

Panama's Proposal

For the evaluation of its bid to
host the Permanent Secretariat
of FTAA



February 2004



Republic of Panama
Presidency

At the III Summit of the Americas held in Quebec, Canada, I had the great honor of conveying Panama's interest in constituting its Capital City the Permanent Venue for the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) *"and thereby fulfilling the destiny foreseen by Simon Bolivar, the Liberator, who envisioned in his Jamaica Letter that if the world had to select a capital, surely the Isthmus of Panama would be chosen for such a glorious destiny."*

A clear demonstration of the commitment of the Panamanian State is the unanimous support of the Legislative Assembly to this initiative *"because it is the country's priority and of national interest."* Likewise, the Panamanian private sector is a strong and far-reaching ally in this important objective, offering valuable support to Panama's just aspiration.

Panama offers a sound, reliable platform committed to efficiently and objectively administering the agreement that will implement the area of free trade of the Americas, the instrument that should ensure the opportunity of prosperity and well-being so desired by the peoples of the American continent.

With great pleasure we present the State Proposal of the National Government, the Private Sector and the People of Panama, in order that due consideration is given to our Capital City among the alternatives for Permanent Venue of the Free Trade Area of the Americas.

The commitment of our young nation that has celebrated one hundred years of republican existence is to provide on this occasion - with the same seriousness, efficiency and effectiveness through which we have amazed both nationals and foreigners on the impeccable administration of the Panama Canal - a serious, neutral and objective option for the convergence of trade integration in the Americas.


MIREYA MOSCOSO
President of the Republic



Republic of Panama
Ministry of Industry and Trade

Office of the Minister

MESSAGE OF THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY & TRADE
PRESENTATION OF PANAMA'S PROPOSAL

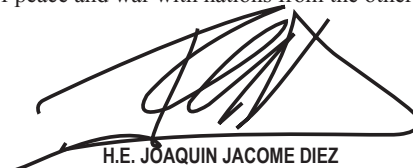
On July 19, 2001, the Presidential Council for the Attainment of the Permanent Venue of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) was created. On this occasion, I had the great responsibility of presiding it, by Presidential designation, in order to promote and coordinate the Panamanian offer to constitute Panama City as permanent venue of this organization of regional impact.

In compliance with the instruction given by Note FTAA.TNC/1/ of January 8, 2004, the Government of the Republic of Panama presents its proposal to be considered in the evaluation of our Capital City as an alternative to host the Permanent FTAA Secretariat. For this purpose, we have include the requested *Elements to Consider in the Evaluation of the Cities which are Competing to Host the Permanent Venue of the FTAA Secretariat*, in addition to important information that fully backs the objective reasons behind the Panamanian proposal.

Likewise, the occasion is favorable to reiterate that Panama would like to become Permanent Venue of the FTAA, based on historic and commercial motives, excellent living conditions, and our proven capacity as Temporary Venue of this regional effort of integration, a commitment assumed from March 1, 2001, to February 28, 2003.

I am fully convinced that the warm reception received by this commendable Panamanian aspiration is due to the seriousness and commitment assumed in our responsibility to present Panama as a dignified, serious and committed option to serve hemispheric integration through trade and investment.

Faithful to its international standing, Panama once again offers a point of convergence for the Americas to host, in this occasion, the Permanent Venue of the FTAA, thus continuing to serve the world through the destiny envisioned by Bolivar when he said: "How beautiful it would be if the Isthmus of Panama could be for us what Corinth was for the Greeks! I hope that some day we shall have the fortune of installing a supreme congress of representatives from republics, kingdoms and empires, in an attempt to discuss the high interests of peace and war with nations from the other three parts of the world."


H.E. JOAQUIN JACOME DIEZ
Minister of Industry and Trade



Working together for Panama

RESOLUTION N° 2

September 4, 2001

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, IN USE OF ITS CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL RIGHTS

Whereas:

That the government of the Republic of Panama formally presented at the Third Summit of the Americas its interest in becoming the Permanent Administrative Venue of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), when the negotiation process culminates in 2005;

That the Republic of Panama is doing an excellent job as temporary venue of the Administrative Secretariat for the FTAA Negotiations;

That the Republic of Panama has the capabilities and appropriate conditions to become the venue of the entity that will manage the Treaty through which the FTAA will be established;

RESOLVES:

1. To support at a legislative level the initiative of the national government, made public at the Summit held in Quebec, of becoming the Permanent Administrative Venue of the FTAA;
2. To recognize the commendable role that the Republic of Panama has played as host of the Temporary Venue of the FTAA Secretariat;
3. To highlight the capabilities and appropriate conditions of the Republic of Panama to become the Permanent Venue of the FTAA Secretariat;
4. To reiterate the willingness of the Legislative Branch to further support the candidacy of the Republic of Panama as Permanent Venue of the FTAA Secretariat, as this is a priority for the country and of national interest;

COMMUNICATE AND COMPLY WITH.

