

The two Optional Protocols, on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, and the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, were adopted to strengthen the provisions of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in these areas. They entered into force respectively on February 12th and January 18th, 2002, making these Optional Protocols binding instruments for half of the countries in the Hemisphere. According to UNICEF's website, these Governments are:

- *Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography*: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Dominica, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, United States, Uruguay, and Venezuela.
- *The Involvement of Children in Armed Conflicts*: Argentina, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Dominica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, United States, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

The OAS Special Rapporteur on Children's Rights has organized, in conjunction with OAS Member States and civil society, several workshops and seminars to educate the public about the inter-American human rights system. For example, on June 19, 2002, in Asunción, Paraguay, the Children's Rapporteur held a workshop on the role of the inter-American human rights system in promoting and defending the rights of children and youth. The OAS also has conducted various on-site visits and workshops, with the participation of government officials and children's human rights defenders, in Paraguay, Guatemala, Honduras, Peru, Mexico, Colombia, Uruguay, Jamaica, Brazil and Trinidad and Tobago in order to promote the inter-American system's mechanisms for the protection of children.

Children's rights are gaining prominence and acceptance in the political agen-

PROGRESS

In Colombia's armed conflict more than 11,000 child combatants fight for guerrilla and paramilitary groups. On September 18, 2003 Human Rights Watch announced that the Colombian government took new steps toward ending the use of child combatants. The Colombian government plans to expand its programs to rehabilitate former child combatants and also pay special attention to the demobilization of child combatants in talks with both the guerrillas and the paramilitaries. These are difficult tasks as the armed groups often make some children execute others who try to desert.

da of the Americas. However, progress on children's rights has been uneven. UNICEF outlines some challenges to children's rights, which include: States that are moving towards increasingly punitive systems of juvenile justice, where children are beaten, arbitrarily detained by police and forced to share prisons with adults in inhumane conditions; combating child labor and exploitation; armed conflicts and the recruitment of child combatants. The IACHR states in their Recommendations for Eradicating the Recruitment of Children and Their Participation in Armed Conflicts that most member countries laws establish a minimum age of 18 for conscription but the practice of violating the human rights of children persists by forced "drafting" by state military forces and armed dissident groups that also recruit minors. Often the young recruits are young people from low-income and/or indigenous families, which are disproportionately affected by poverty and lack of access to justice.



Freedom of Expression

→ MANDATE

The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) created the Special Rapporteurship for Freedom of Expression in 1997 in response to a profound concern regarding constant curtailment of freedom of the press and of information in the Hemisphere. At the Second and Third Summits of the Americas the Heads of State and Government reaffirmed the importance of this office for the democratic system in the region.

“The right of freedom of expression is essential for the development of knowledge and understanding among peoples, that will lead to a true tolerance and cooperation among the nations of the Hemisphere.”
(Declaration on Freedom of Expression)

Since he took office, the Special Rapporteur has participated in international fora and carried out activities designed to coordinate efforts with other nongovernmental organizations. Through the ties established with member states and various civil society organizations, this office has helped to bring on stream initiatives aimed at amending the laws restricting the right to freedom of expression as well as promote

new laws broadening the right of citizens to play an active part in the democratic process through access to information.

One of the major contributions of the Office of the Rapporteur was the preparation of a Draft Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression, which was adopted by the Inter-American Commission at its 108th regular session in October 2000. This Dec-

laration has become a core document for interpretation of Article 13 of the American Convention on Human Rights (which establishes freedom of expression as a fundamental human right) and a reference tool throughout the Hemisphere with respect to the minimum necessary standards that democratic societies must guarantee for the full exercise of that right.

The Office of the Rapporteur also conducts extensive monitoring of violations and threats to freedom of expression in the Hemisphere. This work is reflected in its annual assessment of the status of freedom of expression in the Americas, as well as in its press releases which are distributed throughout the Hemisphere and beyond it.

The work it performs with respect to individual cases considered within the framework of the organs of the inter-American system has led victims of violations of freedom of expression to regard the system as the final resort for seeing that justice is done. The judgments and reports issued in individual cases in which the Office of the Rapporteur has actively participated have helped improve the situation of human rights in the region by inducing specific changes in the legislation and practices of member states of the OAS. Precautionary and preliminary measures have also had a significant impact on protection of the lives of numerous social communicators and the prevention of possibly irreparable damage to the exercise of freedom of expression.

The Office of the Rapporteur has, in addition, made far-reaching contributions to the doctrine of freedom of expression in the chapters of its annual reports devoted to topics such as legislation; gender and freedom of expression; access to information; ethics in the media; terrorism and freedom of expression; and poverty and freedom of expression.

The Office maintains its commitment to combating the prevalence of certain threats to and violations of freedom of expression

- Freedom of expression is both a personal and a collective right
- Freedom of expression is a cornerstone without which no democratic society can exist. An ill-informed society is not fully free.
- Guaranteeing access to information is a basic instrument for promoting justice and it guarantees the existence of remedies to prevent attacks on human rights.

that it has had to draw attention to repeatedly in its annual reports. Assaulting and murdering journalists, impunity, the dearth of legislation guaranteeing access to information, and the existence of laws prohibiting insults against officials are all still lamentable features of some countries in the region. Further information on the Office of the Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression may be found at the following web site: www.cidh.oas.org/Relatoria



3. Justice, Rule of Law, and Security of the Individual

→ MANDATE

At the Third Summit of the Americas, the Heads of State and Government gave more attention to justice in the Americas. Here the governments concentrated their efforts on ensuring greater access to justice and a more independent judiciary. They also considered new and multidimensional threats to security, such as illegal drug trafficking and related crimes, trafficking and criminal use of weapons, and the general problem of violence in the society. Damage caused by the threat of transnational organized crime to our democracies and to economic and social development of our region calls for urgent measures to strengthen and reinforce mutual judicial assistance and cooperation in the Hemisphere. The countries in the Hemisphere have therefore launched major reforms of their legal systems, especially in the area of criminal justice, government, access, and management of systems to face these new challenges.

Judicial system reforms are complex and long-term, calling for coordinated actions with adequate financing and political support in order to be effective. Although the countries have made great efforts to strengthen the independence of the judiciary, it still suffers from widespread corruption and impunity.



Hemispheric leaders pledged to work to develop public and private programs to protect citizen rights and guarantee prompt, equal, and universal access to justice. In this regard, they face several challenges, such as a shortage of qualified judges, inadequate infrastructure, and red tape that delays proceedings. Several countries have made changes to be able to meet these challenges, including the appointment of human rights ombudsmen and guaranteeing budgets for the judiciary. In addition, the Heads of State and Government agreed to promote extensive exchange of information in order to comply with international human rights rules, reduce the number of pre-trial deten-

tions, institute alternative forms of sentencing for minor crimes and improve prison conditions throughout the Hemisphere.

Notwithstanding the progress, there are still serious shortcomings in the judicial system. For example, a shortage of judges results in an impossibly high case load, rulings are unpredictable, the system is corrupt, processing of trials is drawn out, impartiality is lacking, limited resources are assigned, and there is insufficient training. According to the Andean Commission of Jurists, this situation leads to overcrowding in prisons with an average of 58.2% of prisoners awaiting sentence in the Andean region.

According to the latest table on implementation and monitoring of the Summits, Costa Rica has improved conditions in its prisons by doubling capacity between 1998 and 2002 and creating 3,000 new prison spaces in the same period. Costa Rica also remodeled its prisons and made them more humane, and awarded a contract for construction of a new high-security prison in Pococi, with 1,200 additional spaces.

An *independent judicial system* is vital for a stable democratic society. That is why the Summit of the Americas advocated the search for measures to ensure transparent judicial selection, secure tenure on the bench, appropriate standards of conduct and systems of accountability. But judicial system reforms are complex and long-term, calling for coordinated actions with adequate financing and political support in order to be effective. Although the countries have made great efforts to strengthen the independence of the judiciary, it still suffers from widespread corruption and impunity.

According to the Latinobarómetro, the level of trust in the judiciary is not encouraging. Between 1996 and 2003 the confidence level fell by 13 percentage points. In 1996, 33% of the citizens said they had "some" confidence, while in 2003 only 20% of more than 18,000 persons polled had the same opinion.

Cooperation at the highest level is essential to combat illegal transnational activity. That is why the Fourth Meeting of Ministers of Justice or Attorneys General of the Americas (REMJA-IV) was held March 10-13, 2002 in Trinidad and Tobago, as a mechanism for judicial cooperation among the member states. On that occasion, governments were urged to ratify the treaties on mutual legal assistance. There was also progress in developing a hemispheric plan for legal and judicial cooperation to combat various forms of organized transnational crime.

To further strengthen cooperation in this area, the OAS established an Internet-

based network for exchange of information among officials charged with making recommendations on extradition and reciprocal legal assistance to facilitate direct communication and identify common problems in handling cases and matters that should be considered and resolved collectively. There has also been progress in work on cyber-crime and alternative means of dispute settlement. In 2003 the following meetings were held: Central Authorities and Other Experts in Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, the Group of Governmental Experts on Computer Crime, and Penal Authorities and Prison Policies, in preparation for the Fifth Meeting of Ministers of Justice or Attorneys General of the Americas (REMJA-V), to be held in 2004.

The JSCA has also put at the countries' disposal a model for gathering judicial statistics, and has published "Code and Decode", a manual for generation, collection, dissemination, and harmonization of statistics and judicial benchmarks.

PRISON POPULATION WITH NO SENTENCE

Source: CEJA 2003, International Center for Prison Studies

	PRISONER RATE PER 100,000	% WITHOUT SENTENCE	% OCCUPATION RATE (REGARDING CAPACITY)	YEAR
Argentina	111	57.00%	145.99%	2000
Bolivia	67	75.08%	111.01%	2002
Brazil	137	33.70%	132.02%	2002
Chile	215	40.40%	140.65%	2002
Colombia	130	43.68%	125.33%	2002
Costa Rica	110	30.00%	71.19%	2000
Ecuador	60	69.90%	112.96%	2002
El Salvador	164	48.97%	167.48%	2002
Guatemala	61	56.50%	111.67%	2001
Haiti	51	83.50%	207.60%	1999
Honduras	175	78.50%	219.71%	2002
Mexico	156	41.20%	127.76%	2000
Nicaragua	138	30.80%	149.83%	2002
Panama	359	55.30%	148.14%	2002
Paraguay	75	92.70%	151.00%	1999
Peru	105	67.20%	141.03%	2002
Dominican Rep.	209	82.00%	200.56%	2001
Uruguay	168	72.50%	166.24%	2002

PROGRESS

At the Third Summit of the Americas the leaders reaffirmed the importance of the Justice Studies Center for the Americas (JSCA), established in 1999 in Santiago, Chile as a mechanism to strengthen the judicial branch of government and support the member states in their justice reform processes by facilitating the exchange of information and training of personnel. In 2001 the JSCA launched a follow-up project to make a comparative study of legal systems in the Americas. The JSCA also established a registry of alternative means of dispute set-

