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**From Mar del Plata to Port of Spain:
A report on the Summit of the Americas Process between the Fourth
and Fifth Summits**

(November 2005 – April 2009)

Summits of the Americas Secretariat
Organization of Americas States

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ACRONYMS

CIDI	Inter-American Council for Integral Development
CISC	Committee on Inter-American Summits Management and Civil Society Participation in OAS Activities
CSO / CS	Civil Society Organizations / Civil Society
GA	General Assembly
GS/OAS	General Secretariat of the Organization of American States
JSWG	Joint Summit Working Group
OAS	Organization of American States
SAS	Summits of the Americas Secretariat
SIRG	Summit Implementation Review Group
SISCA	Summits of the Americas Follow-up System
SOA	Summits of the Americas
SVP	Summits Virtual Platform

**FROM MAR DEL PLATA TO PORT OF SPAIN:
A REPORT ON THE SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS PROCESS
BETWEEN THE FOURTH AND FIFTH SUMMITS¹**

(November 2005 – April 2009)

I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this publication is to inform the diverse stakeholders of the Summits of the Americas Process, and the general public, about the activities and tasks undertaken by the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States (GS/OAS), in its role as the Secretariat for the Summits process², to respond to the commitments of the Declaration and Plan of Action of the Fourth Summit of the Americas and in preparation for the Fifth Summit of the Americas.

II. THE SUMMITS OF THE AMERICAS PROCESS

The **Summits of the Americas** (SOA) are the highest-level political gathering in the Western Hemisphere, where the 34 democratically-elected Heads of State and Government of the Americas **discuss common policy issues, affirm shared values and commit to concerted actions** at the national and regional levels. Resulting Summit Declarations, themes and commitments reflect a common hemispheric resolve to address new and persistent challenges faced by the peoples of the Americas. Thus, more than an event, **the Summit of the Americas is a process** that involves the ongoing interplay of a variety of stakeholders, including the governments of the region, international organizations, financial institutions, institutions of the inter-American system and social actors who, with the technical assistance of the OAS Summits of the Americas Secretariat (OAS/SAS), work towards implementing these commitments to ensure that the Summits produce sustainable results for the benefit of all the peoples of the Americas. These stakeholders are key to the preparations for upcoming Summits, since their proposals and recommendations contribute to the process of negotiation of commitments prior to each Summit.

III. THE FOURTH SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS

At the Fourth Summit of the Americas, held in Mar del Plata, Argentina, in November 2005, the Heads of State and Government of the Hemisphere adopted the **Declaration of Mar del Plata**, which addressed such topics as: economic growth with employment; creating jobs to fight poverty; training the labor force; micro, small and medium-sized enterprises; and democratic governance.

¹ Prepared by the OAS Summits of the Americas Secretariat – OAS/SAS

² The 34 democratically-elected Heads of State and Government of the Western Hemisphere tasked the Organization of American States with serving as the technical secretariat and institutional memory for the Summits process, in keeping with the central role which the Organization adopted from the beginning of the process in 1994. Through subsequent Summit Declarations, and OAS General Assembly resolutions, Member States have consistently underscored the pivotal function that the OAS plays in the Summits process, and have instructed the GS/OAS to continue its dual role as technical secretariat and institutional memory to this process. The GS/OAS performs these functions through the Summits of the Americas Secretariat (SAS), which engages and supports governmental, institutional and social actor stakeholders in the process on an ongoing basis.

Leaders recognized the importance of confronting major challenges in job creation and the need to strengthen democratic governance. Their concerns were reflected in the **Plan of Action of the Fourth Summit of the Americas**, which defines concrete measures to promote development by creating sustainable employment, increasing citizen participation, promoting cooperation among governments, and stimulating investment in areas vital to creating decent work.

IV. THE FIFTH SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS

The **Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain**, adopted in Trinidad and Tobago in April 2009, at the conclusion of the Fifth Summit of the Americas, reflects the vision of the 34 Member States on the need to secure a better future for the citizens of the Hemisphere by promoting human prosperity, energy security, environmental sustainability, strengthening public security and enhancing democratic governance. Through this Declaration the Heads of State and Government committed to protect and promote political and civil liberties, and to improve the socio-economic and cultural well-being of all of our peoples, by advancing joint solutions to the most pressing challenges facing our Hemisphere.

V. GOVERNING BODIES, STAKEHOLDERS AND KEY INSTRUMENTS OF THE SUMMITS OF THE AMERICAS PROCESS

a. OAS Member States - Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG)

The SIRG is the main governing body of the Summits of the Americas Process, and is responsible for reporting, through the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, on the steps taken to implement SOA commitments. The SIRG, which is chaired by the Summit host country, is responsible for facilitating coordination among National Coordinators, and for ensuring appropriate follow-up and implementation of Summit commitments by studying the annual national reports of the Member States, as well as analyzing other reports describing the steps taken and progress made at Inter-American Ministerials and other high-level meetings that consider or are affected by Summit commitments. The SIRG also maintains an open dialogue and cooperation with the institutional partners which comprise the Joint Summit Working Group's (JSWG)³; prepares for the next Summit; provides annual reports to the ministerial level SIRG on the progress made in pursuit of Summit commitments; receives inputs and recommendations made by civil society organizations and other stakeholders; and studies the relevant reports of the OAS' Permanent Council Committee on Inter-American Summits Management and Civil Society Participation in OAS Activities (CISC). Senior representatives of the GS/OAS, and partner institutions of the JSWG, are invited to support the Governments participating in the SIRG in order to follow up on the commitments of the Summit and to achieve greater coordination and effectiveness of these institutions in performing this function.

