



**NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF LATIN AMERICAN & CARIBBEAN COMMUNITIES**  
**ALIANZA NACIONAL DE COMUNIDADES LATINO AMERICANAS Y CARIBEÑAS**

*A Transnational Vision, Rooted in Latin American and Caribbean Migrant Communities*  
*Una visión transnacional, con raíces en la comunidad migrante latinoamericana y caribeña*

## **Open Letter to President-elect Barack Obama**

November 14, 2008

Dear President-Elect Barack Obama,

Congratulations on your victory. Your election has served as an inspiration to the millions of Latinos who voted, many of them for the very first time, in the elections last week. Furthermore, your election has been an inspiration beyond the boundaries of the United States of America, particularly for the more than 100 million Afro-descendants who are part of the diverse family of Latin American nationalities, ethnicities and races.

The financial crisis that has hit the United States in recent days is the culmination of an economic model that has been harming poor and working people in Latin America, and driving migration, for decades. This same economic policy model is now causing anxiety and growing economic insecurity for broad segments of the population in this country. As you work with the leaders of the other countries of the world to craft a solution to the crisis, we urge you to be bold and visionary.

Immigrants living and working in the United States are in an extremely vulnerable position right now. We share the same challenges of many other hard-working Americans. The crash of the housing bubble and the proliferation of sub-prime mortgages in our communities put us at risk of losing our homes to foreclosure. The dire economy is shedding the jobs we count on to take care of our families. As access to health insurance has become scarce and ever more expensive, we represent a disproportional percentage of those affected.

But immigrants have an additional vulnerability, due to the unchecked wave of anti-immigrant sentiment that has swept across our country over the past few years. If we are to move forward as a nation, we need to change the tone of our national conversation on immigrants and immigration. We believe that you share our vision of a country that values people as human beings, and does not label or scapegoat foreigners. We are ready and eager to work with you to turn that vision into a reality.

We are aware that you are in the process of reviewing the many unnecessary and harmful administrative actions taken by the current administration over the past eight years. As part of this effort, we urge you to take into account measures that have been used to disproportionately punish Latino immigrants. In particular, we ask that you consider reversing the current practice around workplace raids and deportations, as well as stopping the use of Social Security Administration No-Match Letters as an immigration enforcement tool. These practices have submitted many people to a permanent state of fear and vulnerability, and have torn apart thousands of families.

In these hard times, we need everyone's goodwill and energy to solve the most pressing economic difficulties affecting native born, as well as foreign born members of our society. We also look forward to working with you to move ahead with just, humane and realistic immigration policy reform, as soon as conditions permit.

**National Alliance of Latin American & Caribbean Communities (NALACC)**

1638 S. Blue Island Ave. Chicago, IL 60608

1-877-683-2908

E-mail: [info@nalacc.org](mailto:info@nalacc.org)

Visit us on the web at: [www.nalacc.org](http://www.nalacc.org)

We are ready to support a new positive agenda for this country and for the world. Please count us as partners of yours in this endeavor.

Once again, please accept our sincere congratulations. *¡Si Se Puede!*

Sincerely,

Angela Sanbrano  
Board President  
Los Angeles, CA

Marcia Soto  
Board Vice-President  
Chicago Illinois

Mirtha Colon  
Secretary  
New York, NY

Jose Luis Gutierrez  
Treasurer  
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Board Member At-large  
Houston, TX

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Board Member At-large  
Greenville, NC

Gloria Saucedo  
Board Member At-large  
Los Angeles, CA

Ana C. Perez  
Board Member At-large  
San Francisco, CA

Maricela Garcia  
Board Member At-large  
Chicago, IL

Fernando Muñoz  
Board Member At-large  
New York, NY

Nitza Seguí  
Board Member At-large  
Washington, DC

Oscar A. Chacón  
Executive Director  
Chicago, IL