

II. GENERAL SECRETARIAT

THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT

Chapter XVI of the Charter describes the functions and attributes of the General Secretariat, the OAS' central and permanent organ headquartered in Washington, D.C. Elected by the General Assembly, the Secretary General directs the General Secretariat, serves as its legal representative and participates in all meetings of the Organization with voice but without vote. The Secretary General has the authority to bring to the attention of the General Assembly or the Permanent Council any matter that, in his judgment, could affect the peace and security of the Hemisphere or the development of the member states. It is the Secretary General's responsibility to establish whatever offices he deems necessary within the General Secretariat, to determine the number of staff members, appoint them, regulate their duties and functions, and fix their remuneration. The Assistant Secretary General, also elected by the General Assembly, is the Secretary of the Permanent Council and an advisory officer to the Secretary General, whose functions he performs during the latter's temporary absence or permanent disability. The Assistant Secretary General also acts as the Secretary General's representative in all matters which the latter entrusts to him.

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL

In keeping with the policy and practice decided by the General Assembly and with the pertinent decisions of the Councils, the Office of the Secretary General, under the provisions of Article 111 of the Charter, directs the functions associated with the promotion of economic, social, juridical, educational, scientific, and cultural relations among all the member states of the Organization.

Secretary General César Gaviria

Pursuant to the accords of May of 2003 and Article 72 of the Constitution of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, the Office of the Secretary General (OSG) joined the Carter Center in the stage of *reparos* (recall signatures correction for the referendum), at the invitation of the National Electoral Council of that country. In response to a call from this body, the Organization established an Electoral Observation Mission with the Carter Center, which remained in the country until the results of the process were made public and the respective report on the procedures and results was presented.

Toward the end of May of 2004, Secretary General César Gaviria assumed leadership of the Mission. In a declaration made on May 27, 2004, the Secretary General enunciated the impartial and neutral role of the Mission and emphasized the non-binding nature of the evaluations and recommendations made by it. Secretary General Gaviria appointed Ambassador Valter Peclý Moreira, Permanent Representative of Brazil to the OAS, as Head of Mission for the observance of the presidential recall referendum. This Mission was composed of observers from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Spain, the United States, Guatemala, Japan, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay. The Mission carried out its activities in 22 of the 24 states in the country. Upon presenting his report on the referendum to the Permanent Council of the Organization on August 25, Ambassador Peclý Moreira, pointed out the civic spirit of the Venezuelans and stated that the elections had been carried out in an environment of normalcy.

In May of 2004, the OSG presented the First Report of the Mission to Support the Peace Process in Colombia (MAPP/OEA) to the Permanent Council where it reaffirmed the commitment of the Organization to accompanying the government and people of Colombia in their efforts to achieve peace.

The report points to the main concern of MAPP which is to guarantee the promotion and defense of human rights, justice and the strengthening of confidence and security as a part of the processes of verification and reinsertion of the irregular forces. It also explained the creation of a zone for the *Autodefensas Unidas* of Colombia (AUC) to facilitate consolidation and verification of the process, and the joint efforts undertaken with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (CIDH).

In August the Permanent Council received the High Commissioner for Peace, Dr. Luis Carlos Restrepo, who presented his vision of the peace process and asked the international community to provide increased financial cooperation MAPP/OAS. The Secretary General emphasized the technical nature of the Mission and noted the extreme complexity of the Colombian situation.

The Office of the Secretary General and the Pan American Development Foundation (PADF), joined forces to alleviate the effects of the tragic situation in Haiti and the Dominican Republic brought about by the floods and devastation resulting from the hurricanes of May. Secretary General Gaviria announced the commitment of the Organization to these countries to support humanitarian relief efforts and the collection of funds from the international community.

Through PADF, the Inter-American Fund for Emergency Situations (FONDEM) committed \$50,000 for these two countries and PADF also channeled contributions totaling \$85,000 for this purpose.

Secretary General Miguel Ángel Rodríguez

The election of the successor to Secretary General Cesar Gaviria was held during the Thirty-fourth Regular Session of the General Assembly, held in June in Quito Ecuador,. At that time, Dr. Miguel Ángel Rodríguez, presented by Costa Rica, was elected by acclamation. Secretary General Gaviria continued in his post until September 11, 2004, at which time Dr. Rodríguez assumed the position of Secretary General.