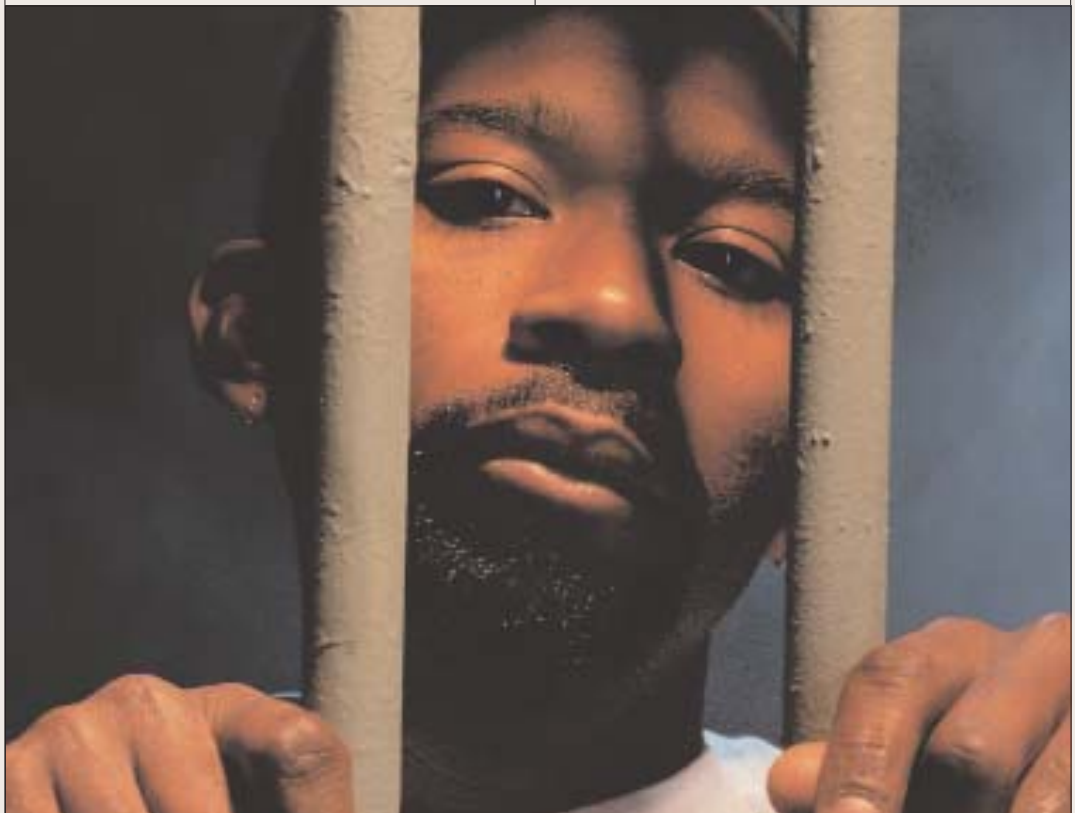
tlement (MARC), as recommended by the REMJA-IV, in an effort to concentrate information on this topic at the inter-American level, and related programs in the Hemisphere. Also, since 2001, with funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Center is developing a project to improve the quality of information on justice systems, generating a comprehensive system of data collection and processing to produce judicial statistics and indicators.

The JSCA has also concentrated its efforts on follow-up and evaluation of penal procedure reforms in many of the Latin American countries, including recent cases in the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Colombia and Peru. These reforms seek to

ensure respect for due process, strengthen the impartiality of judges, guarantee the right to defense and presumption of innocence, and use of oral proceedings. They also seek to make criminal prosecutions more efficient, centralizing the conduct of criminal investigations in the Offices of Public Prosecutions, equipping them to properly handle their workload. Over the past three years the JSCA has evaluated implementation of these reforms in 10 countries in the region, and developed methodologies and activities for overcoming the difficulties encountered.

The new forms of transnational organized crime include money laundering and cybercrime. Cybercrime has become a threat that goes beyond national borders and demands international cooperation. This phenomenon includes a series of crimes, including use of computers and information networks to destroy or gain illegal access to data, spread viruses, or commit financial fraud, distribute child pornography, and facilitate terrorist activity. The Ministers of Justice or Attorneys

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General of the Americas established a group of intergovernmental experts to complete several tasks, including preparation of a synthesis of this type of crime and domestic laws, policies, and practices on cybercrime. As for money laundering, with support of CICAD work is underway to develop model legislation for freezing assets linked to terrorism, and classification and treatment of cases of corruption involving foreign officials.

CHALLENGES

The region's justice systems share several common problems: tardy administration of justice, crowded calendars, lack of modern technologies for administration of justice, and inadequate and obsolete legal

procedures. These factors contribute to the high degree of mistrust of all State sectors and discredit the system. In the area of extradition and international legal assistance there needs to be closer cooperation between the States through effective use of multilateral and bilateral agreements to put an end to impunity for crime. Laws and international provisions for judicial cooperation are not strictly applied, which directly benefits organized national and transnational crime. Confronted with this reality, the countries have decided to face the challenges and pool their efforts to strengthen their justice systems, thereby enhancing democracy and well-being in the Hemisphere.

Combating the Drug Problem

→ MANDATE

The complex, transnational nature of the global drug problem requires that countries adopt a comprehensive and balanced approach. In fact, the only viable and effective mechanism for counteracting such a problem is international cooperation within a framework of shared responsibility.

At the Quebec City Summit of the Americas, Heads of State and Government acknowledged and praised the work of the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) in carrying out the First Round of Review (1999-2000) under the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism (MEM).

This mechanism, which measures progress in the fight against drugs, is the result of a mandate established during the Second Summit of the Americas held in Santiago de Chile in 1998. Governments also reaffirmed their commitment to the Anti-Drug Strategy in the Hemisphere, and recommended that cooperation between CICAD and multilateral development institutions be increased in order to generate new resources in the fight against drugs. Leaders called for the establishment of cooperative, contemporary and comprehensive strategies for dealing with the social, human and economic costs of the drug problem in the Americas.

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Under the CICAD-MEM program, every two years a comprehensive review is made of each country and of the Hemisphere as a whole. The review process produces recommendations that must be implemented by governments. Compliance is checked one year after each review. The MEM evaluates four fundamental aspects of the drug problem in the Hemisphere: institutional strengthening (national plans and strategies against drugs), reduction of demand, reduction of supply (production of drugs, alternative development, and control of pharmaceutical products and chemical substances), and control measures (illicit trafficking in drugs, illicit trafficking of firearms, ammunition, explosives and other materials related to asset laundering). As an outcome of the MEM recommendations, CICAD's current priority is improving performance in the areas of reducing demand and compiling basic statistics. In April 2003, the Chair of CICAD—the Attorney General of Mexico—announced the approval of 14 projects, funded with

US\$1 million, to help countries comply with the MEM recommendations.

Progress has been made in a number of areas, particularly institutional strengthening and the establishment of a joint international legal framework. For example, international conventions such as the Inter-American Convention Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and Other Related Materials and the Inter-American Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters were ratified by a number of countries in the Hemisphere. Furthermore, almost every country has developed National Plans and have created or strengthened their central coordinating authorities. During the 2001-2002 review period, 21 out of 34 countries established or strengthened national drug observatories through cooperative international efforts, which constitutes notable progress. However, these observatories are facing problems: the scarcity of financial, professional and technical resources; inadequate training in compil-

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ing data; and the lack of uniform methodologies for collecting data to analyze trends.

One of the obstacles facing the Hemisphere is the lack of information on the amount of illicit substances being consumed. Countries have made a great effort to fill this gap: the Inter-American System of Uniform Drug-Use Data (SIDUC) and the Uniform Statistical System on Control of Supply Data (CICDAT) are now being used by 24 and 22 States respectively. CICDAT was established in 1992 and has published annual statistical summaries since 1994. SIDUC began its operations in 1996 by carrying out surveys on drug consumption among patients in emergency rooms and drug treatment centres, and in 2001 it began conducting student surveys. CICAD is also developing a methodology that will permit government to estimate and quantify the human, social and economic cost of the drug problem in their countries. Armed with specific data on the economic impact of drugs in their societies, these countries will be able to make decisions on how to allocate scarce public resources based on much more solid information.

REDUCING DEMAND

The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) estimates that some 200 million people around the world consume illicit drugs. Various studies show that illicit drugs, alcohol and tobacco are the most widely used in the Hemisphere. The illicit drugs most in demand continue to be marijuana and derivatives of cocaine chlorohydrate, while new trends include the so-called synthetic drugs such as Ecstasy, ketamines and methamphetamines.

There is also evidence of the illicit use of drugs by injection, a situation that increases the risk of contracting infections such as HIV/AIDS. Furthermore, national strategies have been created and national prevention programs have begun to be implemented with specific target populations, such as students, street children and prison inmates. There is also a significant nursing schools program, which is designed

PROGRESS

With technical assistance from the International Network for the Improvement of Banana and Plantain (INIBAP) and the support of the Vice-Ministry of Alternative Development (VIMDESALT) of Bolivia, CICAD is carrying out a project on the rehabilitation and modernization of Alto Beni organic banana pro-

duction for export markets. It is expected that the project will rehabilitate, modernize and improve the Alto Beni banana plantations over a two-year period (2002–2004), thereby increasing income and employment for more than 500 producer families of the Yungas and discouraging the illegal cultivation of coca.

to prevent the consumption and abuse of drugs, to improve social integration, and to promote health in Latin America and the Caribbean.

REDUCING SUPPLY

According to the most recent MEM Hemispheric Report, there are indications that the illicit cultivation of coca has decreased compared to the previous period: a result of implementing integrated strategies of eradication and alternative development. At the same time, efforts to eradicate the illicit cultivation of coca in Bolivia and Peru have met with increasing difficulty, due to major protests by sectors of the population involved in agriculture. CICAD covers a variety of matters related to monitoring and compliance with laws against drug trafficking, including anti-drug maritime cooperation projects, the control of chemical substances and pharmaceutical products, the establishment of the Andean Community's Regional Anti-drug Intelligence School (ERCAIAD), a technical assistance program in the implementation of port security programs, a pilot project on the concept of community policing, and programs for strengthening the anti-drug capacity of police and customs agencies.

Alternative development has made major strides in the main-producing countries, and has become an important tool for combating illicit cultivation. In response to the demand for drugs and pressure from organized crime—and in the face of poverty,

unemployment, lack of training, market difficulties—many rural inhabitants resort to illicit cultivation. CICAD has been developing and implementing development programs in regions subject to illicit cultivation, in areas that have potential for such cultivation, and/or in areas that are net exporters of labour. These programs generate activities that promote the legal economy and infrastructure, and reduce the possibility of illicit cultivation spreading to adjacent areas.

ASSET LAUNDERING

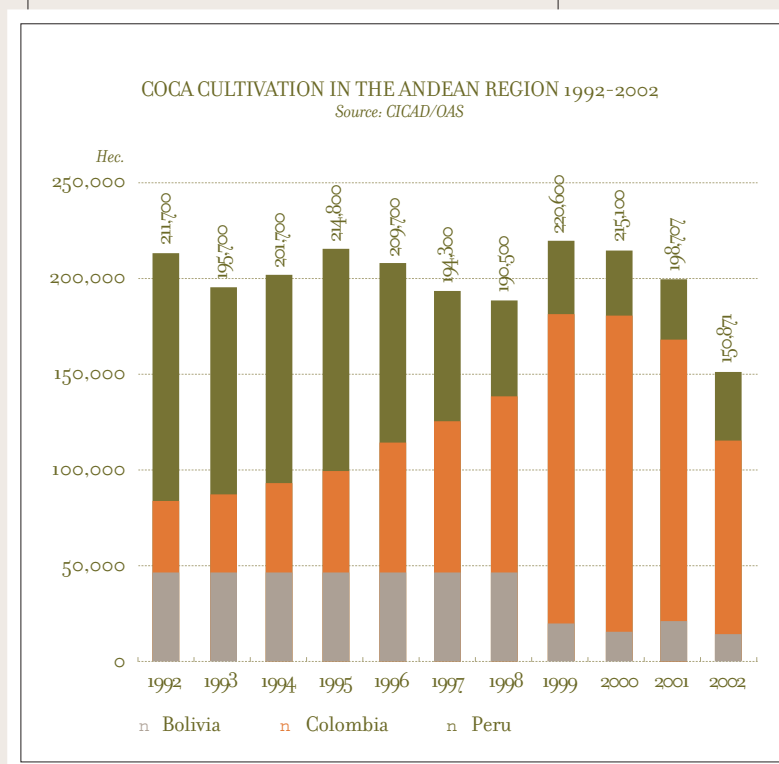
CICAD's Anti-Laundering Unit has been concentrating its activities on creating Financial Intelligence Units, and has been provided with financing from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) to support its work. Financial Intelligence Units are tasked with analyzing financial operations in an attempt to uncover asset-laundering activities. Furthermore, a Group of Experts on Money Laundering has been established. That group is currently drawing up penal legislation to combat the financing of terrorism, developing a legislative model for seizing property related to terrorism,

and creating typologies and case studies of corruption among foreign civil servants.