³ As of April, 2009, the following organizations were members of the JSWG: the Organization of American States (OAS), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Economic Commission on Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the World Bank Group, the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), the Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI), the Andean Development Corporation (CAF), the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the International Labour Organization (ILO), and the Institute for Connectivity in the Americas (ICA).

In accordance with the Plan of Action of the Third SOA, held in Quebec City in 2001, the SIRG includes an Executive Council which represents the sub-regions and is responsible for following up on Summit initiatives, maximizing coherence with sub-regional Summits, working in collaboration with the JSWG's partner institutions, and promoting the participation of and alliances with sub-regional foundations, civil society, and the business and volunteer sectors in support of Summits' mandates and commitments. In addition, the SIRG has a permanent Steering Committee, comprised of the hosts of the previous, current, and future Summits, which serves to support the Summit Chair in preparing the upcoming Summit, including the preparation of SIRG meetings.

b. OAS Permanent Council Committee on Inter-American Summits Management and Civil Society Participation in the Activities of the OAS (CISC)

The CISC was created at the request of OAS Member States' delegates for a specific formal management mechanism to ensure effective and efficient follow up by the GS/OAS of the functions assigned to it by the Declarations and Plans of Action of the Summits of the Americas. It has the responsibility of providing information on the Summits to stakeholders, and for coordinating and discussing technical input with respect to the reports prepared by the Secretariat on the Summits process as well as those prepared by the technical dependencies responsible for inter-American ministerial meetings and other sectoral meetings linked to the Summits process. The CISC is also mandated to study matters relating to civil society participation in OAS activities, and in the Summits process, that are presented to it by civil society organizations or entrusted to it by the Permanent Council or the General Assembly, and to make recommendations to the Permanent Council accordingly. The CISC serves as the liaison between the Permanent Council of the OAS and the SIRG.

In keeping with its functions the CISC, as mandated by the OAS General Assembly, meets monthly and presents its recommendations to the Permanent Council for consideration and direction. The CISC's recommendations, when approved by the Permanent Council, are submitted to the SIRG for consideration and submission to the Heads of State and Government of the Americas. As the OAS's management mechanism for the Summits process, the CISC plays a dual role in ensuring that there is technical input during the pre-Summit preparation period, as well as coordinating and reporting on the implementation process during the post-Summit period. This dual role plays a key part in the institutionalization of the Summits process within the OAS General Secretariat.

c. Joint Summit Working Group (JSWG)

Just as the Summits process has provided the framework for OAS Member States to collaborate and coordinate their development agendas at the highest political levels, the JSWG provides inter-American and other multilateral institutions with a mechanism to coordinate and synchronize their support to countries in the formulation and implementation of Summit commitments and priorities. It is the responsibility of the SAS to harness the significant technical support and resources of the JSWG within the Summits process for the benefit of all stakeholders, including the Summit Host Country, OAS Member States, social actors, and other partner institutions of the JSWG. The SAS, in supporting the OAS' capacity as Chair of the JSWG, worked continually to involve the partner institutions of the Group in the preparatory process for the Fifth Summit, as well as in the implementation of commitments made at the Fourth Summit of the Americas.

In addition to providing Member States with regular reporting on institutional efforts to implement Summit initiatives, the members of the JSWG individually and collectively began an intensive engagement with countries in preparation for the Fifth Summit at the SIRG meeting held in March 2007. On this occasion, each JSWG institution made a presentation on the primary challenges facing the region in order to stimulate dialogue and facilitate the process of addressing these challenges within the framework of the Summits process. These presentations served as the basis for the publication “Towards the Fifth Summit of the Americas: Regional Challenges”, which was presented to the ministerial meeting of the SIRG held in the context of the 37th OAS General Assembly, in Panama, in June 2007. This publication contained the institutional perspectives of the partner institutions of the JSWG on the principal challenges facing the Hemisphere. The SAS also coordinated JSWG partner institutions’ observations on the Preliminary Concept Paper prepared by the Government of Trinidad & Tobago and, in January 2008, presented the technical report “Consultation on the Preliminary Concept Paper for the Fifth Summit of the Americas”, in which the Group presented their individual responses to the content of the Concept Paper, including observations on the stated theme and principal thematic areas.

The JSWG also actively participated in all of the regular meetings of the SIRG held between September 2008 and April 2009; providing technical observations and guidance as requested by the Chair. In addition, several member institutions, including the Inter-American Development Bank, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the Pan American Health Organization, the World Bank, and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture, provided technical presentations to the SIRG on the thematic pillars of the Fifth Summit in order to inform the negotiations of the relevant paragraphs in the Draft Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain. The JSWG also regularly submitted technical comments on the Draft Declaration throughout its negotiation.

In the months preceding the Fifth Summit, SAS, in collaboration with the GS/OAS and the JSWG, organized a series of policy dialogues at OAS Headquarters on the three key Summit themes. These events brought together experts from Member States, JSWG institutions, and civil society to discuss policy considerations and implications to contribute to the overall dialogue on the Fifth Summit priorities. The results of these dialogues were consolidated into policy briefs and provided to Summit National Coordinators to enhance and inform the SIRG negotiation process.