On September 14, Secretary General Miguel Ángel Rodríguez presented an Executive Order which set forth a reform of the operating structure and system of the Organization which sought to enhance improved fulfillment of the programs and objectives of the General Secretariat by focusing the Organization on four basic objectives—human rights, democracy and political affairs, integral development and multidimensional security, as well three logistical and administrative pillars relating to management, legal affairs and external communications and public relations.

Dr. Rodríguez warned about the need to reduce expenditures in order to improve the health of the finances of the Organization and the urgent need to review and redesign the quota system to decrease dependency on specific funds by increasing the size and composition of the regular fund.

Besides setting up the pillars for restructuring the Organization, Secretary General Rodríguez sought to increase interinstitutional coordination by convoking meetings with the various entities of the inter-American system. Joint meetings were held with the IDB, IICA, PAHO and ECLAC.

In a similar fashion and in order to improve dissemination of information about the Organization, and to convert it into a center for analysis, thought and critique of hemispheric activities, he supported the initiative of the Government of Peru to establish the Lecture Series of the Americas and its broad outreach in the Hemisphere.

Secretary General Rodríguez concerned himself with the need to support a humanitarian aid offensive for Haiti to enable that country to achieve increased development, democracy, liberty, growth and improve its health and education indices in a sustainable fashion. He also sought to provide through the Organization technical assistance to the Caribbean states, particularly to Grenada, Haiti and the Dominican Republic that were affected by the hurricanes of 2004.

On October 8, Dr. Rodríguez presented his resignation to the Permanent Council, effective as of October 16, 2004.

Acting Secretary General Luigi R. Einaudi

On October 16, 2004, Ambassador Luigi R. Einaudi, assumed as Acting Secretary General. The very next day, at the request of the Presidents of Central America, the Permanent Council met in an emergency meeting to discuss the political situation in Nicaragua. The Acting Secretary General and the Chair of the Permanent Council were dispatched immediately to Nicaragua to assess the situation. The mission had a calming effect on what was a very troubling political situation, and it demonstrated clearly the OAS' utility and impact when the Organization responds timely and effectively.

On October 19, 2004, the Acting Secretary General opened the XXXVI meeting of the Summit Implementation Review Group, which provided the first opportunity to review the draft concept paper, on the theme of creating jobs to confront poverty and strengthen democratic governance, for the Fourth Summit of the Americas. Then on March 9, 2005, Ambassador Einaudi opened the XXXVII Meeting of

the Summit Implementation Review Group, held in Buenos Aires, where the participating countries received comments from civil society organizations, including representatives of workers unions and employer organizations, and began the process of debating the Draft Declaration of Mar del Plata.

After a process that had begun in June, on November 3, 2004, the Acting Secretary General signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the United Nations on cooperation in the running of the upcoming elections in Haiti. The OAS' task under the memorandum is to support the electoral registration process. The Organization received significant sums, from the United States, \$8.7 million, and from Canada, CDN \$5 million for the electoral process which are expected to contribute to the longer-term institutional development of Haiti.

The participation of the Head of MINUSTAH at the Permanent Council on January 11, 2005 was reciprocated with that of the Acting Secretary General at the January 12 United Nations Security Council Session on Haiti, under the Presidency of the Foreign Minister of Argentina and attended by several foreign ministers of members of the Council and of various OAS member states. Coming on the heels of the resignation of the president of the Haitian Provisional Electoral Council, the meeting, in addition to providing an opportunity for the OAS to interact with core members and countries providing troops to MINUSTAH, was used by the Acting Secretary to call for inclusive electoral and national dialogue processes in Haiti. This was the first time a Secretary General of the OAS addressed the Security Council of the United Nations.

The Acting Secretary General opened a number of important hemispheric conferences including the XIX Pan American Congress of the Child, held October 29, 2004; the IV Meeting and Special Session of the Working Group to Prepare the Draft American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which was held at OAS headquarters November 8 to 11, building on the pioneering work in the Organization is doing in the field of indigenous rights; the fourth annual meeting of Inter-American Forum on Political Parties, held November 9-11, 2004 in Brasilia, where more than 200 leaders from the western hemisphere representing a variety of geographic regions, institutions and ideological tendencies, including academics, electoral authorities, the media, and representatives of civil society, gathered to discuss the modernization of political parties and party systems; the First Hemispheric Meeting of Ministers and High Authorities on Science and Technology, which was held in Lima, Peru on November 11-12, 2004; and the annual meeting of the Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism (CICTE) in Port of Spain, Trinidad, February 16.

