

IWC/M08/INFO 4
[formerly available as IWC/59/28]

Submitted by Argentina
As circulated on 14 December 2006 (IWC.CCG.588)

*Embassy of the
Argentine Republic*

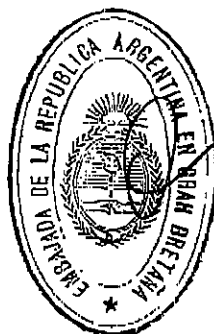
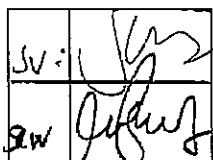
ERUNI 1556 /06

The Argentine Embassy presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the International Whaling Commission and has the honour to submit, for its distribution to the membership of the organism, declaration agreed on 1 December 2006 in the city of Buenos Aires, Argentina together with the representatives of the Commissioners from Chile and Panama (Representatives of the governments of Ecuador, Guatemala and the Dominican Republic and diplomatic observers from the Embassies of Colombia, Uruguay and Venezuela also participated), in the framework of the regional consultations agreed upon in the Buenos Aires Declaration.

Please find attached the mentioned document agreed on 1 December 2006.

The Argentine Embassy avails itself of the opportunity to renew to the Secretariat of the International Whaling Commission the assurances of its highest consideration.

London, 13th December, 2006.



TO THE INTERNATIONAL WHALING COMMISSION
Cambridge

"I. The Commissioners to the International Whaling Commission (IWC) from Argentina, Brazil, Mexico and Peru met on 1 December 2006 in the city of Buenos Aires, Argentina together with the representatives of the Commissioners from Chile and Panama. Representatives of the governments of Ecuador, Guatemala and the Dominican Republic and diplomatic observers from the Embassies of Colombia, Uruguay and Venezuela also participated. The meeting underscored the need to strengthen the activities of the Commission, especially those regarding the non-lethal use and conservation of whales at the international level and in the region.

II. In the framework of the regional consultations agreed upon in the Buenos Aires Declaration, the Latin American Member States present at the meeting decided to analyze the most important issues of the Commission and to strengthen the coordination of their policies in respect of it.

III. The Commissioners and the representatives of the Member States of the region agreed that:

1. The non-lethal use of cetaceans is a permanent commitment of the countries of the Latin-American region represented at this meeting, as stated in the Buenos Aires Declaration.

2. High quality and well managed implementation of whale watching tourism promotes economic growth and social and cultural development of local communities, bringing educational and scientific benefits, whilst contributing to the protection of cetacean populations. The development of whale watching tourism and non-lethal scientific research should be supported and encouraged by countries of the Latin American region. In this regard, all regional cooperation initiatives in this field which make it possible to disseminate experiences and share knowledge between the Latin American countries are specially valued.

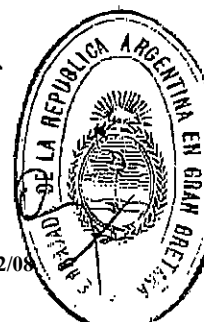
3. They should undertake systematic assessment of the socio-economic benefits of non-lethal activities of coastal communities.

4. The right of coastal communities to benefit from the non-lethal use of cetaceans has for them the same importance as aboriginal subsistence whaling has for other communities.

5. It is relevant to promote in international bodies, in relation to the objectives of the Commission, the coordinated participation, consultations and active cooperation of the countries of the region with interests in the protection, conservation and non-lethal use of cetaceans.

IV. The meeting, while wishing to encourage new and constructive approaches at the multilateral level with a view to attain consensus on criteria within IWC, recognized the importance of the following:

1. The next meetings of Commissioners prior to the annual meeting should have a common space for analysis, consensus building and support to the competence of the Commission (IWC). To this end, the Commissioners will jointly follow up on the meetings that may be convened; in that respect, the increasing importance of non-lethal use of



cetaceans and the need to adapt the IWC to the highest standards of environmental law should be taken into account, including an effective enforcement regime reflecting the best international practices in the matter.

2. To reiterate their firm commitment to the moratorium on commercial whaling, in the current context, and the urgent need, in this scenario, for approval of the South Atlantic and South Pacific Whale Sanctuaries by the Commission in order to guarantee the existence of whaling-free areas for non-lethal management of cetacean populations in the Southern Hemisphere.

3. To continue to uphold, jointly and in coordination, the rejection of the lethal research and commercial activities by any state which are contrary to multilateral commitments reached in the framework of the Convention.

4. Whaling under Special Permits should be terminated and scientific research limited to non-lethal methods with a view to creating appropriate conditions for dialogue within the Commission (IWC).

5. To continue with the work carried out during the Whale Killing Methods and Associated Welfare Issues Workshop, which took place at the 58th Meeting of the IWC.

6. To promote broader participation of developing countries in the IWC on the basis of sovereign equality, and particularly of its researchers in the Scientific Committee.

7. To reiterate the validity and strengthen the work of the Conservation Committee in the Commission and to request the full participation of all State Parties.

8. To transmit to the IWC and the International Maritime Organization all the information gathered regarding collisions between cetaceans and vessels.

9. To jointly follow-up budgetary issues and the study of the scheme of contributions to IWC. To explore mechanisms within the Commission to allow the full participation of those countries that may have temporary difficulties in the payment of their contributions, especially those in arrears.

10. To analyse the convenience, in the current situation, of changing the IWC Secretariat Headquarters.

V. The Commissioners, representatives and observers present welcomed the outcome of the meeting, and thanked Argentina for its kind hospitality. IWC Member countries duly noted the convergence that was attained, in view of which, with the other participants, decided:

1. To keep the Buenos Aires Group permanently informed and in consultation on the issues that were analysed and on IWC activities in general.

2. On the convenience of holding periodical meetings to follow up its activities and consider possible new meetings of the Group in alternative venues.

3. To initiate negotiations towards the signing of a Latin American agreement on the non-lethal use and conservation of cetaceans.

4. To acknowledge the importance of Civil Society following the activities of the Latin American Commissioners.

5. To thank Chile for hosting the 60th IWC annual meeting in 2008 and to support Portugal's candidature.

Buenos Aires, 1st december 2006".