Nearly every institutional head of the JSWG institutions was present at the Fifth Summit. JSWG representatives also participated in the various fora organized and held in Port of Spain prior to the actual Summit, enriching the dialogue that civil society, the private sector, workers, indigenous peoples, youth, and other stakeholders had among themselves and with the Foreign Ministers. Representatives of the twelve institutions were present during the entire plenary sessions of the Fifth Summit on April 18 to take note of the discussions and outcomes of the dialogue. At the Fifth Summit, the SAS distributed, on behalf of the JSWG, the publication “Achievements of the Summits of the Americas: From Mar del Plata to Port of Spain”, which provided an overview of the efforts of the twelve institutional partners to implement and support the mandates of the Fourth Summit, as well as an overview of strategies and actions to contribute to the implementation of commitments made in the framework of the Fifth Summit. During the Summit, the JSWG met at the senior level as well as with high-level Member State officials to begin planning strategies and actions for implementing the commitments made.

d. Summits of the Americas Follow-up System (SISCA)

The Fifth Summit of the Americas set a new tone in hemispheric relations, harmonizing the development of collaborative and multilateral initiatives expected to produce sustainable, beneficial results. With a renewed commitment toward the Summits process, the need for and utility of a common follow-up system is readily apparent. Such a system will allow Member States of the OAS to tackle, in a comprehensive manner, the collective commitments reached throughout the history of the Summits process.

In response to a request from the Chair of the Ministerial SIRG, in 2007, the SAS has undertaken a comprehensive analysis of mandates and commitments which have emerged over the past 15 years through the Summits of the Americas. Based upon that review, in a concerted effort to address the challenges faced by Member States in reporting on their implementation of Summit mandates, SAS has developed a “Summits of the Americas’ Follow-up System” (SISCA). This is a mechanism that provides Member States with the tools they need for assessing their progress towards attaining the goals set out in Summit mandates, ensuring that they are measurable over the medium and long term through results-based management.

The follow-up system is a working strategy that will provide countries, and the inter-American system, with management tools to facilitate achieving domestic policy objectives of Member States, which are responsive to the challenges identified in Summit mandates and commitments. The aim is to launch a new methodology for prioritizing the implementation of Summit commitments with a view to streamlining the process and enhancing the attainment of intended results.

The implementation of SISCA is intended to contribute to generating information for decision making by governments, particularly in relation to the continuity of their policies and in the identification of necessary resources for their implementation. By providing greater efficiency in the processing of information and systematization of results, it is anticipated that SISCA will serve as a useful tool in promoting greater transparency and efficiency in the Summit follow-up process, thereby contributing to strengthening and consolidating the inter-American agenda.

e. Social Actors

The participation of social actors in the activities of the Summit of the Americas Process, including the meetings of SIRG, CISC, and the Summit itself, is essential to the follow-up and implementation of previous Summits’ commitments, and in the effort to generate and contribute to the themes for the forthcoming SOA.

Each of the previous Summits encouraged governments to work together with civil society in the formulation and implementation of development policies and programs, and acknowledged the powerful role of civil society in the consolidation of democracy. In response to these high-level commitments, the OAS Member States approved resolutions that encourage continued efforts by Member States and the GS/OAS to promote and facilitate the participation of social actors, including civil society, labor organizations, indigenous groups, the private sector and youth in the Summits process.⁴

⁴ See OAS AG/RES. 2519 (XXXIX-O/09) and OAS AG/RES. 2520 (XXXIX-O/09)

As per the GS/OAS Executive Order No. 08-01 Rev. 2, the SAS has taken on the responsibility for promoting and facilitating the participation of civil society in the Summits of the Americas Process and, consequently, has fostered the contributions of civil society in the thematic areas of the hemispheric agenda, and has institutionalized the exchanges between civil society representatives and government officials.

The recommendations and suggestions from civil society and other social actors are influential in determining the approach to the implementation of Summits' commitments. To this end, their inputs are presented to Summit National Coordinators and Ministers of Foreign Affairs, as well as to the OAS Member States' representatives in Washington, D.C. (through the CISC), for careful consideration in formulating relevant policies, commitments and programs.

f. Summits of the Americas Virtual Platform (SVP)

The SAS' communication and consultation efforts were enhanced through the success of the Summits Virtual Platform (SVP), which was launched in September 2008, in partnership with the OAS' Education Portal of the Americas, to expand opportunities for participation in the Summits process through the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs).⁵

The SVP was designed to promote active civil society participation within the preparatory process for the Fifth Summit, to facilitate access to information, to expand opportunities for interaction among the diverse stakeholders and to benefit from the cost and time effectiveness provided by ICT tools. The initial phase of the SVP revealed that opportunities for interaction enabled by e-participation technologies, such as virtual fora, enhanced our capacity to promote an inclusive and participatory regional process, particularly when considering the limitations in time and resources facing stakeholders involved in the Summits process.

From September 2008 until May 2009, the SVP hosted five virtual fora, in accordance with the themes of the Draft Declaration of Port of Spain, and one additional forum was conducted in preparation for the 2009 OAS General Assembly in collaboration with the OAS Department of International Affairs. More than 780 participants registered for the virtual discussions, representing 34 countries in the region and a variety of stakeholders and interest groups.

g. Summits of the Americas Information Network

The SOA Information Network⁶, maintained by the SAS, is the primary medium for disseminating information regarding Summit activities to stakeholders and the general public. This website, which was completely updated and revamped prior to the Fifth Summit, maintains a historical archive of SOA related events and documents, and also contains information regarding current and future activities, all the while preserving the institutional memory of the Summits process.

⁵ The Summits of the Americas Virtual Platform is a virtual space designed to complement the Summits of the Americas Process. It provides registered users access to online fora and other communication tools, as well as access to Summit-related materials, document drafts and other resources.

⁶ Summits of the Americas Information Network: www.summit-americas.org

The SAS maintains a database of stakeholders in the Summits process, including Member States, JSWG officials, social actors, members of the academic and private sectors, civil society representatives, and indigenous peoples. An email management tool enables the SAS to send mass correspondence to these various contacts either by electronic mail (Summit-Info) or through the OAS Mail Manager System. These mailings typically provide information about various Summit-related activities and events with relevant documents attached.