The Acting Secretary General also attended the Ibero-American Summit in Costa Rica, November 16-21, 2004, and his advisors participated by special invitation in a Rio Group meeting convened on the margins of the Summit to discuss ways of coordinating and accelerating the delivery of international cooperation assistance to Haiti.

With the help of his advisors and the Fund for Peace, the Acting Secretary General continued to work with the governments of Belize and Guatemala to resolve the territorial differences between those two countries. Ambassador Einaudi engaged in a new round of shuttle diplomacy by visiting both countries in July 2004, and subsequently meeting with the Foreign Ministers or their representatives in September, October and November 2004, holding individual consultations to determine next steps and what issues the Parties could agree upon. At the same time, the Organization's confidence-building work in the Adjacency Zone continued thanks to the efforts of the Secretariat's small but dedicated staff on the ground. In February 2005, the Acting Secretary General convened a two-day meeting in Miami with delegations from the two countries led by their respective Foreign Ministers, to continue moving the process forward.

The Acting Secretary General also provided political and institutional support for the Mission to Support the Peace Process in Colombia. By the beginning of 2005, the mission had verified the demobilization of more than 3,000 members of the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC); an unprecedented feat in the history of the Colombian conflict. The OAS had a presence in the demobilization zones, supporting the preparatory tasks and verifying the lists of individuals and weapons. On December 7, Ambassador Boudewijn J. van Eenennaam, Permanent Observer of The Netherlands to the OAS, signed with the Acting Secretary General an agreement effecting a contribution of almost 1 million Euros, made through The Netherlands Ministry of Development Cooperation to support the peace process in Colombia.

In order to improve communication and coordination between the major institutions of the Inter-American System, the Acting Secretary General actively encouraged regular meetings with Enrique Iglesias, President of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), Mirta Roses, Director of the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) and Chelston Brathwaite, Director General of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA). At the suggestion of President Iglesias, Einaudi instructed the directors of the Units of the General Secretariat in the Member States to convene regular meetings of the representatives in country of the different entities of the inter-American system.

Convinced of the need to continue a process of a reform that would enable a rational approach to the creation of a single and accountable organization, the Acting Secretary General undertook an extensive consultation process that involved the member states, the areas of the General Secretariat and the Staff Association. This process was also intended to ensure that the internal reforms would be responsive to the political concerns and realities of the Hemisphere, thus completing the bridge between managerial reform and strengthening the capacity of the General Secretariat and the Organization as a whole to respond effectively to the political bodies. This included a commitment to ensuring a more consistent presence of the leadership of the General Secretariat in the Council during its deliberations. Ambassador Einaudi's reforms were contained in Executive Order 05-03, issued on January 25, 2005.

The Executive Order sought to combine the managerial excellence of Secretary General Rodriguez' Executive Order 04-01, with the operational and historical realities of the inter-American system. Some of the principal changes made by the Acting Secretary General follow: The operative provision the Order contained a provision that preserves the statutes of the specialized organizations and entities, as well as their agreements with the General Secretariat. The Summits of the Americas Secretariat was moved back to the Office of the Secretary General, and its director became an ex-officio member of the Cabinet. This was done because a function as important to the countries and essential to the Organization should be directly linked to the Secretary General himself. The Department of Human Rights was replaced by the Executive Secretariat of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. The Permanent Secretariat of the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) and the Office of the Inter-American Children's Institute (IACI) were returned to the Office of the Assistant Secretary General. The Department of Integral Development became the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development, thereby restoring and returning to an earlier organizational and institutional tradition. The Office of International Threats to Civil Society became the Office of International Threats, with a mandate that made clearer its role. Finally, given the weakness of the Regular Fund which requires that fundraising be an essential survival element of this Organization's activities, the Executive Order clarified that while it is inevitable that different offices must engage in a degree of fundraising, it is also essential that the Organization have a degree of coordination and coherence. And so, the Department of Communications and External Relations and the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development were tasked with collaborating in external fundraising.

Ambassador Einaudi also issued two additional executive orders establishing internal procedures more consistent with the aims of transparency and rationalization: Executive Order No. 05-6 "Process of negotiating, preparing, reviewing, signing and registering agreements in the General Secretariat" and

Executive Order No. 05-4 corr.1, which regulates the performance contract procedures. Moreover, he issued Executive Order No. 05-5 which redefines the Reduction in Force Committee. Two additional executive orders are under study: Prohibition of harassment in the work place and “Protection for whistleblowers, informants and witnesses”.

