

July 18, 2006
San José, Costa Rica

Senior Deputy
NICOLÁS MADURO
President of the National Assembly
Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

Dear Mr. Maduro:

On behalf of the Executive Committee of the Latin American Association of Promotional Organizations (Asociación Latinoamericana de Organizaciones de Promoción, ALOP), I write to you to express my solidarity with the Venezuelan organizations that have voiced their opposition to the Law for International Cooperation establishing new regulations and obligations for civil society organizations, which has met with approval during its first discussion in the Venezuelan National Assembly.

We believe that international cooperation plays an important role for integral human development, social justice, and the well-being of the people. It is in this spirit that civil society organizations have been constituted, providing considerable contributions to Venezuelan society in the fields of human rights, development, gender, and youth and adolescents, among others. Also, civil society organizations lend services and support to the most vulnerable and poorest segments of society.

We stand in solidarity with the civil society organizations in Venezuela that believe they are subject to all valid judicial orders and, in particular, all judicial frameworks for their actions at the national, state, and municipal levels; that think additional restrictive regulations on their operations without due justification for their necessity in a democratic society, without the law's establishment of case-specific restrictions, and without delegating this possibility to the Executive by means of regulation would violate the right to association, to participation, and other human rights contained in the Constitution of Venezuela and international agreements; and that think the law would not fulfill the state's obligation to create favorable conditions for the exercise of those rights.

We concur with Venezuelan organizations that believe contributions from civil society organizations to the development of a democratic state based on human rights, transparency, and responsibility should be understood as a positive contribution, even though these contributions can produce confrontations or disagreements in the political environment.

We hope the opinions expressed here are received as an expression of the universal character of human rights, which we monitor across national boundaries as members of the international community.

Sincerely,

Jorge Balbis

Executive Secretary

For the Executive Committee of the Latin American Association of Promotional Organizations - ALOP

(Note: Translation was made to English to publish this document in this page)