Another key tool of the SAS's communication strategy is the Summits of the Americas' Newsletter. These newsletters contain information on recent and upcoming events, initiatives, and other significant issues related to the Summits process, and are distributed on a quarterly basis to all stakeholders and subscribers besides also being available online.

VI. ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE SUMMITS OF THE AMERICAS PROCESS: 2006-2009

a. Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG)

2006

On **April 18, 2006**, the first meeting of the SIRG following the Fourth Summit was convened in Washington, D.C. to discuss guidelines that national governments could utilize to set in motion the implementation of the commitments agreed to in Mar del Plata. The importance of establishing an effective multilateral follow-up and monitoring mechanism for the implementation of Summit commitments was stressed. Additionally, the Delegation of Trinidad and Tobago formalized their offer to host the Fifth Summit of the Americas in 2009. OAS Secretary General Insulza proposed that Member States institutionalize and regularize the Summits process so that the region's leaders would be able to meet on a regular basis, with prepared agendas, and be capable of managing medium-term goals and initiatives.

On **June 5, 2006**, seven months after the Summit of Mar del Plata, during the meeting of the SIRG at the ministerial level (held in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, in the framework of the OAS 36th General Assembly), OAS Member States accepted the offer of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago to host the Fifth Summit of the Americas and the process of transferring the chairmanship of the Summits process was initiated. At this meeting the publication of Volume IV of the "Official Documents of the Summits of the Americas Process: 2004-2006"⁷ was distributed. In addition, on behalf of the JSWG, the SAS presented a report to the Ministerial SIRG entitled "Implementation of the Mandates of the Fourth Summit of the Americas".

On **September 12, 2006**, a subsequent meeting of the SIRG at the ministerial level was convened to formally transfer the chairmanship of the Summits of the Americas Process from the Republic of Argentina to the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. During this meeting, held at OAS Headquarters in Washington D.C., the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Argentina, Ambassador Roberto García Moritán, formally handed over the chairmanship to the Minister of Energy and Energy Industries, Public Administration and Information of Trinidad and Tobago, Senator Dr. Lenny Saith. The ceremony was marked by the transfer of the statue of "Inukshuk" which the Government of

⁷ Prepared by the Summits of the Americas Secretariat in an effort to promote adherence to the commitments of the Special Summits of the Americas (Monterrey, 2004) and the Fourth Summit of the Americas (Mar del Plata, 2005).

Canada, as host of the Third Summit, had previously offered to Argentina prior to the Fourth Summit as a symbol for guidance and regional unity.

2007

On **March 29, 2007**, the first meeting of the SIRG under the chairmanship of Trinidad and Tobago was held in Washington D.C. At this meeting the partner institutions of the JSWG presented their perspective on the challenges of implementing the mandates and commitments of the Fourth Summit of the Americas.

On **June 7, 2007**, in Panama City, Panama, a meeting of the SIRG was held at the ministerial level within the framework of the 37th OAS General Assembly. Foreign Ministers discussed the advancements reflected in their national reports, and OAS Secretary General Insulza presented, on behalf of the JSWG, a publication entitled “Towards the Fifth Summit of the Americas: Regional Challenges”.

2008

On **February 28-29, 2008**, the preparatory work towards the Fifth Summit of the Americas started to show tangible results at the First Regular Meeting of the SIRG of 2008⁸, in Tobago, Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. The meeting centered on the presentation of a Concept Paper being prepared by a team of experts from the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, which proposed the thematic areas to be addressed at the Fifth Summit: human prosperity, energy security and environmental sustainability.

Subsequently, on **April 9, 2008**, during a Special Session of the OAS Permanent Council, held in Washington D.C., the Government of Trinidad and Tobago presented to Member States the Concept Paper entitled “Securing Our Citizens’ Future by Promoting Human Prosperity, Energy Security and Environmental Sustainability.” This document contained the concerns and goals that the host Government invited all Member States to focus on in preparation for the establishment or renewal of hemispheric commitments by the Heads of State and Government at the Fifth Summit of the Americas.

On **June 2, 2008**, the first meeting of the SIRG of 2008 at the ministerial level was held in Medellin, Colombia, within the framework of the 38th OAS General Assembly. It was during this meeting that the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Trinidad and Tobago, the Honorable Paula Gopee-Scoon, officially announced that the Fifth Summit of the Americas would be held in Port of Spain on April 17-19, 2009. Member States and partner institutions of the JSWG commented on the topics, goals and objectives included in the Concept Paper. They also commented on the preparations for the Fifth Summit, the Summits process, and the follow-up and implementation of past Summits’ mandates.

⁸ According to the previous system used for the identification of SIRG meetings, this meeting was convened as the XLI Meeting of the Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG). Note: Since May 2008, the SAS adopted the standard OAS classification system for documents issued at meetings of various Summits stakeholders (that are organized or supported by the SAS) in order to further facilitate document follow up by users and to better protect the institutional memory of the Summits of the Americas Process. The new system also called for a simplified format for the numbering of Summits’ related meetings and events.

On **July 24, 2008**, the Draft Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain was officially presented to Member States during the Second Regular Meeting of the SIRG of 2008, held at OAS Headquarters. This document, prepared by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, was based on the previously issued Concept Paper, and took into consideration the comments and suggestions received from Member States, the recommendations from the partner institutions of the JSWG, as well as those gathered from civil society and other social actors. The first draft of the Declaration contained 66 paragraphs that were divided into three main thematic areas and two additional sub-sections.