Ambassador Einaudi,, as well, personally took up the development of the 2006 budget preparation. The program-budget for fiscal year 2006 was designed to begin implementation of the structure of the General Secretariat established by Executive Order 05-03, but kept total expenditures constant at the ceiling of \$76.275 million established by the General Assembly. It was a particularly difficult budget to design as the budget ceiling was inadequate to meet the operational needs of the Organization. A decade of steadily declining funding eliminated the Organization’s reserves, making it impossible for the Organization to respond to crises without specific funds. It also gradually eroded the OAS’ capacity at the very time that mandates were increasing. Since the Summit process began in 1994, the Organization has lost one out of every four Regular Fund positions.

Through the annual draft General Assembly Budget Resolution, the Acting Secretary General presented the member states with a strategy for placing the Organization’s finances on a firm footing in 2007. The plan called for a special session of the OAS General Assembly to be held no later than January 31, 2006, for the purpose of considering and approving a revised scale of Regular Fund quota assessments for 2007, and subsequently for the member states to authorize a significant budgetary increase. To justify the increase, the Acting Secretary General presented the member states with a thirty-six page document illustrating in detail the costs of many immediate needs of the General Secretariat, which amounted to over \$23 million. The document identified specific examples of existing shortfalls in the Organization’s ability to implement mandates or pay for non-discretionary costs due to a lack of resources.

Office of the Inspector General

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) functions under the provisions of the General Standards to Govern the Operations of the General Secretariat (Chapter IX, “Advisory Services, Auditing, and Fiscal Control”), the Budgetary and Financial Rules, and Executive Order No. 95-05, "The Internal Audit Function of the General Secretariat and the Office of the Inspector General." These provisions establish the internal audit function, which helps the Secretary General and the governing bodies monitor compliance with responsibilities regarding General Secretariat programs and resources on the part of the various levels of administration. The OIG checks to ensure that the established policies, rules, and practices are being observed and carried out correctly, efficiently, and economically. It also ensures a systematic review of the General Secretariat’s operating procedures and financial transactions at headquarters and at its offices in the member states.

Audits

The OIG conducted 14 audits and two investigations to check operations and ensure compliance with OAS directives and procedures, and for purposes of a systematic review of internal accounting and management controls. The audits focused on the higher-risk operations and on those with the most potential for yielding greater efficiency, economy, and effectiveness. The OIG operated independently, with unrestricted access to all functions, activities, operations, records, properties, and staff of the General Secretariat, both at headquarters and at offices of the General Secretariat in the member states.

The audits reviewed the Organization’s infrastructure at headquarters and Oracle 11i applications administered by the Department of Administration and Finance, travel costs at headquarters, operations and internal controls at the Office for the Promotion of Democracy, performance contracts issued by the General Secretariat, specific funds granted by the United States to the IACD, and administrative support

costs collected by the Office of Budgetary and Financial Services. The OIG also reviewed the activities of the offices of the General Secretariat in Costa Rica and Peru to determine whether their activities were carried out in accordance with OAS rules and procedures.

All the audit reports and recommendations were approved by the Secretary General.

The OIG also evaluated 11 projects executed in various member states to make certain agreements were being honored and to determine whether objectives had been met. The projects audited were: (1) Program of assistance to small hotels in Central America; (2) San Juan River Basin; (3) Democracy observatory in Central America; (4) Environmental system design proposal in Peru; (5) Construction of the Inter-American Biodiversity Information Network; (6) Sustainable development of the Peruvian-Ecuadorian Amazon border region (PDPE); (7) Distance education: Distribution of the Inter-American Democratic Charter; (8) Democratic leadership program (PROLIDEM); (9) Training Program for Democratic Leaders; (10) Center for information on democracy and governance in the Hemisphere; and (11) Latin American Studies at Georgetown University, to develop a database on policies in the Americas.

Other activities

The OIG conducted follow-up on corrective actions to ensure that its recommendations were being implemented effectively. The Office continued to provide advice and assistance through analyses, evaluations, research, and recommendations, and participated as an observer on a number of committees of the General Secretariat.

