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By Email

April 6, 2015

The Honorable John F. Kerry
Secretary of State
Office of the Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20520

Re: Letter of the Inter American Press Association

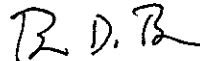
Dear Secretary Kerry:

As the U.S. representative to the Inter American Press Association, the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press sends you the enclosed letter from IAPA president Gustavo Mohme.

The letter, in advance of the 7th Summit of the Americas to be held in Panama this week, calls on President Obama and the other leaders participating in the summit to bear in mind that freedom of expression is a fundamental human right essential to the functioning of democracy. The IAPA hopes that the summit will make historic strides in recognizing and celebrating this right.

Thank you for your attention to these issues.

Yours very truly,



Bruce D. Brown

Enclosure



SOCIEDAD INTERAMERICANA DE PRENSA
INTER AMERICAN PRESS ASSOCIATION
SOCIEDADE INTERAMERICANA DE IMPRENSA

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April 1st, 2015

President of the United States of America
The Honorable Barack Obama

Mr. President,

As President of the Inter American Press Association I respectfully wish you a productive participation in the 7th Summit of the Americas to be held in Panama, and trust that you are able, along with your colleagues, to make come true its slogan "Prosperity with Equity: The Challenge of Cooperation in the Americas."

I also take this opportunity to suggest that this summit could represent an historic opportunity to reaffirm your commitment to freedom of expression and of the press and the people's right to information, principles that the Inter-American Democratic Charter enshrines as essential for democratic life and the common good.

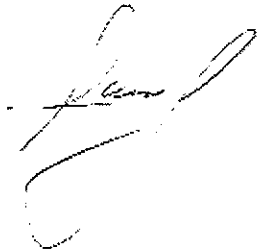
Beyond the ideological differences and the official rhetoric on uncomfortable interferences and national sovereignties, the violation of individual and civil liberties, as required under the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Man, must be denounced by all – those in government and those governed – without censorship, limits nor borders.

Under that proclamation and the mandate that each Constitution calls for, those in government have the obligation to monitor, promote and defend freedom of expression as a fundamental human right, without which neither can there be true prosperity, equity and cooperation among peoples and nations.

If this 7th Summit seeks to be historic it will have to recognize that in order to build democracy electoral acts are not sufficient. Democracy demands a clear separation of powers, independent judges, transparency in the public administration, fueling prosperity, promoting equity, individual guarantees and a respectful environment that empowers diverse and plural ideas, as corresponds to a state of law.

The future will determine if in the Declaration that emerges from this Summit the government leaders of the Americas will have shown to be firm that full and true cooperation can only be achieved when there is democratic conviction, and no member of the public is excluded or discriminated against for thinking, expressing an opinion or for being different.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gustavo Mohme', with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Gustavo Mohme
President
Inter American Press Association