On **September 18-19, 2008**, the Third Regular Meeting of the SIRG of 2008 was held, marking the beginning of the negotiations on the text of the Draft Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain. It was during this meeting, in Bridgetown, Barbados, that delegations initiated the presentation of their official proposals to be negotiated for inclusion into the text. The partner institutions of the JSWG were also invited to present their recommendations.

The negotiations on the various sections of the Draft Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain continued in 2008 during the following Regular Meetings of the SIRG:

- The Fourth held in Saint John's, Antigua and Barbuda, **October 15-17**;
- The Fifth held in Washington D.C., **November 17-19**; and
- The Sixth held in Salinitas, El Salvador, **December 10-12, 2008**.

2009

During the first months of 2009, SIRG meetings were convened more frequently. There were four Regular Meetings of the SIRG held in Washington D.C.: the First on January 15-16, the Second on February 9-13, the Third on February 23-27 and the Fourth on March 10-13. Additionally, the SIRG convened on three occasions for meetings of Plenipotentiary Officials: in Port of Spain on March 23-25, in Washington D.C on April 2, and in Port of Spain on April 15.

From the issuing of the Draft Declaration on July 24, 2008 through to the signing of the Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain on April 19, 2009, the SAS supported all technical aspects of the negotiation process that took place in the framework of the SIRG, including maintaining a detailed record of language proposed by all OAS Member States, and ensuring that changes were accurately incorporated in the various versions of the Draft Declaration that were produced. The SAS also issued three compendia of proposals by OAS Member States on the various sections of the Draft Declaration. A similar compilation of the suggestions and recommendations from the JSWG on the Draft Declaration was also submitted to all Member States by the SAS for consideration.

b. OAS Permanent Council Committee on Inter-American Summits Management and Civil Society Participation in the Activities of the OAS (CISC)

Following the Mar del Plata Summit, and in preparation for the Port of Spain Summit, the CISC met regularly to consider the contributions from the inter-American Ministerial and sectoral meetings within the Summits process, and received reports with recommendations from social actors emanating from the various fora and other activities coordinated by the SAS.

2005-2006

During this period the CISC held eight meetings during which the Committee considered the topics of civil society participation in OAS activities and the Summits of the Americas Process; follow-up on mandates from the Summits of the Americas; preparatory activities and implementation of the Fourth Summit of the Americas mandates; and the follow up on the implementation of the Mexico City Plan of Action on Decentralization and Strengthening of Municipal and Regional Administrations and Citizen Participation (2003).

The Committee was presented with 49 requests for official OAS registration from civil society organizations, out of which 44 were approved by the Permanent Council. This increased the number of registered organizations by 40% from the number for the previous year. The Committee, in keeping with its mandate to increase and strengthen the participation of civil society in OAS activities, began this process by presenting and approving a draft on guidelines and strategies. The Committee also reiterated its instruction to the SAS to coordinate the participation of civil society in the Summits process.

CISC activities involving Civil Society Organizations and other Social Actors

A roundtable with civil society entitled “Good Governance and Development in the Knowledge-Based Society” was organized by the SAS, which took place on May 2-3, 2006 at OAS headquarters. The purpose of the Roundtable was to encourage increased discussion and the exchange of ideas among civil society organizations that follow Summit mandates and carry out activities related to the themes of the inter-American agenda. The recommendations⁹ from civil society were presented to the Member States in a special meeting of the CISC, and subsequently served as a basis for the dialogue held with representatives of civil society organizations, heads of delegation of the Member States, and the Secretary General at the 36th Regular Session of the OAS General Assembly.

The Committee worked closely with the SAS in driving the Summits process forward. The SAS presented to the CISC the publications on national and institutional accomplishments which included a summary of the programs and projects executed by the countries and multilateral agencies in accordance with the Summits’ mandates, particularly those of the Third Summit of the Americas (Quebec 2001) and the Special Summit of the Americas (Monterrey 2004). In order to ensure the promotion of the mandates of the Special Summit held in Monterrey, and the Fourth Summit held in Mar del Plata in 2005, the SAS also distributed to the CISC the publication entitled “Official Documents of the Summits of the Americas Process 2004-2006: Volume IV”.

The Chair of the CISC reiterated the request of the Committee that the General Secretariat continue providing the necessary support to effectively implement and follow up the mandates of the Summits of the Americas, as well as efforts to ensure the linkages of these mandates with the inter-American Ministerial and sectoral meetings related to the Summits.

⁹ Document CP/CISC-248/06 corr. 1.

2006-2007

During this period the CISC held six meetings and considered 66 requests for registration with the OAS which were made by civil society organizations. The Permanent Council approved 52 of these requests, three were withdrawn and the rest were left open pending further consideration. The number of registrations rose by 30% over that of the previous year.

CISC activities involving Civil Society Organizations and other Social Actors

In an endeavor to ensure the full participation of civil society in the Summits process, the SAS held a roundtable with civil society on the hemispheric agenda in May 2007. The recommendations¹⁰ emanating from this roundtable were subsequently used as the basis for discussions with heads of delegation and civil society at the 37th regular session of the OAS General Assembly.

The Committee maintained its close link with the SAS in promoting the Summits process and in support of the Host Government of the Fifth Summit and the Member States in their preparation for the Summit in 2009. The SAS presented to the CISC, on behalf of the JSWG, the publication "Towards the Fifth Summit of the Americas: Regional Challenges". This was intended to facilitate and contribute to the dialogue that would help determine the thematic and priority areas to be focused on during the planning for the Fifth Summit.

During this period, the CISC received for consideration several reports emanating from inter-American ministerial and other sectoral meetings. The Committee's comments and recommendations on these reports were submitted to and approved by the Permanent Council.