CHALLENGES

In spite of the progress achieved, obstacles have been encountered in some cases due to the lack of financial and technical resources. In January 2003, the results of the second complete round of evaluations were published, covering the period of 2001 through 2002. It was determined that the lack of records and statistical controls in many countries made it impossible to evaluate progress in the implementation of adopted policies, and for this reason work in this area was being expedited. Although countries have made great efforts to counteract the scourge of drugs, the fact remains that drug use is on the rise. Furthermore, groups involved in drug-trafficking are extending their arms-smuggling networks and becoming more sophisticated when it comes to asset-laundering, and interdiction and eradication activities have not achieved the desired results. Major obstacles such as the lack of preferential tariff systems for alternative development programs, high levels of corruption and the different activities of

organized transnational crime have been difficult to overcome. For this reason, the effectiveness of an anti-drug strategy in the Hemisphere will depend on international cooperation within a framework of shared responsibility.



Prevention of Violence

→ MANDATE

In an effort to replace the culture of violence with a culture of peace, the Summit of the Americas process gave priority to violence prevention. In the Quebec City Plan of Action, leaders acknowledged that violence and delinquency are serious obstacles to social co-existence, and to the democratic and socio-economic development of the Hemisphere. Not only do the high rates of delinquency and violence in the region harm people; they also have a negative effect on the potential for development of the societies of the Americas.

Various types of violence have afflicted countries in the Hemisphere, including domestic violence, political violence, common crime, drug-related violence, youth violence, sexual violence, occupational violence, and intra-familial violence, among others. According to figures provided by the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO), the impact of violence in the region is cause for concern: close to 120,000 people are assassinated each year in the Americas, 55,000 commit suicide, 125,000 die from injuries suffered in automobile accidents, and between 20 and 60 percent of women are the victim of intra-familial violence. PAHO statistics also show that the countries with the highest rate of homicides per 100,000 inhabitants are Colombia, with 65; Honduras with 55; Guatemala with 50; El Salvador with 45; Jamaica with 44; and Venezuela with 35.

In an effort to combat these high rates of violence, on June 23, 2000, the Inter-American Coalition for the Prevention of Violence was established, and is comprised of the OAS, the IDB, PAHO, UNESCO, the World Bank, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in the U.S., and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). The Coalition is designed to be a catalyst in the prevention of violence in the

Americas through prevention, research, education and training of human capital. In a comparable effort, the World Health Organization (WHO) published "The World Report on Violence and Health" in 2002. The report contained nine recommendations for the prevention of violence, and called on countries to study and implement these recommendations according to the conditions encountered in each country.

Similarly, within the framework of a joint UN—OAS International Civilian Mission in Haiti, the Special Program for the Promotion of Dialogue and Conflict Resolution within the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy of the OAS developed a training program in conflict resolution for the national police force of Haiti, in order to prevent outbreaks of violence in that country. The program is designed to improve relations between the police force and the community. Furthermore, a pilot



PROGRESS

Among the national initiatives designed to reduce the high levels of violence, El Salvador's case can be highlighted, which has developed an Inter-institutional Plan for children and youth in response to the alarming increase in youth gangs. (The WHO estimates that some 30,000 youth are involved in gang-related activities in El Salvador and Honduras.) Between June 2002 and June 2003, the Secretariat of Community Relations has sponsored 41 citizen consultative meetings and more than 1,000 neighborhood visits in order to learn about the main problems affecting the community and commanding the attention of more than 428 communities at the national level.

It is essential to involve civil society and other social sectors in this struggle against violence. Although much remains to be done, it should be pointed out that governments, international organizations and communities are showing ever-increasing interest in establishing preventive programs.

project on mediation was conducted with the judicial authorities of Artibonite, and representatives of NGOs were trained in alternative methods of conflict resolution.

CHALLENGES

The high rates of criminality in the Americas are cause for concern, since violence affects foreign investment, hampers economic growth and development, and undermines the faith of citizens in political and legal systems. Violence can be prevented through political decisions, strengthening oversight in the systems, training police

forces, and designing educational programs. In order to reduce the high levels of violence, up-to-date information and statistics are essential to permit the design of new initiatives. It is essential to involve civil society and other social sectors in this struggle against violence. Although much remains to be done, it should be pointed out that governments, international organizations and communities are showing ever-increasing interest in establishing preventive programs.



4. Hemispheric Security

→ MANDATE

The Third Summit of the Americas approved a series of mandates in hemispheric security including the following: to hold a Special Conference on Security in order to develop common approaches to international security; to continue activities on conflict prevention and the peaceful resolution of disputes; support the efforts of Small Island States to address their special security concerns; to improve transparency and accountability of defense and security institutions; to continue promoting greater degrees of confidence and security in the Hemisphere; to encourage the signing, ratifying or acceding to the Ottawa Convention on Anti-Personnel Landmines, the Inter-American Convention on Transparency in Conventional Weapons Acquisitions, and the Inter-American Convention Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and Other related materials; to support the efforts of the OAS to pursue the goal of the conversion of the Western Hemisphere into an anti-personnel landmine-free zone; to call for an experts meeting on CSBMs; to promote financial support to the OAS Fund for Peace; and to support the preparatory work for the Fifth Meeting of Defense Ministers of the Americas.

STRENGTHENING MUTUAL CONFIDENCE

The concept of hemispheric security in the Americas has evolved and now includes multidimensional aspects reflecting the different security interests of national governments and regional groupings. Today, the region faces acute threats from new and existing conditions and challenges. These range from the trafficking of drugs, weapons

and small arms; money laundering and transnational organized crime to lingering, century-old, boundary disputes; terrorism; insurgent groups; poverty; and social exclusion. In effect, with instability and civil unrest plaguing various countries of the region, natural disasters harming others, and economic woes rising, the concept of security now incorporates social, economic and political, as well as military, dimensions.

Many of the hemispheric security mandates received from the Summit refer to holding conferences related to the different components of security. The table below illustrates the progress on some of the Summit mandates.

The OAS has had great success in its efforts to convert the Western Hemisphere into an anti-personal landmine-free zone. The OAS Unit for the Promotion of Democracy (UPD) Mine Action Program has developed three activities under the area of mine action: humanitarian demining, destruction of stockpiles, and personal security of the population in mine-affected countries. The Mine Action Program has

helped clear more than 1,400,000 square meters of land in Central America and more than 22,000 antipersonnel landmines. Moreover, in recent months, this program help police deminers in Peru destroy more than 20,000 antipersonnel mines located around electric towers.

Additionally, with the assistance of the OAS Mine Action Program and the Inter-American Defense Board (IADB), in the past two years, 650,000 stockpiled mines have been destroyed in Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Peru. This program has further contributed to the strengthening of confidence building measures by facilitating, and thereby increasing,

QUEBEC CITY PLAN OF ACTION
PROGRESS ON HEMISPHERIC SECURITY MANDATES

MANDATE	ACTION
Hold the Special Conference on Security	<i>The Special Conference on Security was held in Mexico City, Mexico (October 27-28, 2003). Governments adopted the Declaration of the Special Conference on Security. (http://www.oas.org/csh/spanish/default.asp)</i>
Support the efforts of Small Island Developing States to address their special security concerns	<i>OAS General Assembly held in Bridgetown, Barbados (2002). The theme was the multidimensional approach to hemispheric security: Bridgetown Declaration A High-Level Meeting on the Special Security Concerns of Small Island States was held in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, January 8-10, 2003. Governments signed the Declaration of Kingston on Security of Small Island States and Security Management model for Small Island States and CSBMs to enhance security of Small Island States. (http://www.oas.org/csh/spanish/peizreun.asp)</i>
Call for an experts meeting as a follow-up to the regional conferences of Santiago and San Salvador on CSBMs	<i>Meeting of Experts on Confidence and Security Building Measures (CSBMs) was held in Miami, Florida (February 2-4, 2003). Countries adopted the Miami Consensus and an Illustrative List on Confidence and Security-Building Measures. (http://int.csh.oas.org/spanish/mfcre.asp)</i>
Promote and consider the adoption and ratification of international conventions	<i>8 additional countries ratified the Inter-American Convention Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking of Firearms, Ammunitions, Explosives and other Related Material (Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, Grenada, Guatemala, Paraguay and Venezuela)</i>
Promote financial support for the OAS Fund for Peace	<i>Since the Fund for Peace was established in 2000, it has received a total of \$2,450,000 in financial contributions from the following member and observer states, a number of which have made more than one contribution: Argentina, Bahamas, Belize, Brazil, Canada, Cyprus, Denmark, Guatemala, the Holy See, Honduras, Israel, Italy, Korea, Mexico, Nicaragua, Norway, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America.</i>
Support the work leading up to the Fifth Meeting of Defense Ministers of the Americas	<i>Fifth Meeting of the Defense Ministers of the Americas was held in Santiago, Chile (November 18 - 22, 2002). - Santiago Declaration (http://int.csh.oas.org/spanish/docminist.asp)</i>

the exchange of information regarding stockpiled mines by national military forces of member countries and the OAS. The Mine Action Program strengthens the security of the individual through mine-risk education, victim rehabilitation and job training, and land rehabilitation.

Another important area where much has been accomplished is in international conflict resolution and the peaceful settlement of territorial disputes. Since the Quebec City Summit, the OAS has been actively helping a number of Central American governments implement confidence-building measures to reduce tensions caused by resurfacing border or territorial disputes. OAS civilian verification missions were sent to the Honduras-Nicaragua border in the summer and fall of 2001 to reduce tensions caused by claims, counterclaims, and military build-up along the border, which resulted from the two countries' maritime boundary dispute in the Caribbean Sea. The OAS has been assisting the governments of Belize and Guatemala to peacefully resolve their longstanding territorial differences, both through the effective implementation of confidence-building measures and through high-level diplomatic talks. In the summer of 2003, the OAS opened a field-office in the Adjacency Zone between Belize and Guatemala to verify inci-

PROGRESS

On the 10th of December, 2002, Costa Rica became the first country assisted through the Program to declare itself free of anti-personnel landmines, having located and destroyed 338 mines and cleared 130,000 square meters of land. With the completion of its mine clearance operations, Costa Rica complied with the Ottawa Convention well before the deadline.

Source: UPD/OAS

dents, implement confidence-building measures, and ensure respect for human rights of the local inhabitants. The OAS is also engaged in helping the governments of El Salvador and Honduras permanently and definitively demarcate the border over which the two governments fought a brief but intense war in 1969.

All of the work described above is made possible through voluntary contributions by Member and Observer States to the Fund for Peace: Peaceful Resolution of Territorial Dispute. The Fund has received almost \$2.5 million in voluntary contributions since its inception; most resources were pledged fol-



Costa Rica is the first country in Latin America free of landmines

Source: UPD/OAS
Mine Action Program

PROGRESS

“Our new concept of security in the Hemisphere is multidimensional in scope, includes traditional and new threats, concerns, and other challenges to the security of the states of the Hemisphere, incorporates the priorities of each state, contributes to the consolidation of peace, integral development, and social justice, and is based on democratic values, respect for and promotion and defense of human rights, solidarity, cooperation, and respect for national sovereignty”.
Declaration on Security in the Americas, adopted in Mexico City, October 28, 2003

lowing an appeal by the Heads of State and Governments at the Quebec City Summit.

Perhaps the most important accomplishment in terms of Summit implementation was the Special Conference on Security, which was held in Mexico City, October 27–28, 2003. The Conference marked a milestone in the evolution of the concept of security in the Americas. The countries agreed on a new security concept for the region, based on a multidimensional approach that includes new threats, concerns, and challenges to security. They established commitments and cooperation

measures on a wide range of issues. Countries also recognized the need for institutional support in this area and the important role of the OAS in order to achieve the application, evaluation, and follow-up of the Declaration on Security in the Americas

In addition to signing the Declaration on Security in the Americas, countries adopted a Declaration on the Situation in Colombia, expressing solidarity with the government and people of Colombia “in their fight against terrorism and other destabilizing threats, as they defend democratic institutions.” They also adopted a declaration acknowledging the important contribution to security made by the Framework Treaty on Democratic Security in Central America.