Summits of the Americas Secretariat

As of the Third Summit of the Americas and in keeping with OAS General Assembly resolutions, especially resolution AG/RES. 1994 (XXXIV-O/04), this office is performing the functions of Secretariat of the Summit process, which involves providing technical and logistical support to the meetings of the Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG) and of its Executive Council and Steering Committee; drafting, serving as custodian of, and updating and publishing all the documentation from these meetings in the section reserved for governments on the website of the Summit of the Americas Information Network; preserving the institutional memory of the Summit process; constantly updating the information on follow-up activities conducted pursuant to the mandates approved by the heads of state and government of the Americas; and providing all the information that the countries need on this subject. During this last year, the Office has engaged in promotional activities to raise public awareness of the work of the Summits and their mandates.

- Assistance to the work of the Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG)

The Summits of the Americas Secretariat (SAS) provided assistance to the meetings that the SIRG held in June and October 2004. The June 2004 SIRG meeting was in Quito, Ecuador, during the regular session of the General Assembly in Quito. The ministers of foreign affairs participated in the meeting. There, the Foreign Minister of Argentina, Rafael Bielsa, announced the theme of the Fourth Summit of the Americas, "Creating Jobs to Confront Poverty and Strengthen Democratic Governance." At the October 2004 meeting, the Chairman of the SIRG, Ambassador Jorge Taiana, Deputy Minister of Foreign Policy of Argentina, presented a white paper on the theme proposed for the Fourth Summit.

At both meetings, in addition to providing logistical and technical support, the SAS helped with presentation of the reports of the ministerial meetings and preparation of the proceedings of the meetings and also assisted the Chair by transmitting documents to and from the national coordinators, translating documents and national reports, and then publishing them on the web site. At the October SIRG meeting,

the SAS gave a presentation on indicators that could be used to measure the progress made in implementing mandates in the area of “economic growth with equity to reduce poverty.”

The SAS has regular contact with the national coordinators and also manages the website of the Summit of the Americas Information Network. The site is accessible to the public, but has one section reserved for use by the governments. This website contains the basic documents from the Summits, including speeches, national reports, declarations, reports and summaries of the SIRG meetings, reports of the relevant ministerial meetings, and information on other activities having to do with Summit mandates.

- Follow-up of ministerial and high-level meetings related to the Summit process

At every meeting of the SIRG, the SAS presents a report on the ministerial meetings held. To that end, it coordinates with the technical areas of the General Secretariat for the topic in question, attends and supports these ministerial meetings, and reports to them on the Summit process and on civil society’s participation. In this reporting period, the SAS has provided its support to the following meetings:

- Meeting of the Inter-American Committee on Social Development, held in Santiago, Chile, April 6-8, 2004;
- Second Meeting of Ministers or of the Highest Authorities Responsible for the Advancement of Women in the Member States, held in Washington, D.C., April 21-23, 2004;
- Fifth Meeting of Ministers of Justice or of Ministers or Attorneys General of the Americas (REMJA-V), Washington, D.C., April 28-30, 2004;
- Meeting of the States Parties to the Inter-American Convention against Corruption, Managua, Nicaragua, July 8-9, 2004;
- Second Inter-American Meeting of Ministers of Culture and High-Level Authorities, Mexico City, August 23-24, 2004;
- Meeting of Ministers of Health of the Americas, Washington, D.C., September 27-October 1, 2004;
- First Hemispheric Meeting of Ministers and High Authorities on Science and Technology within the Framework of CIDI, Lima, Peru, November 11-12, 2004;
- Sixth Conference of Ministers of Defense of the Americas, Quito, Ecuador, November 16-21, 2004.

- Joint Summit Working Group

In July 2001, a Letter of Understanding was signed to establish a Joint Summit Working Group, a partnership of international organizations that includes the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Organization of American States (OAS), the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), the Andean Development Corporation (CAF), the Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI), the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), and the World Bank. During this reporting period, other organizations have joined the group, namely the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the International Labour Organization (ILO). The OAS’ Office for the Summits Process provides secretariat services to this Working Group and is in charge of coordinating its activities.

The SAS convenes this Group’s meetings, presents an agenda, drafts the minutes of the meetings, compiles the joint reports, and follows up on the decisions adopted. This group of institutions held four meetings in this reporting period and participated in the meetings that the SIRG held in June and October 2004.