2007-2008

During this period the Committee held five regular meetings and one special meeting. Twenty-two (22) requests for registration with the OAS were received and considered by the Committee, which recommended that all be approved by the Permanent Council. The Committee also recommended that the Permanent Council review the outstanding requests for registration so that a final decision could be made.

CISC activities involving Civil Society Organizations and other Social Actors

To ensure ample civil society participation in the Summits process and OAS activities, the Committee, in partnership with the SAS and the Secretariat for External Relations' Department of International Affairs, convened the annual dialogue between the heads of delegations of the Member States and representatives of the civil society during the 38th Regular Session of the OAS General Assembly. The focus of this dialogue was on the recommendations¹¹ emanating from "The Hemispheric Forum with Civil Society: Youth and Democratic Values". These recommendations

¹⁰ Document CP/CISC-325/07

¹¹ Document CP/CISC-359/08 – "Civil Society Recommendations from the Roundtable with Civil Society on the Hemispheric Agenda."

were presented to the CISC for its consideration at a special meeting held to strengthen dialogue with civil society organizations in March 2008.

The CISC also considered the recommendations which emanated from a civil society Hemispheric Forum, held in Miami in May 2008, on “Securing our Citizens Future by Promoting Human Prosperity, Energy Security and Environmental Sustainability”. These recommendations were also presented to Trinidad and Tobago’s National Secretariat for the Fifth Summit for consideration as it prepared the Draft Declaration of Port of Spain.

The CISC considered all the reports presented by the technical organs of the OAS, as well as the other institutions associated with the Summits process, and presented its comments and recommendations to the Permanent Council for approval.

2008-2009

CISC activities involving Civil Society Organizations and other Social Actors

A civil society hemispheric forum took place on March 3-4, 2009 at OAS Headquarters, organized by the OAS’ Department of International Affairs, in collaboration with the SAS. The recommendations generated were presented to the Member States at a special meeting of the CISC in order to contribute to the work undertaken by the OAS both in preparation for the Fifth Summit and for the Thirty-Ninth Regular Session of the General Assembly.

c. Joint Summit Working Group (JSWG)

Subsequent to the Fourth Summit and in preparation for the Fifth Summit, the JSWG met on a regular basis, reported on institutional commitments, and provided technical assistance and guidance in specialized areas through, *inter alia*, their participation in SIRG, inter-American Ministerial and sectoral meetings. On several occasions, meetings were also held exclusively among the heads of the JSWG partner institutions to foster inter-agency cooperation and complementarity of efforts, as well as to consolidate and strengthen their engagement in the overall Summits process.

In 2006, 2007 and 2008, the SAS prepared and distributed annual reports to the Ministerial SIRGs, held within the framework of the OAS General Assembly, highlighting the progress made by JSWG institutions since the Fourth Summit to implement and support Summit commitments. These reports were compiled in a publication entitled “Achievements of the Summits of the Americas: Progress since Mar del Plata”.

d. Fora and other activities involving Social Actors

2006

In preparation for the Fifth Summit, the SAS succeeded in expanding and enhancing the participation of social actors by facilitating and coordinating a series of discussions involving the General Secretariat, Member States and civil society organizations concerning the implementation

of Summits' commitments. The effective participation of various social actors in the Summits of the Americas Process was manifested, in large measure, through the realization of multiple fora:

- Consultation meetings with civil society in preparation for the First Inter-American Meeting of Ministers and High Level Authorities on Sustainable Development (Buenos Aires, Argentina, August 28, 2006; Washington DC and Panama, September 14-15, 2006; Port of Spain, September 19, 2006; Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, October 3, 2006)
- PAHO - Consultation Session with civil society: "Social Determinants of Health" Brasilia, Brazil, October 12-13, 2006.

2007

- Central American and Caribbean Afro-Descendant Forum, Managua, Nicaragua, February 2, 2007
- Civil Society on the Social Determinants of Health, Brasilia, Brazil, April 12-14, 2007.

2008

The preparation of the Concept Paper of the Fifth Summit of the Americas took into consideration the recommendations made by the partner institutions of the JSWG, as well as those by civil society organizations and other social actors who contributed their views on the current challenges faced by the Hemisphere.

Consultations with civil society organizations regarding the Concept Paper began on May 1-2, 2008 in Miami, Florida, at a Hemispheric Forum on the theme "Securing Our Citizens' Future by Promoting Human Prosperity, Energy Security and Environmental Sustainability". The SAS collaborated with the National Secretariat for the Fifth Summit to organize this forum.

In collaboration with the OAS Department of International Affairs, and the National Secretariat of Trinidad and Tobago, the SAS organized the Caribbean Sub-regional Civil Society Forum held Port of Spain on October 30-31, 2008, and the Sub-regional Civil Society Forum for Central America, Mexico and the Dominican Republic, held in San Salvador on December 7-9, 2008.

Activities organized in collaboration with other OAS Departments and affiliates:

With the Young Americas Business Trust (YABT):

- Caribbean Sub-Regional Dialogue for the Participation of Young People in the Summits of the Americas Process, Trinidad and Tobago, October 29 -30, 2008.
- South American Sub-regional Consultation for the Participation of Young People in the Fifth Summit of the Americas, Paraguay, November 21, 2008.
- Latin American Sub-regional Dialogue for the Participation of Young People in the Fifth Summit of the Americas, Mexico, November 28, 2008.

With the OAS Department of Trade and Tourism of the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development

- Private Sector Consultations with the Business Leaders of the Andean, Caribbean, Central American, Southern Cone and North American regions; El Salvador, December 9, 2008.¹²

The recommendations from the civil society sub-regional fora and the private sector consultations were presented for the consideration of delegates during the Sixth Regular Meeting of the SIRG of 2008 held in Salinitas, El Salvador, as well as at meetings of the CISC.