CHALLENGES

Despite some successes, many challenges remain ahead. A concrete strategy needs to be defined and developed to address the many security concerns, threats and challenges of the countries in this Hemisphere. Additionally, some crucial issues—such as the role and institutional relationship of the Inter-American Defense Board and the OAS—need to be clarified. Also, some hemispheric security treaties, instruments, and cooperation mechanisms need to be revitalized and strengthened according to the new realities and concepts in the Hemisphere: in particular the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (Rio Treaty) and the American Treaty on Pacific Settlement (Pact of Bogotá).



The Fight Against Terrorism

→ MANDATE

The Summits of the Americas have supported the effort to establish a unified political and operational response to terrorism. The Summits support efforts to combat this threat to the region, particularly through the work of the Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism (CICTE), which was created in 1998 as a result of the Commitment of Mar del Plata. This latter instrument was strengthened in order to promote hemispheric cooperation in preventing, combating, and eliminating all forms of terrorism in the Americas.

Terrorism is one of the main threats to peace and security in the Hemisphere. The terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, against the United States brought renewed attention to inter-American efforts in confronting this new scourge. The February 7, 2003, attack on the Club el Nogal in Bogotá, Colombia, caused the Colombian government to launch an offensive against this

threat. In response to this most recent incident, on March 11, 2003, the Foreign Ministers and Ministers of Defense of Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru, Venezuela, Colombia, Brazil and Panama—together with delegates from the United States and Brazil—signed the Declaration of Panama in an effort to strengthen the fight against terrorism, drug trafficking, and arms smuggling.

The Inter-American Convention against Terrorism is a clear example of a collective effort to combat terrorism in the region.



Inter-American Committee
against Terrorism

CICTE currently has active programs in 11 countries of the Hemisphere and has participated with the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) in the creation of draft model regulations for countries in the region. It has also designed and deployed an electronic database. Furthermore, CICTE has taken part in a number of meetings with the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force (CFATF) and the UN Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC). It established an inter-American virtual network of experts, which will be used by member States to exchange information and best-practices. CICTE is also concentrating on improving port security. To this end, it is working with the Inter-American Committee on Ports and the US Maritime Administration to strengthen safety and security in inter-American maritime traffic and to develop a common security strategy. Finally, CICTE has established National Focal Points designed to facilitate the communication and the exchange of information among official experts in the fight against terrorism.

In January 2003 in El Salvador, CICTE recommended that countries adopt a series of measures to strengthen border security, reinforce customs procedures, and improve the quality of identification and travel documents. Other recommendations included financial controls to prevent money laundering and the financing of terrorist activi-

ties. CICTE has also played an important over-arching role within the region. For example, in October 2003 it hosted a meeting at OAS headquarters to determine how regional and international organizations could help in the overall efforts to combat terrorism. The meeting, which was held in collaboration with the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC), included participants from the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the European Commission and the African Union, as well as delegates from more than 50 international organizations.

In addition, the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism is a clear example of a collective effort to combat terrorism in the region. This convention was negotiated in less than nine months, and has already been signed by 33 of the 34 OAS member states. In only one year, it received the necessary number of ratifications to enter into effect in 2003. This international instrument commits OAS member States to increase cooperation and exchange intelligence information. The convention includes provisions to intensify border controls, confiscate the funds and other property of terrorist groups, take measures against the financing of terrorist activities, provide mutual legal assistance and cooperation, and ensure respect for human rights. This Inter-American Convention, along with UN Resolution 1373 and the principles contained in the Declaration of Lima to Prevent, Combat and Eliminate Terrorism, constitutes an important instrument in the fight against terrorism.

One fundamental aspect of the fight against terrorism is ensuring respect for human rights. Indeed, the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism stipulates that the fight against terrorism should be waged "with full respect for the state of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms." The OAS, through the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, established the minimum standards for protecting human rights in cases of terrorism.

PROGRESS

Among the initiatives taken by countries to strengthen their borders, is the Puebla Process Pilot Initiative—a training program on border control measures, with joint sponsorship by the United States, Mexico and Canada. According to Canada's National Report on the implementation of Summits of the Americas mandates for the period of November 2002 to June 2003, this exercise was carried out in nine countries, involved 15 trainers, and provided training to more than 400 border control police and immigration officers.



The international community joined forces in the fight against terrorism after September 11, 2001, but the threat still remains.

Similarly, cyber-crime is considered to be a new threat. For this reason, the CICTE, the Inter-American Telecommunications Commission (CITEL) and the Government Expert Group on Cyber-crime of the Meeting of Ministers of Justice or of Ministers or Attorneys General of the Americas (REMJA) are working with the governments of Argentina and the United States to develop a hemispheric strategy to safeguard telecommunications and computer networks. Their first step was to hold a meeting on cyber-crime in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on July 28-29, 2003.

CHALLENGES

The international community joined forces in the fight against terrorism after September 11, 2001, but the threat still remains. The main challenges concern the

effective exchange of information that will lead to concrete actions designed to prevent terrorist activities. Furthermore, ongoing training and technical assistance must be provided to allow public servants and private authorities to monitor, detect and control asset laundering operations or other activities aimed at financing terrorism. Similarly, the CICTE must continue to develop the inter-American network for the collection and dissemination of data, to formulate and put into practice technical assistance programs for governments that request them, and to design and implement mechanisms for cooperation.

5. Civil Society

→ MANDATE

The Presidents and Prime Ministers of the Americas, gathered at the Quebec City Summit, recognized the critical role of civil society participation in the consolidation of democracy, and that this participation constitutes one of the vital elements for the success of development policies. They noted that men and women have the right to participate, with equality and equity, in the decision-making processes affecting their lives and well-being. They also agreed to establish public and private funding instruments aimed at building the capacity of civil society organizations (CSOs) in order to highlight the work and contribution of these organizations and to promote accountability.

In the months leading up to the Third Summit of the Americas, the OAS supported a broad process of consultation with various nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), academic institutions, and other representatives of civil society. This effort was coordinated with the Corporación Participa of Chile, the Canadian Foundation for the Americas (FOCAL), and the Esquel Foundation, headquartered in the United States. Subsequently, civil society organizations have increased their participation in the agencies and entities that support the process of the Summits of the Americas.

The governments have developed national policies on this subject, and with support from the OAS, other multilateral organizations and development banks, have implemented strategies to increase the capacity for civil society to participate in the inter-American system, and in the political,

economic, and social development of their communities and countries.

Globalization has contributed to strengthening dialogue and political interaction between our leaders and between civil society stakeholders. According to a recent Carnegie Endowment for International Peace study by P.J. Simmons (2002): “a recent explosion of activity by NGO’s has energized volunteers in almost all countries to advance causes that range from banning landmines to protecting endangered species. Their presence has helped turn once-controversial concepts—such as the efficacy of microcredit, the empowerment of women, and the need for environmentally sustainable development—into conventional wisdom.”

In a recent study by the Justice Studies Center for the Americas (JSCA) in Argenti-

na, Chile, Colombia, and Peru—titled Justice and Civil Society—it is clear that civil society has played a key role in legal system reform in those countries. The nongovernmental organizations “contribute comprehensive studies, reform proposals, and follow-up activities.”

In the Caribbean, civil society has played a significant role since 1993 in the Caribbean Court of Justice’s gender and youth cases, in the prevention of HIV/AIDS, and in economic and social affairs. Participation of civil society in this region has increased since the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) signed a declaration of principles in the Forward Together Conference in Liliendaal, Guyana, in July 2003. This establishes procedures for consultation between representatives of civil society and the 15 CARICOM members, which includes dialogue between the Heads of Government and nongovernmental organizations. It stresses the need for constructive relations, especially in the Council for Trade and Economic Development, the Council for Finance and Planning, and the Council for Social and Human Development of CARICOM. A small working group on civil society coordinated by the CARICOM Secretariat was created.

In Brazil, according to an article by Marcos Kisil, Regional Director of the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, published in *TerceiroSector.org*, there has been an upsurge of civil society organizations “following the return of democracy to the country during the 1980s.” This has led several political analysts to consider that the growth of the so-called third sector “is the most important factor that by itself could have ensured the future of democracy for Brazilian society,” which is defined as a democracy that is shifting from representation to participation.

The Government of Canada polled civil society organizations in January 2003 by

PROGRESS

The Hemisphere’s Heads of State and Government stressed the importance of civil society by noting: “We welcome and value the contributions of civil society, including business and labor organizations, to our Plan of Action. We affirm that openness and transparency are vital to building public awareness and legitimacy for our undertakings. We call upon all citizens of the Americas to contribute to the Summit process.”

on-site visits and electronic dialogue with civil society organizations and the general public. In the discussion called “A Dialogue on Canadian Foreign Policy,” participants analyzed and reviewed Canadian foreign policy developments since 1995 in the areas of global and Canadian security, promotion of global and Canadian prosperity, and the protection of values and culture. As a result of the dialogue, 38,000 copies of the document “A Dialogue on Foreign Policy—Report to Canadians,” which contained the reflections of the various participants, were distributed. The dialogue established a vehicle for direct interaction and cooperation between the government and civil society to contribute to the development of Canadian foreign policy.

In the Americas, civil society has contributed to redefinition of the role of international organizations and the redesign of a system of international institutions better equipped to cooperate and work together with them. Working meetings have been held between the OAS, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the World Bank, national and international cooperation agencies such as the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Inter-American Agency for Cooperation and Development (IACD), with civil society to identify new forms of cooperation and joint work.

The Organization of American States (OAS) is at the forefront of multilateral organizations in terms of civil society participation by affording it the opportunity to



In the Americas, civil society has contributed to redefinition of the role of international organizations and the redesign of a system of international institutions better equipped to cooperate and work together with them.

PROGRESS

During the process of drafting the Inter-American Democratic Charter in 2001, the OAS invited citizens to submit their comments on a special web site created for the purpose. It also organized a virtual forum to collect the views of more than sixty-nine (69) civil society organizations, which provided important input for final approval of the Inter-American Democratic Charter.

comment on draft resolutions, not only in the framework of the General Assembly but also those adopted in specialized conferences, or in the process of approval of inter-American conventions. This progress is reflected in the “Guidelines for Participation of Civil Society Organizations in OAS Activities,” which defines how CSOs can participate in activities of the OAS and its political organs, and attend their meetings. The OAS has taken great strides by creating a web page for civil society and updating it to make it more accessible for all through a

design that clearly shows the many ways civil society can connect with the Organization. The OAS promotes the registration of NGOs. There are presently 78 civil society organizations working with the political bodies and 1380 working with the functional areas of the Organization.

According to a study by Laurie Cole of the Canadian Foundation for the Americas, “Participation of Civil Society in the Inter-American System: the Case of the Organization of American States,” the application of the above-mentioned guidelines “[have] proved to be [...] valuable mechanism[s] for legitimizing civil society organizations.” This publication notes the increased participation of civil society in the inter-American system—especially in the OAS—and shows that additional work is needed to “build lasting relations and truly consolidate the inclusion of society and tolerance of diverse opinions.”

**The regional forum on,
Civil Society in the
Process of Hemispheric
Integration within the
Framework of the Special
Summit of the Americas.**

*November 24th-25th 2003
Mexico City, Mexico*



Civil society organizations have participated in ministerial and high-level meetings, and in the political organs of the OAS. At the OAS General Assembly in 2003, in Santiago, Chile, the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy (UPD) and the Summits of the Americas Secretariat of the OAS helped the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (FLAC-SO) in Chile and other civil society organizations and networks to hold a workshop on democratic governance. The workshop's results were presented in the informal dialogue between civil society organizations, foreign ministers, and the OAS Secretary General. At that meeting in June 2003, the Foreign Ministers adopted a resolution to establish a dialogue between civil society and heads of delegation as a regular feature of the General Assembly, which shows the effort made by the OAS to increase the involvement of these organizations and ensure greater transparency in its deliberations.

