

# Press Release

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## OAS SECRETARY GENERAL: PRIVATE SECTOR MUST BE ENGINE FOR DEVELOPMENT

November 2, 2005

MAR DEL PLATA, Argentina – The Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS), [José Miguel Insulza](#), today called for a dynamic civil society with the active participation of a private sector that supports the rule of law, promotes democratic governance, combats corruption and enhances government transparency.

Insulza, who arrived yesterday in Mar del Plata to attend the negotiating sessions on the draft declaration of the [Fourth Summit of the Americas](#), made his comments at the Hemispheric Private Sector Forum, held in Buenos Aires this morning. Speaking to business leaders from around the Americas, he said he hoped this dialogue between the private sector and [OAS member states](#) would lead to an ongoing process of exchange and cooperation that would benefit development and strengthen democracy in the region.

“It is essential to undertake a public-private dialogue in order to identify and implement actions that will improve the quality of institutions and regulations that affect the development of the private sector,” the Secretary General said.

Insulza underscored the importance of private-sector initiatives that will be taken under consideration by the Heads of State and Government at the Fourth Summit, which begins Friday in Mar del Plata. The leaders of the region will focus on the theme “Creating Jobs to Fight Poverty and Strengthen Democratic Governance.”

In his remarks at the business forum, Insulza noted that “poverty generates instability and a lack of governance.” An “unacceptable” percentage of the region’s population lives in poverty and youth unemployment is high, resulting in frustration, violence and increased migration, Insulza added. “This is a current and long-term challenge for the global competitiveness of the hemisphere,” he said.

Insulza told the business representatives that “while the role of government in developing countries should focus on building a foundation for long-term economic growth, the business owner has a critical role to play as a creator of income and wealth.” He noted that “long-term poverty reduction cannot take place without the jobs, markets, trade and investment that the private sector creates.”

President Néstor Kirchner of Argentina and President Antonio Saca of El Salvador participated in the forum, along with Panamanian Vice President Samuel Lewis, several foreign ministers, OAS Assistant Secretary General Albert Ramdin and Ernesto Gutiérrez, who coordinated the Hemispheric Private Sector Forum.

In comments to reporters after the meeting, Insulza said that despite political conflicts in some countries of the hemisphere, Latin America is not a region in crisis and therefore it is not a central concern for the United States.

Before the Fourth Summit begins, Insulza will hold bilateral meetings with the President of Ecuador, Alfredo Palacio, Peruvian Foreign Minister Oscar Maúrtua and the Prime Minister of Belize, Said Musa, among others. On Thursday he will participate in meetings the foreign ministers of the region will have with diverse groups, including civil society, the private sector, and workers and employers. The OAS Secretary General will inaugurate the Fourth Summit of the Americas on Friday, along with President Kirchner and Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin.

