

President Carter Disseminates Atlanta Declaration to Advance Right to Information Worldwide

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Last month, former U.S. President Jimmy Carter forwarded the Atlanta Declaration and Plan of Action for the Advancement of the Right to Information to all heads of state and leaders of the major international organizations and financial institutions. President Carter urged these leaders to ensure the right of access to information and its implementation and enforcement.

The Atlanta Declaration and Plan of Action was the product of the Carter Center's International Conference on the Right to Public Information, held February 27-29, 2008 in Atlanta, Georgia. Freedominfo.org advocates joined the more than 125 participants, representing governments, civil society, international organizations and financial institutions, private sector, donors and scholars from 40 countries who met to discuss the successes and future challenges to the establishment of a right of access to information.

The Atlanta Declaration and Plan of Action, serving as a framework for advancing this human right, finds that access to information is fundamental to dignity, equity and peace with justice, and that a lack of access to information disproportionately affects the poor, women and other vulnerable and marginalized societies. The Declaration calls on all states and intergovernmental organizations to enact legislation and instruments for the exercise, full implementation and effective enforcement of this right. It further encourages all stakeholders to take concrete steps to establish, develop, protect and promote the right of access to information. The Declaration is available in Spanish, French, and Chinese.

For additional information related to the conference and materials, please visit the Carter Center's Access to Information project website at <http://www.cartercenter.org/peace/americas/information.html> or contact Laura Neuman, Access to Information Project Manager, The Carter Center, at (404) 420-5146 or lneuman@emory.edu.

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