2009

- Second Inter-American Forum of Afro-Descendants, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, January 15-17, 2009
- South American Civil Society Sub-regional Forum, Lima, Peru, February, 6-7, 2009
- Hemispheric Level Forum for Civil Society in preparation for the General Assembly and the Fifth Summit of the Americas, Washington D.C., March 3-4.

The recommendations from these fora and the outcomes of the Youth Fora of the Americas Consultation Process from 2008 were presented for the consideration of delegates during the Second Regular Meeting of the SIRG of 2009 held in Washington, DC, in February and to the CISC in March, 2009.

e. Fora of the Summits of the Americas Virtual Platform

The first of five thematic virtual fora, entitled “**Promoting Human Prosperity**” was held on October 1-10, 2008, focusing on eight themes: poverty reduction and economic growth; labor and employment; food security; health; education; youth; knowledge-based society, and culture. The “**Promoting Energy Security**” virtual forum took place from October 27 to November 6, 2008, to discuss sustainable energy systems, and international cooperation and coordination for promoting energy security and increasing public awareness. The next virtual forum held on November 17- 26, 2008 addressed “**Promoting Environmental Sustainability.**” Climate change, natural disasters, and environmental governance were the themes that received the most attention, and the commentators expressed a common desire for governments to encourage environmental awareness and preventive mechanisms with social actors. During the following virtual forum, from January 28 to February 15, 2009, the exchange focused on how to “**Strengthen Public Security and Democratic Governance.**” The issues of discussion centered on the challenges to public security, democratic governance, how inter-sectoral partnerships can confront these challenges, and whether or not these challenges were being adequately and appropriately addressed in the Draft Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain. The final virtual forum prior to the Fifth Summit was

¹² Private Sector consultations continued during 2009 and were compiled in the Final Private Sector Sub-regional Consultations Report, March 2009. This report includes the: Consultations with the Central American Private Sector; the Caribbean Private Sector; the North American Private Sector; with the Members of CEAL; with the Members of CEATAL; with the Members of ALETI; the Declaration of the Andean Business Advisory Council and the Consultations with the Southern Cone Private Sector.

the “**Virtual Gender Forum**” which took place February 18-27, 2009, in coordination with the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) and the Latin American and Caribbean Committee for the Defense of Women’s Rights (CLADEM). Commentators discussed the social, political, and economic inequalities of women in the Americas relating to the wage gap, job segmentation, racial discrimination, gender based violence, and human trafficking.

f. Policy Dialogues

In cooperation with the OAS’ Department of International Affairs, the International Labor Organization and the OAS’ Department of Sustainable Development, the SAS organized three policy dialogues to foster constructive discussions in several of the main policy areas related to the issues that would be addressed at the Fifth Summit. The Policy Briefs produced in relation to these dialogues were provided to OAS Member States, social actors and other Summit stakeholders with an analysis of key policy areas relevant to the inter-American agenda, with the intent of enriching the multilateral dialogue and consensus-building inherent to the Summits process. The following policy discussions were organized in preparation for the Fifth Summit: “Youth, Decent Work, and Human Prosperity in the Americas”, on November 6, 2008; “Energy Security in the Americas”, on December 6, 2008; and “Environmental Sustainability in the Americas”, on February 17, 2009. All three sessions were held in Washington, D.C.

g. Lecture Series of the Americas¹³

Close coordination between the SAS and the Department of International Affairs resulted in two sessions of the Lectures Series of the Americas focusing on principal themes of the Fifth Summit. The first, entitled “Facing Energy Security in the Americas through Agro-Energy Sources”, was held on October 28, 2008 with special guest, Mr. Roberto Rodrigues, Former Minister of Agriculture of Brazil and currently Co-President of the Inter-American Ethanol Commission. On December 8, 2008, the second lecture entitled “A Conversation on the Inter-American Agenda”, was presented by Mr. Robert B. Zoellick, President of the World Bank Group. Both lectures were presented at OAS Headquarters with simultaneous web-casts.

h. Pre-Summit Fora with Social Actors

The participation of the private sector, civil society, and other social actors in the Fifth Summit was highlighted at seven pre-summit fora that took place in the week leading up to the Summit. The “Third Indigenous Leaders Summit of the Americas: Implementing the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas,” was convened in Panama City, Panama, on April 14-15, 2009. The remaining six fora were all held in or near Port of Spain:

¹³ The Lecture Series of the Americas was established in September 2004, through Permanent Council [Resolution 870 \(1446/04\)](#), in an effort by the OAS Member States to enrich the hemispheric debate on key issues on the inter-American agenda by hosting monthly conferences where prominent intellectuals from throughout the world share their experiences and expertise with the public at-large. The objective is to reach out to everyone interested in the Americas.

- “Civil Society Forum,” held aboard the Carnival Victory cruise ship, on April 14-16, 2009
- “Private Sector Forum,” held aboard the Caribbean Princess cruise ship, on April 15-16, 2009
- “Youth Forum of the Americas,” held aboard the Caribbean Princess cruise ship on April 15-16, 2009
- Special Parliamentary Dialogue “Engaging Parliaments in the Summits of the Americas Process”, held at the Parliament of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on April 16, 2009
- “Forum of the Workers of the Americas,” held at the University of the West Indies – St. Augustine Campus on April 15-16, 2009
- Academic Colloquium “Inter-American Cooperation at a Crossroads” held at the Institute of International Relations (IIR) on the St. Augustine campus of the University of West Indies on April 15-16, 2009.