Issued at the Justo Arosemena Palace, in the City of Panama, on the third day of the month of September 2001.

The Chairman
(Original Signed.)
Rubén Arosemena Valdés

The Secretary General
(Original Signed.)
José Gómez Núñez

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 - * Expedient entrance and departure procedures
 - * Compliance with international agreements regarding diplomatic and consular treatment
 - * Agreements to eliminate visas to users of diplomatic, official and ordinary passports
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 - * multiple facilities
 - * site of international events
 - * Availability of existing theaters in the ATLAPA Convention Center, according to the necessities of the Permanent Secretariat, upon requirement
 - * Commitment of the Government of Panama to set up the offered installations for the FTAA Venue.

Other commitments that the Government of Panama is willing to assume regarding the installation and operation of the Permanent FTAA Secretariat.

- * Offering of housing in the FTAA City
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The Republic of Panama offers the Permanent FTAA Secretariat the creation of a National Liaison Office, based on the country’s experience as Temporary Venue of the FTAA Administrative Secretariat during the 2001 - 2003 period

AGREEMENT REGARDING THE HEAD OFFICE TO DETERMINE THE LEGAL SITUATION OF THE PERMANENT FTAA SECRETARIAT AND ITS PERSONNEL, INCLUDING PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES.61

The agreement proposal, among other issues, offers:

- * Recognition of legal status, with capacity to hire and dispose of properties and to institute judicial and administrative procedures, similar to the regime granted to international organizations, pursuant Panamanian legislation (Cabinet Decree No. 280 of 1970);
- * Appropriate installations for offices and meetings of the FTAA Secretariat;
- * Assistance in the installation of utilities required by the Permanent Secretariat;
- * Inviolability of Permanent Secretariat installations, files and documents, as well as communication and correspondence;
- * Security for the Permanent Secretariat installations, furniture and other possessions, exempt of registration, seizures, embargo or execution measures.
- * Jurisdictional immunity over judicial actions against the Permanent Secretariat, its installations and other possessions;
- * Right to use passwords and to dispatch and receive correspondence through messenger or valise, with the same immunity of the diplomatic mail and valises;
- * Exoneration of direct and indirect taxes on the purchases of equipment, automobiles and other goods acquired by the Permanent Secretariat, for its use;
- * Concession to the Executive Secretary and family members of the privileges and immunities of diplomatic agents;
- * Concession to the officials of the Permanent Secretariat, FTAA technicians or experts, of privileges and immunities, not less favorable than those granted to officials, technicians or experts of international organizations. The above-mentioned persons will be exempt of:
 - o Immigration restrictions, and the requirement of making deposits or repatriation guarantees;
 - o Jurisdiction by the national authorities with regard to spoken or written words that express, or actions executed, in the exercise of their official duties;
 - o All taxes and charges over the salaries and payments by the FTAA;
 - o All personal performance of public services, whichever their nature;
 - o Customs rights, taxes and related charges on baggage and domestic furniture, when arriving for the first time to the country;

- o Customs levies, taxes and related charges on an automobile every two years for personal use;
- o License plate tax for a personal automobile, including the cost of the plate;
- o Gasoline consumption tax;
- o Social security provisions in force in the Republic of Panama;
- o Export rights or taxes on furniture and goods, including an automobile, when returning to their country of origin or moving to another destination;
- o Taxes and related charges on articles or objects for personal use or consumption
- * The Republic of Panama will allow the dependents of the Permanent Secretariat officials to carry out remunerated activities in the Republic of Panama
- * The Republic of Panama is willing to honor the terms offered here regarding the grant of privileges, immunities and benefits and, even evaluating a subsequent consideration of improving these conditions after a previous negotiation process and agreement among the parties

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