At the First Meeting of Ministers and Senior Officials of Culture, held July 12 and 13 in Cartagena, Colombia, some 20 representatives of civil society and four culture ministers discussed the Plan of Action of Cartagena, with special attention paid to cultural diversity and other matters related to culture and equity.

The OAS also invited representatives of civil society to participate in a workshop on education, held in July 2003 in Bogotá, Colombia, two weeks before the Third Meeting of Ministers of Education in Mexico City. On that occasion representatives of educational networks, teachers' associations, and parent groups adopted recommendations to present to the education ministers in Mexico.

In similar fashion, the Organization invited civil society organizations registered with the OAS to participate in the "Second Meeting of Ministers and High-Level Authorities Responsible for Policies of Decentralization, Local Government, and Citizen Participation at the Municipal Level in the Hemisphere," which took place September

24-26, 2003, in Mexico City. In addition, several civil society representatives attended the Special Conference on Hemispheric Security, held September 27 and 28 in Mexico City.

Civil society has also participated in recent follow-up of hemispheric treaties against corruption and terrorism and in preparation of the draft American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

For the Eighth Meeting of Ministers of Trade of the FTAA, in Miami November 17 and 18, 2003, civil society organizations held the Americas Trade and Sustainable Development Forum (ATSDF) with informal dialogue and substantive exchanges between civil society and the government delegations. This forum supplemented and enhanced work accomplished on the Free Trade Area of the Americas negotiations.

PROGRESS

In the OAS, the Summits of the Americas Secretariat is responsible for ensuring that civil society organizations are involved in OAS activities and the design of the summit agenda, as well as follow-up and implementation. In preparation for the Special Summit of the Americas in January 2004, the Secretariat for the Summits of the Americas, together with the Government of Mexico, Corporación Participa, The Regional Coordinator of Economic and Social Research (CRIES), the Inter-American Network for Democracy, Partners of the Americas and USAID, the Civic Alliance, the Canadian Foundation for the Americas (FOCAL) and the Latin American Association of Advocacy Organizations (ALOP) organized a regional forum on "Civil Society in the Process of Hemispheric Integration Within the Framework of the Special Summit of the Americas," which was held in Mexico City in November 2003, with participation of 98 non-governmental and academic organizations from 20 countries in the Hemisphere. The forum's primary purpose was to afford representatives of civil society organizations that are working for peace, economic and social development, and democratic governance an opportunity for dialogue and agreement to make a contribution to the Special Summit of the Americas and present their recommendations to the governments in the GRIC meeting in December.

SUMMIT IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW GROUP (SIRC)

**The regional forum on,
Civil Society in the
Process of Hemispheric
Integration within the
Framework of the Special
Summit of the Americas.**

*November 24th-25th 2003
Mexico City, Mexico*



The World Bank uses mechanisms similar to those of the OAS to transmit information on its programs to civil society organizations. Specifically, the communication includes meetings for consultation and transmission of electronic information. In addition, the World Bank has a newsletter for civil society on its web site. The World Bank has a Civil Society Program for the Latin American and Caribbean Region that encourages opportunities for expanding the dialogue among governments, civil society organizations, and the private sector at the national and local levels. Part of this effort includes providing resources and expert knowledge to create the alliances and synergies needed to face the challenges of inclusiveness and development in this region.

Since its inception the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) has been working with civil society and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in Latin America in projects to increase the social and economic well-being of the population. The IDB's work with civil society occurs on several levels: operational, institutional, and policy. For example, the Bank and its borrowers consult

NGOs and target population in the preparation and execution of projects. The NGOs and interest groups can also review and comment on draft strategies and guidelines for loans. In addition, the IDB uses mechanisms that include loans to enhance the institutional capacity of civil society organizations at the national and local levels, stimulates dialogue between the various sectors of the IDB and the CSOs, and when necessary, asks them for assistance to implement projects and conduct research. Furthermore, in the past year the IDB has carried out an intensive effort in lending, technical cooperation, dissemination, understanding, and consensus building in five major areas—governance and political development, integration and economic development, ecology and sustainable development, equity and human development, and connectivity and technological development—through which the IDB is supporting the mandates of the Quebec City Summit. At that summit the IDB presented 22 programs in these five areas, all of which have been moving ahead well.

The UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) involves

CSOs in initiatives of the inter-American system, especially in the areas of transportation, migration, trade, gender equality, and connectivity. ECLAC's contribution in all these sectors includes the preparation of substantive input for intergovernmental debates, and support for organizational aspects and the Secretariat.

The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) began in 1990 to build a civil society coalition to respond to the challenges experienced by health systems after reforms in the health sector. This coalition, which PAHO calls "partners," includes networks of NGOs, public foundations, and the private sector.

The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture (IICA) consults civil society in the process of consideration of its policy documents. The most recent of these consultations was held to draw up the "AGRO 2003-2115" Plan of Action for agriculture and rural life in the Americas, which was adopted at the Second Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Rural Life, held in Panama on November 11 and 12, 2003.

CHALLENGES

Although significant strides have been made in this area, civil society's participation in the region continues to face several challenges. First, it is necessary to continue strengthening their technical ability and expertise in their areas of interest, by developing internal mechanism for consultation, accountability, and selection of leaders, in order to ensure its members are truly represented and its work and contributions are of high quality. Second, resources must be allocated to ensure effective and sustained monitoring and implementation of the mandates of the Summits of the Americas. In addition to the internal processes, they must creatively promote efficient vehicles for exchange of information with governments at the national level and with decentralized administrations. This is facilitated with the establishment of networks to promote synergies in innova-

tive joint initiatives that assist in the search for the necessary financing.

To create opportunities for participation, the governments need to have the political will to dedicate adequate resources and mechanisms to facilitate the dialogues. Some governments have done excellent work in creating focal points for dialogue with civil society right in the foreign ministries.

Furthermore, international agencies need to have the requisite human and financial resources to enable them to contribute to the development of a community of civil society organizations that helps nurture and enrich the development thinking and strategies that are adopted in the Americas.

Finally, civil society organizations are key partners in helping national governments implement the mandates of the Summit and provide the necessary accountability. The Summits process is a joint initiative of the governments and civil society, and its success requires a shared effort by all social stakeholders.

The Summit process is a joint initiative of the governments and civil society, and its success requires a shared effort by all social stakeholders.

6. Trade, Investment and Financial Stability

→ MANDATE

Free and open economies, market access, sustained flows of investment, capital formation, financial stability, appropriate public policies, access to technology and human resources development and training are key to reducing poverty and inequalities, raising living standards and promoting sustainable development. We will work with all sectors of civil society and international organizations to ensure that economic activities contribute to the sustainable development of our societies.

—DECLARATION OF QUEBEC CITY

Leaders at the Third Summit of the Americas directed Trade Ministers to ensure that negotiations of the Free Trade Area of the Americas Agreement (FTAA)—announced at the First Summit of the Americas and officially launched at the Second Summit of the Americas in April 1998—would conclude no later than January 2005. They called for an agreement that was balanced, comprehensive, and consistent with World Trade Organization rules. An added instruction was to take into account the differences in size and levels of development in the participating countries. A Free Trade Area of the Americas, incorporating countries with the 34 democratically-elected governments in the Western Hemisphere, would represent a population of over 800 million and a combined economic output of over US\$13 trillion. It would be the largest regional free trade area in the world, and represent the cornerstone of the overall Summit process.

To achieve this goal, leaders recognized the importance of transparency and consultation with civil society, as well as the need for technical assistance and capacity-building to ensure full participation by all countries in the negotiations. An official FTAA website was established and is managed by the Organization of American States as part of the Tripartite Committee to support the ongoing negotiations. The Tripartite Committee consists of the OAS, the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Inter-American Development Bank. Through the website and periodic regional seminars, civil society representatives are encouraged to make recommendations to the FTAA negotiators. Written submissions are considered by the FTAA Committee on Civil Society and are forwarded to the appropriate negotiating group for consideration. To facilitate the informed input of civil society—and in response to a direct mandate from leaders—the draft text of the FTAA Agreement was made public in English, Spanish, French and Portuguese following the Buenos



Aires Ministerial Meeting in April 2001, following the Quito Ministerial Meeting in November 2002, and again following the Miami Ministerial Meeting in November, 2003. The draft text can be found on the official FTAA website at www.ftaa-alca.org.

FTAA Ministers Responsible for Trade met with business and civil society representatives at each of their Ministerial Meetings and received recommendations for the negotiations. Many governments have also increased consultations with their business and civil society communities at the national level.

The negotiations have been proceeding on-track with continuous meetings of trade officials attending sessions of the various FTAA Negotiating Groups and other Special Committees at the present site of the negotiations in Puebla, Mexico. In this final stage—from November 2002 to January 2005—the FTAA negotiating process is being co-chaired by Brazil and the United States.

CAPACITY-BUILDING FOR TRADE

Negotiators in the FTAA have recognized the difficulty some of the smaller economies have in fielding well-informed and fulsome negotiating teams to represent their interests at FTAA talks. They also recognized the challenges many governments will face in implementing the FTAA obligations after completion of the negotiations. To address these concerns, Ministers Responsible for Trade endorsed the FTAA Hemispheric Cooperation Program as an integral part of the FTAA process. Countries agreed to seek assistance under the program by first preparing national or regional strategies to strengthen their capacities in:

- i) preparing for negotiations,
- ii) implementing trade commitments, and
- iii) adjusting to integration.

With the approval of the FTAA Hemispheric Cooperation Program—and in accordance with new mandates emerging from the OAS General Assembly in support of this initiative—the OAS Trade Unit has expanded

STRUCTURE OF THE FTAA NEGOTIATIONS

- Ministers Responsible for Trade
- Vice Ministers Responsible for Trade (Trade Negotiating Committee)

NEGOTIATING GROUPS

- Market Access
- Agriculture
- Services
- Investment
- Government Procurement
- Competition Policy
- Intellectual Property Rights
- Subsidies, Antidumping and Countervailing Duties
- Dispute Settlement

SPECIAL COMMITTEES

- Civil Society
- Institutional Issues
- Smaller Economies

FTAA Ministers Responsible for Trade met with business and civil society representatives at each of their Ministerial Meetings and received recommendations for the negotiations.

its set of trade-related capacity building activities in the Americas. These activities include the following main lines of action:

- Support for the development of national or subregional trade capacity building strategies
- Training programs for government officials and trade policy dialogues with civil society. This includes the development of training courses within the sub-regions of the Hemisphere to provide ongoing and sustainable capacity-building in trade.
- Network promotion among members of academic communities through the Net-Americas network (at www.netamericas.net).
- A program to support initiatives for the modernization of government procurement systems.
- Programs to support the participation of the micro, small and medium enterprises in government procurement, and access to electronic markets and online technical services.
- Publications: including the Trade Unit Series Studies and academic volumes.
- Transparency enhancement and dissemi-

nation of trade-related information, using information technologies available through the SICE, or Foreign Trade Information System website at www.sice.oas.org

CHALLENGES

The FTAA negotiations encompass nations as large as Brazil and the United States, and as small as St. Kitts and Nevis and St. Lucia. It includes economies as sophisticated and diversified as that of Canada, together with countries such as Bolivia and Paraguay which are dependent on very few export commodities. The diversity of the participants underlines the very ambitious nature of this undertaking. The negotiations are reaching their final stage at a time of slow economic growth worldwide, increased demands on fragile democratic governments in the region, and with a new and heightened emphasis on security issues. Vulnerable and non-competitive sectors in all economies are under increasing economic pressure. As demonstrated by the suspended meeting of

the World Trade Organization in Cancun, Mexico, in September 2003, trade talks world-wide are struggling to find a middle ground of agreement in the areas of development, agriculture, protection of national markets, integration of international agreements into domestic policies, and production and export subsidies.

