real time design for public administrations, it will be necessary to make significant investments in information technology and in process and organisational reengineering, according to innovations as
they arise.

11. Modernisation of public management aimed at implementing efficiency objectives with social equity will require innovation, extensive leadership training and compelling decisions to strengthen public health management, job retraining and basic and higher education, technological management and regulation and control of the interests of users and beneficiaries of public services.

THE ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN REDEFINING THE STATE FOR THE FUTURE

12. Cooperation among states is a principal means for expressing solidarity among countries that compose one same cultural identity, particularly if it leads to diminishing the differences caused by unequal access to the benefits of development. State Reform and modernisation of Public Administration are sensitive areas in the construction of a just society, based on improving the capacity for institutional performance, where errors and failures have high social costs. For this reason, the exchange of experiences and knowledge, as well as advisory services derived from horizontal cooperation and the assistance of multilateral agencies, have a high potential for reducing the costs of reform and even making it more effective.

Within this framework, bilateral and multilateral cooperation should be strengthened, including that of CLAD, the United Nations, the IDB and other international agencies. Moreover, the holding of international conferences should be regularly scheduled in the Ibero-American sphere, and protocols should be established to carry out working and study visits in the various administrations, as well as the exchange of experiences, legislation and documentation.

13. National Public Administration Institutes should contribute to greater efficiency and effectiveness in the ties among public administrations in the region by coordinating action in the field of research and training.

14. Some particularly relevant areas of bilateral and multilateral technical cooperation should be prioritised, inter alia, the participation of social non-profit organisations in the exercise of the public function, the new modalities of social security, the codification of managerial administration principles as a function of Ibero-American reality, the establishment of inter-institutional relations and the various ways of fighting corruption.
RESOLUTIONS

The Ministers of Public Administration and State Reform and Heads of Delegation of the Ibero-American countries, meeting in Lisbon, Portugal, on 27-28 July 1998, on the occasion of the First Ibero-American Conference of Public Administration and State Reform, have decided to adopt the following resolutions:

I

1 To express their acknowledgement to the Government of Portugal for its support to the excellent organisation of this Conference and, again, to the Government of Portugal and the municipalities of Sintra and Cascais for their proverbial hospitality and contributions to the climate of Ibero-American brotherhood that has characterised this Conference.

2 To establish periodical meetings of ministers of Public Administration and State Reform, prior to the Ibero-American Summit Conferences of Heads of State and Government, that may contribute to decision-making and recommendations in line with the common needs of the administrations in the region.

3 To accept the invitation of the Government of Cuba to hold the Second Ibero-American Conference of Public Administration and State Reform.

4 To entrust CLAD with the responsibility of acting as permanent secretariat for the Ibero-American Conference of Ministers of Public Administration and State Reform, and to support the holding of the international congresses of CLAD on State and Public Administration Reform, which have become the Ibero-American forum that enjoys the greatest participation and the widest range of views for the exchange of experiences and knowledge.

II

1 To assert the need for a State policy regarding high-level public management, in such a manner that will allow for the rise of citizen-oriented organisations and the promotion of policies that will motivate officials. All training activities should also be furthered, as an essential step towards professional improvement and modernisation of Public Administrations.

2 As a result of the generalised use of information science and technology, to prioritise activities aimed at converting information systems to resolve the so-called Year 2000 effect.
3 To assert the need for a State policy aimed at generating regulatory spaces for implementing strategies that will allow for citizen participation in public management supervision and control.

4 To support the operation of the “Network of Institutions for the Fight against Corruption and the Recovery of Public Ethics”, agreed upon at the Ibero-American Forum against Corruption, organised by CLAD and Agencia Española para la Cooperación Internacional, and recently held in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, as the ideal means for improving cooperation among governmental and non-governmental agencies working to combat this scourge.

III

1 To support the bilateral and multilateral efforts made by national and multilateral agencies to cooperate in State Reform and Public Administration, and to promote cooperation and financing modalities with third parties.

2 To request that the various national cooperation organisations and agencies maintain an exchange of information with the CLAD General Secretariat regarding cooperation activities carried out with Ibero-American countries in the field of Public Administration and State Reform.

3 To stress the priority interest of the Conference participants in obtaining the full support of national agencies and international organisations for their collective efforts aimed at furthering knowledge on the best policy alternatives for modernisation of the Public Administration and the State. This will be achieved by carrying out studies and systematising documentary information that will allow for experiences and best practices to be shared and consulted in order to serve each country’s priorities.

IV

1 To request the Pro-Tem Secretariat of the Ibero-American Summit Conference to submit the contents of this “Lisbon Declaration”, through appropriate channels, to the consideration of the Heads of State and Government.

Argentina
D. Guillermo Schweinheim

Bolivia
D. Armando Méndez Morales

Brazil
D. José Walter Vasquez Filho

Chile
D. Juan Villarzú Rohde
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