

Brazil Holds Latin American Summit

Contributed by Cristiane Ribeiro
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The heads of state of 19 South and Central American nations, along with Mexico, will be in Rio de Janeiro tomorrow for the opening of the 18th Rio Group summit which will last two days.

At the close of the meeting a document will be signed by the heads of state with proposals for regional cooperation and the solution of conflicts.

Three topics will be central at the meeting: a worldwide campaign against hunger and misery, international cooperation to deal with the situation in Haiti and the creation of an investment fund for members of the Rio Group.

In order to ensure a peaceful meeting, security has been tightened in Rio with 1,800 personnel from the police and armed forces on duty in the city.

The Rio Group was created in 1986 to consolidate regional democracy through cooperation and integration in economic and social development.

The third Work Meeting session of National Coordinators of the Rio Group was scheduled to begin today at 10 A.M. in the Copacabana Palace Hotel, in Rio de Janeiro.

Two sessions were held yesterday. These sessions are being used to prepare the proposals that will be submitted to the Chancellors of the 19 countries that comprise the Group (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, the Dominican Republic, Venezuela, Uruguay, and a representative of the Caribbean Community - Caricom).

The Ministers of Foreign Relations will meet this afternoon, and their talks will continue tomorrow.

They are responsible for drafting the document that will be presented to the heads of government and State who plan to attend the 18th Meeting of Heads of State and Government, which gets underway tomorrow.

The Rio Group, created in 1986, is a permanent mechanism of consultation and political coordination.

The Brazilian National Coordinator for the Rio Group, Minister Marcelo Vasconcelos, informed that the Brazilian government will propose the establishment of financial instruments to ensure resources for programs to combat hunger and poverty and cooperation with Haiti to reinforce the presence of troops in that country.

Another item on the agenda is the creation of a South American investment authority, which would act as a financial agency to obtain and distribute resources.

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