The Eighth FTAA Ministerial in November 2003 in Miami ended with the agreement of all 34 participants to continue the negotiations and proceed under the agreed deadline of January 2005. The coming year will be decisive in demonstrating whether countries can reach common ground and succeed in their ambitious goal of reaching agreement on a Free Trade Area of the Americas which should contribute, as stated by the hemispheric leaders at the Third Summit of the Americas, to "reduce poverty and inequities, raise living standards and promote sustainable development."

Economic and Financial Stability

Leaders recognized the importance of financial and economic stability, as well as strong and sustainable growth, as fundamental preconditions for accelerated development and poverty reduction, and to ensuring that the benefits of globalization are broadly and equitably distributed. They called on the Finance Ministers to pursue policies that would protect the most vulnerable people and prevent crisis while recognizing the unique challenges faced by small states.

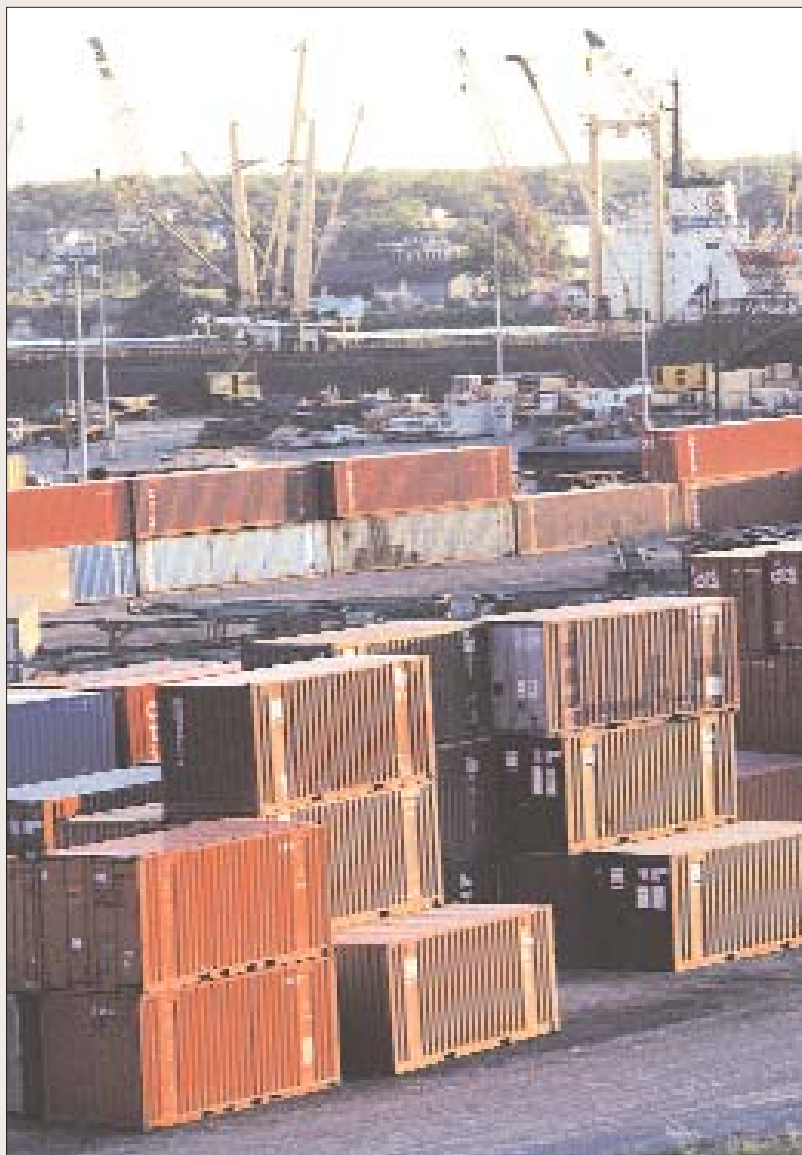
To implement this commitment, Finance Ministers were instructed to explore ways to ensure that international financial institutions and regional development banks take into account Summit initiatives in their lending policies and technical assistance programs for the Hemisphere.

Members of the Joint Summit Working Group, the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the Caribbean Development Bank, the Andean Development Corporation, and the Central American Bank for Economic Integration report regularly on their support to countries in order to fulfill Summit mandates. In fact, there is considerable overlap between the existing programs of the development banks and goals of the Third Summit of the Americas. A renewed effort in the areas of poverty alleviation and consideration of governance issues can be seen in the programs and plans of the World Bank and the regional development banks.

In addition to the oversight of the multilateral development banks, Finance Ministers are working to revise International Monetary Fund policies in order to increase predictability and crisis prevention in their programs. In fiscal year 2003 a Stand-By Arrangement for Brazil of \$31.5 billion—the largest arrangement in IMF history—dominated new IMF lending commitments to its member countries. This arrangement—plus other large arrangements for Colombia and Argentina—and the augmentation of an existing arrangement for Uruguay, kept commitments in fiscal year 2003 relatively high. (IMF 2003 Annual Report)

CHALLENGES

Rapidly evolving financial markets, and strong links between the region's economies and the world economy increase opportunities to access international capital, but also make these markets vulnerable to changes in international conditions. Many of the countries in the region are highly dependent on



commodity exports that are subject to price swings. Exchange rate policies and central bank management can also dramatically change the relative prices of exports and imports, and influence interest rates. Frequent changes in these conditions can be a disincentive to business investment. Fiscal and monetary management in the region continues to improve, and the IMF and multilateral development banks are working to contribute to increased financial stability, but the uncertainty of global markets, heavy debt burdens in some countries, and the need to meet political and economic demands remain a challenge.

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Corporate Social Responsibility

Businesses of all sizes make an important contribution to sustainable development and increased access to employment opportunities. Citizens and civil society organizations also have expectations that businesses carry out their operations in a manner consistent with their social and environmental responsibilities. To facilitate this process, leaders expressed support for the work of the Organization of American States and the Inter-American Development Bank in raising awareness of and encouraging the exchange of experiences on how businesses can develop, adopt and implement principles of good conduct that will advance corporate social and environmental responsibility.



At the Conferences on Corporate Social Responsibility, major companies, such as IBM of the United States and CEMEX of Mexico, shared their experiences in building corporate social responsibility into their basic business strategies.

SUCCESS STORIES

The Inter-American Agency for Cooperation and Development (IACD) has announced a program to promote corporate social responsibility in four Latin American countries, with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) donating Can\$500,000.

An IACD initiative—developed jointly with the regional network Forum EMPRESA—will foster measures for the private sector in Chile, Brazil, El Salvador, and Peru, targeting particularly small- and medium-sized enterprises. The CIDA contribution will complement the recently approved US\$1.1 million grant from the Inter-American Development Bank's Multilateral Investment Fund. The IACD also received support from the United States Mission to the OAS for the original design of the program. The models developed in these four countries will be extended to the rest of Latin America and the Caribbean. The OAS Inter-American Agency for Cooperation and Development (IACD) co-sponsored a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Conference held in Trinidad and Tobago, and organized by the Inter American Foundation (IAF). The conference provided information on CSR related areas and stimulated the

formation of alliances among the interested institutions in the Caribbean.

The Inter-American Development Bank held two well-attended conferences—in Miami and Panama—on Corporate Social Responsibility, civil society and competitiveness. These conferences increased awareness of the issue and strengthened networks to promote good business practices. Major companies, such as IBM of the United States and CEMEX of Mexico, shared their experiences in building corporate social responsibility into their basic business strategies. The IDB created a website (www.csramericas.org) to present conference materials and act as a comprehensive networking tool on the topic.

CHALLENGES

Corporate Social Responsibility is a relatively new concept for businesses in Latin American and the Caribbean. As many economies are struggling in the region, businesses interested in good business practices are compelled to examine how these practices can contribute to their profitability and good community relation, and improve the reputation of the private sector among citizens in the Americas.

7. Infrastructure and Regulatory Environment

Telecommunications

→ MANDATE

The Heads of State and Government addressed the issue of telecommunications at the Quebec Summit of the Americas and recognized that the progress made in the areas of telecommunications and information technologies open up countless opportunities for individual and collective development in the region, the growth in the economies. Conscious of the disparities in cost—and access to technology within and between the countries of the region—in the Quebec City Plan of Action, governments pledged—in cooperation with the private sector—to promote measures to modernize the telecommunications sector, bearing in mind that the full potential of telecommunications will be realized only if relevant applications and services are available, and if people are aware of and capable of using modern information technologies. Access is increasing, but it is essential that content be disseminated in various languages, and that remote areas in Latin America and the Caribbean build greater network capacities to enable them to receive and use information in a timely fashion.

Countries have fulfilled several mandates set out in the Quebec City Plan of Action, largely through the assistance of the Inter-American Telecommunication Commission (CITEL). CITEL programs aim at awareness, capacity building, and analysis of relevant and critical telecommunications issues.

The Summit requested the promotion of an Agenda for Connectivity in the Americas—in the form of national agendas

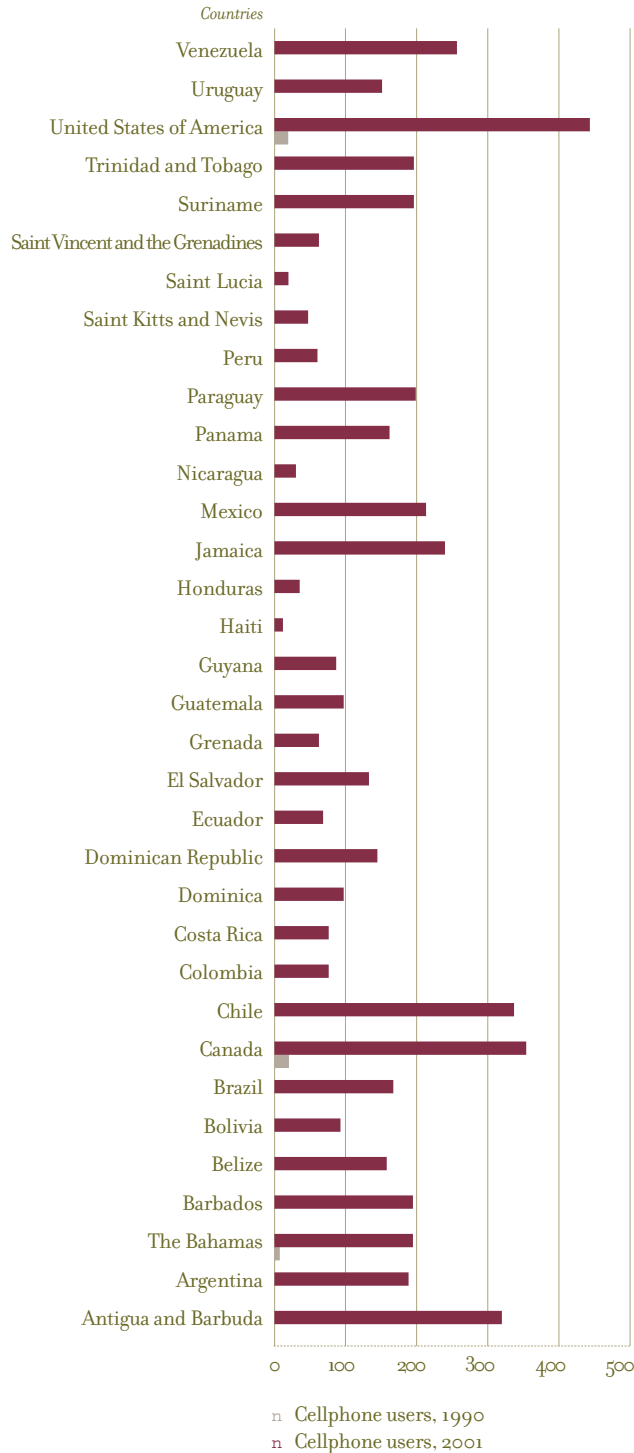
or strategies—to facilitate the integration of the Hemisphere, and provide the citizens of the Americas with opportunities to fulfill their human potential. In this context, CITEL prepared an Agenda for Connectivity in the Americas and Plan of Action of Quito that sets out principles, premises, definitions and objectives to take advantage of opportunities, and sets out procedures for the design and implementation of connectivity activities. The countries also adopted the Washington



The development of physical infrastructure is an important complementary factor for economic integration.