The inputs and recommendations which resulted from these fora were presented to OAS Member States during the Dialogue between Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Social Actors, held aboard the Caribbean Princess cruise ship, the morning of April 17, 2009.

VII. PORT OF SPAIN, APRIL 17-19, 2009

On April 17-19, 2009, in Port of Spain, the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago hosted the 34 Heads of State and Government of the Western Hemisphere at the Fifth Summit of the Americas.

The inaugural ceremony was held on Friday April 17, 2009, at the Port of Spain Ballroom, in the Hyatt Regency Trinidad Hotel. The keynote speakers at the ceremony were the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, Patrick Manning; the President of the Republic of Argentina, Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner; the President of Nicaragua, Daniel Ortega; the Prime Minister of Belize, Dean Barrow; and the President of the United States of America, Barack Obama.

The first plenary session was held on the second day of the Summit at the Hyatt Regency Trinidad Hotel, where the Heads of State and Government addressed the topic of human prosperity. The subject was presented by the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, the Honourable Patrick Manning, and was followed by various presentations and dialogue among delegates.

The official photograph of the Fifth Summit was taken during the plenary session’s recess.

The next item on the agenda, environmental sustainability, was discussed during a working lunch. The subject was initially addressed in a presentation by the Secretary General of the United Nations, His Excellency Ban Ki-moon. The second plenary session focused on the matter of energy security, and the third and final plenary session addressed the issues of democratic governance, public security and Summits follow-up and implementation effectiveness.

On the last day of the Summit, Sunday, April 19, leaders convened in a closed retreat at the host government’s Diplomatic Center in Port of Spain. There, Prime Minister Manning signed the Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain on behalf of the Heads of State and Government in

attendance. The Prime Minister took this opportunity to release a statement commenting specifically on several important topics that surfaced during the Fifth Summit, such as the challenges in Haiti, the global financial crisis, the reintegration of Cuba in the Inter-American system, and the contents of the Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain.

VIII. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE INTER-AMERICAN MINISTERIAL AND THE SUMMITS OF THE AMERICAS PROCESSES

The SOA Process is coordinated and ratified at the highest political level by Heads of State and Government, supplemented by Ministers of Foreign Affairs, and Ministers and high-ranking officials from the sectoral areas of national governments. The mechanism for ministerial-level dialogue in the Hemisphere offers great potential within the Summit preparation and follow-up process.

A significant number of sectoral areas hold ministerial-level dialogues within the context of the inter-American system. It is of the utmost priority that the results of these ministerial meetings are examined by the CISC and the SIRG, as the political organs involved in the Summit follow-up and planning process. Substantial efforts have been made to ensure that the sectoral areas are aware of this relationship, and of its vital importance, so that the Summits and the Ministerials are mutually reinforcing.

The following chart presents a chronological list of all inter-American ministerial meetings held between the Fourth and Fifth Summits:

Sixth Meeting of Ministers of Justice or of Ministers or Attorneys General of the Americas
(REMJA-VI)
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic; April 24-26, 2006

Forty-seventh Directing Council of the Pan American Health Organization
Washington, D.C., USA; September 25-29, 2006 ¹⁴

Seventh Conference of Ministers of Defense of the Americas
Managua, Republic of Nicaragua; October 1-5, 2006

Third Inter-American Meeting of Ministers of Culture and Highest Appropriate Authorities within
the Framework of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI)
Montreal, Canada; November 13-15, 2006

¹⁴ To access the documents from this meeting, please go to <<http://www.paho.org/english/gov/cd/cd47index-e.htm>>

First Inter-American Meeting of Ministers and High-Level Authorities on Sustainable Development within the Framework of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI)
Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia; December 4-5, 2006

Fourth Ministerial Meeting on “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas”
Within the context of the Summit of the Americas Process
Antigua, Guatemala; July 23-26, 2007

Fifteenth Inter-American Conference of the Ministers of Labor (IACML)
Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago; September 11-13, 2007

Twenty-seventh Pan American Sanitary Conference (Fifty-ninth Session of the Regional Committee) Washington, D.C., USA; October 1-5 2007¹⁵

Fifth Inter-American Meeting of Ministers of Education within the Framework of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI)
Cartagena, Colombia; November 14-16, 2007

Seventh Meeting of Ministers of Justice or Other Ministers or Attorneys General of the Americas (REMJA-VII) - Washington D.C., USA; April 28-30, 2008

Fifteenth Inter-American Meeting at the Ministerial Level, on Health and Agriculture (RIMSA-15)
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; June 11-12, 2008

First Meeting of Ministers and High Authorities of Social Development within the Framework of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI)
Reñaca, Valparaiso Region, Chile; July 9-10, 2008

Eighth Conference of Ministers of Defense of the Americas
Banff, Canada; 2-6 September 2008

Forty-eighth Directional Council of the Pan American Health Organization
Washington, D.C., USA; September 29-October 3, 2008¹⁶

¹⁵ To access the documents from this meeting, please go to
<http://new.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=754&Itemid=733#official>

First Meeting of Ministers Responsible for Public Security in the Americas (MISPA)
Mexico City, Mexico ; October 7-8, 2008

Second Meeting of Ministers and High Authorities on Science and Technology in the Framework
of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI)
Mexico City, Mexico; October 27-28, 2008

Third Meeting of Ministers or of the Highest-Ranking Authorities Responsible for the
Advancement of Women in the Member States (REMIM-III)
Santiago, Chile; November 13, 2008

Fourth Meeting of Ministers of Culture and Highest Appropriate Authorities within the
framework of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI)
Bridgetown, Barbados; November 20-21, 2008

¹⁶ To access the documents from this meeting, please go to
<http://new.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=770&Itemid=733&lang=en>