CELLULAR USERS

Data Source: UNDP Human Development Report 2003

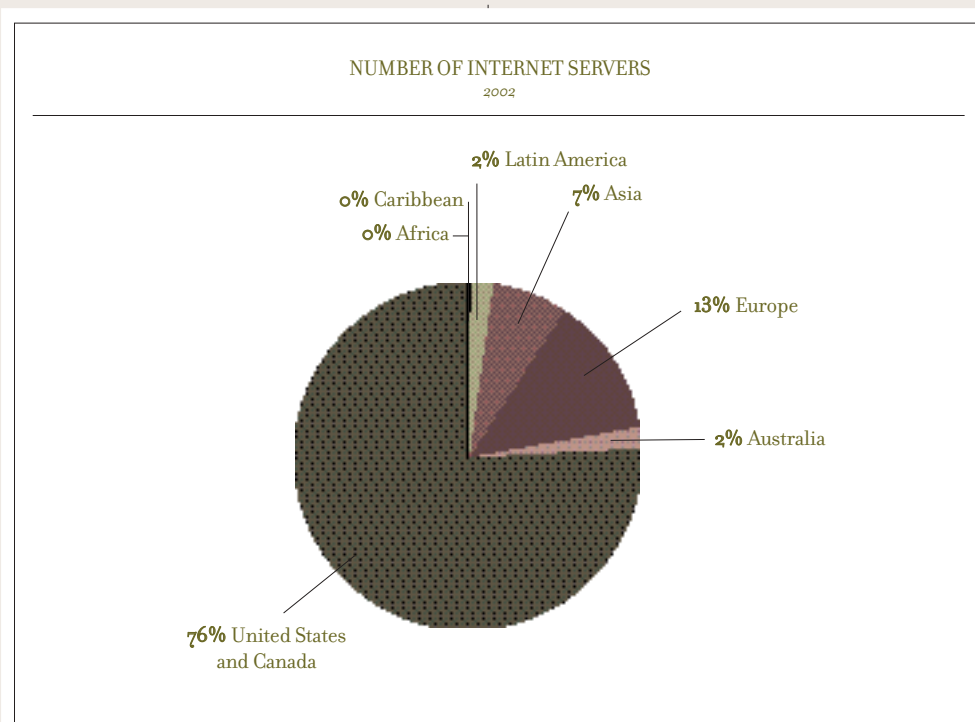


Declaration on August 16, 2002, agreeing to continue expanding CITEI's capabilities to promote the implementation of an Agenda of Connectivity for the Americas

and to encourage the provision of universal access to information and communication technologies. This is an issue that extends far beyond the ability of telecommunications authorities to implement on their own, so other regional and international organizations have been requested to join forces. Several governments have already developed national programs based in this document.

Taking into account the growing need for trained and skilled personnel to cope with the changing telecommunication environment, CITEI has been working with accredited training centers in the region, and the Centre of Excellence for the Americas of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) in particular, to provide appropriate training programs to telecommunications professionals of in Latin America and the Caribbean. Since 2002, thirteen courses—distance learning and face to face—on telecommunications policy, regulation, management and technology have been offered. CITEI has awarded nearly 490 scholarships in the region. Collective hemispheric efforts were made more effective through innovative uses of information and communications technologies, such as distance learning. Also, a book on tele-education that includes countries' experiences and offers lessons learned was published in 2001, in an effort to incorporate new communities into the knowledge society.

Health care practice is currently undergoing a rapid transformation in the Americas. The growing availability and affordability of telecommunications-based technologies make it possible to extend access to and improve the quality of health services for a larger number of individuals. Medical resources, only available in major health-care institutions, are becoming readily accessible to all citizens. A book on Telehealth in the Americas, which recommends policies and strategies will be made available in early January 2004. This is the outcome of joint efforts of CITEI, ITU and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) for the benefit of the whole region.



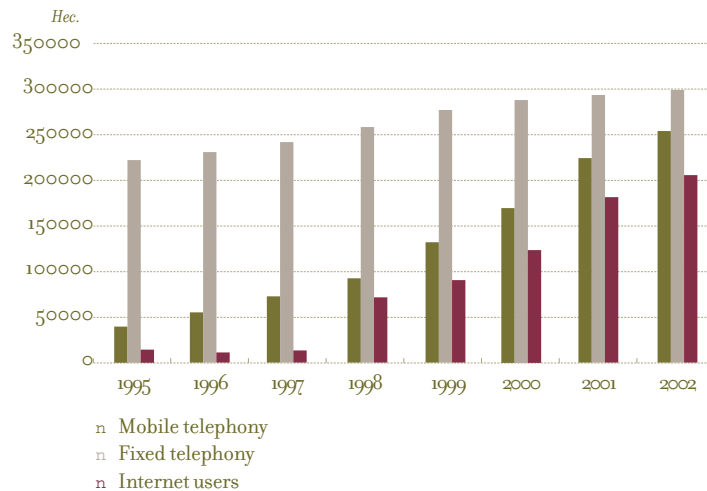
Reforms are reshaping the industrial and governmental structures of the telecommunications sector worldwide, resulting in large demands on regulators who need to protect consumers, prevent anti-competitive abuses and attain national goals such as universal access and economic productivity growth. CITEC and the ITU have begun updating the Blue Book on Telecommunication Policies for the Americas, a fundamental tool and foundation for implementing a regulatory regime able to reach the policy goal of developing a Global Information Society. Regulatory reform is needed, as 74% (data from 2002) of the countries in the Americas have privatized state-owned assets, making liberalization and competition an increasingly common feature in a variety of service markets. Regulators are faced with a growing number of regulatory challenges from interconnection, third generation mobile service licensing, broadband deployment, and the Internet. CITEC provided recommendations regarding interconnection guidelines, universal service/access, and harmonization of spectrum. The recommendation on frequency bands for third generation systems and a hemispheric database on spectrum allocation is now operational through the CITEC web site.

Technological advances and convergence of services are increasing the use of broadband via satellite worldwide, as satellite is one of the best-suited means to reach regions lacking terrestrial access. CITEC recently approved a recommendation on satellite services regulations so as to encourage the development of broadband services via satellite. Also, a web page has been developed that details the laws and rules governing the provision of satellite services and providing all the necessary information for interested parties to apply for licenses in the countries of the Americas.

To achieve economies of scale, reduce time to market and costs while assuring continued compliance with national technical regulations, CITEC has been working on a number of issues, specifically Mutual Recognition Agreements and standards coordination. A Mutual Recognition Agreement for assessing the conformity of telecommunications equipment has been developed and approved. This mechanism will facilitate trade and access to information technologies. Several countries are already participating in its phases, while others are adopting measures to implement the Mutual Recognition

WHAT IS THE STATUS OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND INTERNET USE IN THE AMERICAS?

Source: ITU (2002)



Agreement on conformity assessment developed by CITELE, including the adjustment of national laws, as required. Also, analysis is underway to harmonize assessment processes in the region, by preparing the Yellow Book on telecommunication equipment conformity assessment processes in the Americas. CITELE encourages the discussion of adequate standards to ensure technological compatibility and the timely introduction of new technology. Recent standards coordination documents endorsed several common standards for network access. In addition, a standards roadmap on Next Generation Networks has been approved.

The need for the rapid spread of information technology and connectivity has been endorsed by the Summit. CITELE has recognized that terrestrial digital television broadcasting offers new ways of accessing and sharing information and has approved a resolution agreeing on the adoption and implementation of a common hemispheric standard for digital terrestrial television broadcasting, which encour-

ages OAS member States to work towards the successful transition from analogue to digital terrestrial television technology as rapidly as possible.

CITELE is committed to a harmonized view of telecommunications in the region, as may be seen by the development of joint Inter-American proposals to the World Radiocommunication Conference, the World Telecommunication Development Conference, and the upcoming 2004 World Telecommunication Standardization Conference of the ITU.

CHALLENGES

Despite these successes, the Americas still has many hurdles to overcome. Governments must ensure that all available actors and forces become involved and cooperate to spur greater development and increase use of modern telecommunications and information technologies. They must also work to narrow the domestic digital divide to ensure that all citizens have access to the benefits provided through new technologies.

Transport

→ MANDATE

The Heads of State and Government endorsed the work of their Ministers of Transportation, through the Western Hemisphere Transport Initiative (WHTI), and delegated to them the responsibility of carrying out the mandates outlined in the Quebec City Plan of Action. These mandates were concentrated in the following areas: to improve the training programs for human resources in the transportation area, to ensure the environmental viability of transportation infrastructure systems, and to encourage air and maritime operators to comply with international safety conventions, regulations, codes of conduct and standards.

There exist a number of major initiatives to integrate the transportation field, such as the Initiative for the Integration of the Regional Infrastructure in South America (IIRSA) (www.iirsa.org) and the Puebla-Panama Plan (www.iadb.org/ppp), which consists of a program to develop infrastructure, housing and micro-credits in Central America and southern Mexico. Countries and international organizations alike are making major efforts to support these initiatives. For instance, from June 2001 to December 2002, the Andean Development Corporation (CAF) approved nine new infrastructure projects for integration, worth a total of US\$ 517.8 million (Report of the Joint Working Group, XXIXth Meeting of the SIRG, June 2003).

The WHTI facilitates cooperation, convergence, and information exchange among sub-regional groups and multilateral organizations. Its main purpose is to ensure the development of an integrated transportation network in the Western Hemisphere that is adequate, safe, secure, efficient and respectful of the environment. WHTI has a web site (www.transport-americas.org) that is managed by the Summits of the Americas Secretariat. At the most recent meeting of Transportation Ministers held in May 2003



in Ixtapa, Mexico, ministers carried out an in-depth review of four issues importance to transportation in the region: safety and security, exploring conventional and new proposals for financing, the urgent need to safeguard ecosystems, and the strategic importance of multimodal transportation networks in the process of hemispheric integration (Ministerial Declaration, Ixtapa-Zihuatanejo, Mexico, May 2003).

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PROGRESS

The IDB, CAF and Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEL) have granted medium and long-term loans to governments, public entities and private corporations to support infrastructure investment programs and projects for highways and other modes of transport such as pipelines, ports, rail and waterways. By August 31, 2002, CAF had approved a total of US\$ 1.833 billion for the transport sector, of which US\$ 923 million was earmarked for projects to integrate the transportation infrastructure among member countries. CABEL approved two loans for the construction and rehabilitation of roads in El Salvador and Honduras, in the amount of US\$ 135 million and US\$ 22.8 million respectively. It also loaned Costa Rica US\$ 60 million to finance part of the Comprehensive Southern Coast Highway Program (Reports of the Joint Working Group to the SIRG, November 2002 and June 2003).



The following initiatives related to transportation initiative priorities should be highlighted:

- ECLAC has presented an Action Plan for the Integration of Transportation in the Americas (<http://www.transport-americas.org/Priority1-SP.htm>) that includes three main components: institutional cooperation, trade interchange routes and a knowledge network. ECLAC identified several priorities for developing concrete projects: harmonization of road transport standards, regulations and practices; highway safety and security; and transport of hazardous materials.

- The Unit for Sustainable Development and Environment of the OAS has prepared a working document entitled "Mechanisms for Mutual Assistance in Case of Damage and Vulnerability Reduction of Transportation Infrastructure in Central America", which is available to all countries and organizations and contains concrete recommendations for action. The OAS has also prepared two additional publications on managing natural hazards: "General Study on the Vulnerability of Road Segments to Natural Hazards of the Pan American Highway and its Complementary Corridors in Central America" and "Course Manual on the Use of Information on Natural Hazards when Formulating and Evaluating Investment Projects in the Transportation Sector".
- The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) has established a technical cooperation program in support of countries that require assistance developing and implementing projects within the entire gamut of air transport activities, including operational safety and security. The ICAO also has a new financial instrument known as the International Financing Facility for Aviation Safety (IFFAS). It was designed to provide financing for projects related to operational safety, in particular for States that cannot obtain the necessary financial resources from traditional sources.
- Multilateral working groups have been created to consider issues such as maritime environmental pollution, data banks, aviation safety and security, and the transport of hazardous materials, with the objective of exchanging information and improving individual and regional systems. Through its PROCORREDOR program, the OAS has disseminated technical information and conducted workshops on the creation of trade corridors to stimulate the economies of member countries.

CHALLENGES

The relative importance of integration infrastructure has increased due to the sub-regional integration processes and the growth

in sub-regional trade. However, very little progress has been made in this regard, except when the integration infrastructure coincided with priority domestic infrastructures. This explains the origins of initiatives such as the IIRSA, in South America, and the Puebla-Panama Plan in Central America. In this context, it would be important to strengthen the role of the Western Hemisphere Transportation Initiative as a forum for promoting greater integration of transport systems, finding the necessary synergies to carry out concrete projects and building a continental transport system. Such a system must feature infrastructures and types of integration that, in addition to facilitating trade exchanges and international tourism,

are safe, efficient and environmentally sustainable. The main obstacle to reaching these objectives is the lack of economic and financial resources to develop transportation supply fast enough to match the growth in trade and in security procedures.

Undoubtedly, the main challenge is to achieve an integrated infrastructure by building multimodal transportation networks. With this in mind, a number of participants at the most recent ministerial meeting suggested the creation of an Americas infrastructure trust fund. Such a fund would accelerate the investment process, encourage direct investment from the private sector, and limit risk to investors and lending agencies.

The Hemispheric Energy Initiative

The Third Summit of the Americas called for governments to support and endorse the Hemispheric Energy Initiative launched in the Santiago Plan of Action, reaffirming its role as the primary vehicle for the promotion and practice of policies to advance the regional integration of energy through regulatory reform and trade liberalization.

Energy remains a controversial issue for governments in the Americas, with energy crises, shortages and related civil protests affecting several countries. Various evolutionary changes have transpired in the energy sector, with previously state-owned entities in the Caribbean and Latin America and vertically integrated companies in Canada and the United States which have undergone major restructuring during the past five years. Many of these changes in ownership have been accompanied by new government policies, particularly in the creation of regulatory frameworks to oversee the growth of new markets. (Averch, Harvey, "Regulatory Framework since 1990," paper delivered at the Second Hemispheric Con-

ference of Hemispheric Energy Regulators, Florida, March 7, 2002.

Moreover, the Second Hemispheric Conference of Energy Regulators was held as part of the Summit of the Americas on March 6 to 8, 2002 in Miami, Florida, under the auspices of the Hemispheric Energy Initiative (HEI). Bringing together public and private sector representatives from 21 countries, discussion included issues of regulatory reform and the liberalization of goods and services related to energy. They further addressed regional cooperative strategies, energy integration, regulatory framework compatibility and information sharing.



**Mini-hydro plants—
Pelton generators
in the Bahamas**

SOURCE: IDB

PROGRESS

Since the Quebec City Summit of the Americas, 8 countries—Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Mexico, Panama and Peru—have created regulatory agencies to oversee the development of new markets, new entrants, and reformed utility companies. As a consequence of such deregulation, investment opportunities have opened up in the energy sector, demonstrating that effective and harmonized regulation encourages investment.

In 2001, energy consumption in the Hemisphere was 22,403.6 Boe (barrels of oil equivalent). These figures include oil, natural gas, coal, and electricity. Compared to data from 1999, this represents an increase of 1.64% for the region. (OLADE, Energy Economic Information System 2002)

SUCCESS STORY

Despite the many challenges facing countries, a good example of a successful national program is the National Commission for Energy Conservation (CONAE) of Mexico. With a 2001 budget of \$6.3 million, CONAE succeeded in saving an estimated \$360 million worth of energy, the equivalent of 57 times its budget. (ECLAC, Renewable energy and energy efficiency in Latin America and the Caribbean: constraints and prospects, October 2003)

CHALLENGES

The Americas have made little progress in the areas of economic reform and capacity building in the energy sector. Energy efficiency and renewable energy have yet to be given more prominent positions in the energy policies of Latin America. According to ECLAC, the push towards privatization in the 1990s—while an important financial component of the reform process—has been emphasized over other critical economic and political factors.



8. Disaster Management

→ MANDATE

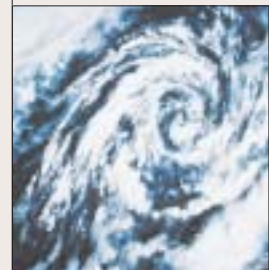
The Heads of State and Government of the Americas, at the Quebec City Summit, recognized the need to develop, implement, and sustain programs for dealing with natural and man-made disasters. They set the goal of reducing the vulnerability of the Hemisphere's population and economies, and to maintain or quickly restore minimum levels of consumption, income, and production following a disaster of any kind.

The Heads of State and Government also pledged to develop the capacity to forecast, prepare for, and mitigate the potential impacts of natural and man-made disasters, as well as promote vulnerability reduction, adopt and enforce better building codes and standards, and ensure appropriate land-use practices. The objective was to establish the requisite legal framework and cooperative mechanisms to access and share advances in science and technology, including their application in the "early warning", preparedness for, and mitigation of, hazards. They also agreed to establish information networks—with the involvement of the Inter-American Committee on Natural Disaster Reduction (IACNDR), and other relevant regional and international organizations—to exchange scientific and technological knowledge, encourage further regional and sub-regional action to reduce risks and, improve response to natural disasters.

The natural disasters that have struck Central America and the Caribbean exemplify the perpetual threat faced by regions with limited resources for coping with them, which lead to the establishment of programs for disaster cooperation, mitigation, relief, and recovery. Bilateral cooperation with multilateral agencies and nongovernmental organizations has strengthened the Hemisphere's ability to reduce, and cope with, the

countries' vulnerability to natural disasters. The OAS and PAHO support Hemisphere-wide efforts to reduce vulnerability to natural disasters. The activities include technical assistance, training, and transfer of technology for policies, planning, design, and execution of actions in the context of development.

Among these activities are vulnerability assessment and risk management. Early



warning for floods and climate changes in coastal areas, reduction of vulnerability of school buildings and transportation corridors are supported by the the actions of member States, with assistance from international agencies, including: the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the World Bank, as well as bilateral programs with such countries as Canada, the Netherlands, Ireland, Turkey, and the United States.

Major regional actions underway to implement the mandates of the Third Summit of the Americas include:

- Projects addressing the full range of hazards, such as the Inter-American Committee on Natural Disaster Reduction (IACNDR), the primary hemispheric forum for reviewing policies and strategies for disaster management, in the context of development, of the OAS Member States. It is designed to reduce the impact of natural disasters and to respond to emergencies in three work areas: 1) Evaluation and Elaboration of Vulnerability Indicators, led by the OAS; 2) Financing Natural Disaster Reduction, led by the IDB; and 3) Emergency Preparedness and Response, led by the Pan American Health Organization, (PAHO). The Member States have approved for implementation the Strategic Plan for Policies for Risk Management, Vulnerability Reduction, and Emergency Response (IASP), which was prepared by the IACNDR and reviewed by the Committee on Hemispheric Security and the OAS General Assembly.
- The Program for Research and Training on Trade Corridors (PROCORREDOR) is comprised of 14 Cooperating Centers in nine countries. The program involves the study and training of vulnerability reduction in transportation corridors affected by natural risks. The Cooperating Centers are in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Paraguay, the

United States, and Uruguay.

- The Hemispheric Action Plan for Vulnerability Reduction in the Education Sector to Socio-Natural Disasters (EDUPLAN-hemisferico) is a hemispheric action plan to diminish vulnerability of socio-natural disasters. It is maintained through technical secretariats in various Member States, and includes support from the academic sector, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), international development assistance agencies, private sector groups such as teachers' associations and for-profit corporations. EDUPLAN hemisferico identifies and enhances national, regional, and hemispheric mechanisms to facilitate the commitment to and execution of programs for advisory services, training, technology transfer, and investment. The plan's eight technical secretariats include institutions in Argentina, Costa Rica, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, the United States, and Venezuela.
- The Hemispheric Plan for the Guide for Environmental Management of Highway Transportation Corridors was developed by the OAS with support from the IDB, the Andean Development Corporation, the World Bank and the Pan American Institute of Highways (PIH) of the Latin American Society of Environmental Transportation Units (SLUAT) in order to disseminate information on environmental management of highway transportation corridors.
- The Coral Health and Monitoring Program (CHAMP): In June 2002 the OAS and the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA) signed an agreement with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) that includes this program, which is intended to train members of the Caribbean Community to reduce the risk of natural threats.
- The Program for Early Warning and Vulnerability Reduction for Floods in Small Central American Valleys (SVP): In cooperation with the Federation of Municipalities of the Central American Isthmus (FEMICA), the Central American Disaster Prevention Coordination Center (CEPRE-



Thanks to the Small Central American Valleys (SVP) project, the Honduran government documents in the pilot valleys of the program that following Hurricane Mitch (1998), the communities lost no lives from either flooding or landslides.



The Member States have approved for implementation the Strategic Plan for Policies for Risk Management, Vulnerability Reduction, and Emergency Response.

DENAC), and the Regional Committee on Hydraulic Resources of the Central American Isthmus (CRRH), as well as the support of the Dutch government plans have been created to establish the SVP Regional Platform, through which a group of nongovernmental organizations offers technical assistance services and training to local, national, and regional groups on vulnerability to floods.

SUCCESSFUL EXPERIENCES

The Caribbean Disaster Management Program (CDMP) has been carried out successfully for nearly five years with support from the U.S. Agency for International Development. It has undertaken the Post-Georges Disaster Mitigation Project (PGDM) in St. Kitts and Nevis, and in Antigua and Barbuda. This project—funded with resources from USAID and the OAS General Secretariat—seeks to develop national plans and policies to mitigate threats from tides, storms, high winds, coastal erosion, drought, insular flooding, and volcanic dangers.

Thanks to the SVP project, the Honduran government documents in the pilot

valleys of the program that following Hurricane Mitch (1998), the communities lost no lives from either flooding or landslides.

USAID also financed the project for the Water Level Observation Network for Latin America (RONMAC), through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), in response to the effects of Hurricane Mitch in four Central American countries.

The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), with experts in the region, has developed tools to help governments strengthen their reaction ability in case of natural disasters. This is an ongoing strategy implemented with the philosophy that it is possible to mitigate, and even prevent, the devastating impact of these natural disasters. This program has gained world renown for its comprehensive concept of risk reduction. In affected countries, it works with all sectors of society to deal with urgent problems, such as restoration of water and sewer services, primary health care, and other medium and long-term impacts.

The most successful aid programs

strengthen their operations when international interest wanes and needs become more pressing.

CHALLENGES

Policies and programs of international humanitarian assistance and development finance institutions help countries to meet their needs for vulnerability reduction and emergency response. However, public and private sectors could assume more technical responsibility for decisions that damage the economic infrastructure and thus make it more vulnerable to natural disasters. The countries of the Americas need to more efficiently undertake repair, restoration, and reconstruction of the infrastructure when it is affected, damaged, or destroyed.

The specific challenges to implementing the Strategic Plan for Policies for Risk Management, Vulnerability Reduction, and

Emergency Response (IASP), and to vulnerability reduction in the population as well as their economic and social infrastructure in general, include:

- Integrating disaster mitigation, in the context of development, and the role of governmental decentralization and civil society participation
- Effective channeling of humanitarian assistance in case of disaster
- Managing the role of military institutions in disaster relief
- Incorporating risk management in the planning and execution of development
- Improving the infrastructure of trade corridors and vulnerability reduction
- Recognizing the impossibility of sustainable development in conditions of vulnerability.

Public and private sectors could assume more technical responsibility for decisions that damage the economic infrastructure and thus make it more vulnerable to natural disasters.