At the ministerial meeting of the SIRG in June 2004, the Joint Working Group presented a report compiled by this Office on the activities undertaken by the partner institutions of the Summit process in the follow-up to the mandates from the heads of state and government in the fight against corruption. At the October 2004 SIRG meeting, some partners gave presentations on topics in the area of economic growth with equity. The IDB and the CABI spoke about small- and medium-size enterprise; the CAF about competitiveness, and the ILO on labor issues.

- Dissemination of the Summits of the Americas

In an effort to report news on the implementation of Summit mandates, the SAS has organized, in some cases, and participated in the following events:

- Meetings with various sectors of Argentine society in preparation for the Fourth Summit of the Americas, Buenos Aires, March 24-30, 2004;
- A presentation, at the Special Private Sector Post Summit Debriefing of the Monterrey Summit of the Americas for Heads of State and the Future of Democratic Governance in Haiti, Coral Gables, Florida, April 2004;
- Presentation by the SAS on the Gender Perspective in the Summits of the Americas, at the Permanent Council's special meeting on the Promotion of Women's Human Rights and Gender Equity and Equality, April 21, 2004;
- Organization of the Civil Society Hemispheric Forum, Quito, Ecuador, April 2004;
- Presentation on the Summits of the Americas at Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia, April 2004;
- Organization of a panel on the subject of corruption, Washington, D.C., May 2004;
- Organization of the Informal Dialogue among Civil Society Organizations in the Hemisphere, the Heads of Delegation of the Member States, and the OAS Secretary General, during the regular session of the General Assembly held in Quito, Ecuador, June 6, 2004;
- Presentation on the topic of corruption and the Summits of the Americas, at the Meeting of the States Parties to the Inter-American Convention against Corruption, Managua, Nicaragua, June 2004;
- Presentation at the First Regional Seminar on "Civil Society in Peace-building, Regional Security, and Prevention of Conflicts in Latin America and the Caribbean," Buenos Aires, Argentina, June 2004;
- Organization of the seminar on "Remittances to Latin America and the Caribbean: Issues and Perspectives on Development," Washington D.C., July 22, 2004;
- Organization of the meeting of the Donor Consultative Group (DCG) on Accountability and Anti-Corruption in the Americas, Washington, D.C., August 2004;
- Presentation on the Summits of the Americas and the theme of science and technology, at the Second Preparatory Meeting for the First Meeting of Ministers and High Authorities on Science and Technology within the Framework of CIDI, Washington, D.C., September 21, 2004;
- Presentation on the Summits of the Americas and the topic of remittances, at the special meeting of the Working Group to Prepare an Inter-American Program for the Promotion and Protection of the Human Rights of Migrants, Including Migrant Workers and Their Families, Washington, D.C., September 2004;
- Presentation on the Summits of the Americas and trade at the seminar "Reflections on North American Integration," organized by FLACSO-Mexico, Mexico City, September 27 and 28, 2004;

- Presentation on the Summits of the Americas and the topic of remittances, at the forum titled “Payments in the Americas,” organized by the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta, October 2004;
 - Presentation on the Summits and the theme of gender equality at the Thirty-second Assembly of Delegates of the CIM, Washington, D.C., October 27-29, 2004;
 - Participation as advisors in the Model OAS General Assembly for high school students, Washington, D.C., November 2004;
 - Launch of the electronic bulletin “The Summits of the Americas Inform,” December 2004;
 - Organization of a meeting with the chiefs of the OAS offices and units on preparations for the Fourth Summit of the Americas, Washington, D.C., January 11, 2005;
 - Organization of a roundtable with civil society, Washington, D.C., January 24, 2005;
 - Regional Forum with Andean Region Civil Society, Lima, Peru, February 2005.
- Mobilization of resources

In 2004, the SAS made a special effort to mobilize resources, and received contributions from member states (Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Nicaragua, Trinidad and Tobago, and the United States) and from organizations like the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Open Society Institute. The additional resources made it possible to engage greater interest among civil society organizations and to participate in ministerial meetings in preparation for the Fourth Summit of the Americas and in OAS activities.

Support to the Committee on Inter-American Summits Management and Civil Society Participation in OAS Activities

The SAS provides this Committee with technical support, coordinates civil society’s participation in its meetings, and registers nongovernmental organizations with the Organization.

Technical support services were provided at this Committee’s seven meetings by preparing reports and the draft work plan, analyzing applications from nongovernmental organizations, and other activities. The Office also prepared the draft resolution titled “Specific Fund to Support the Participation of Civil Society Organizations in OAS Activities and in the Summit of the Americas Process” pursuant to operative paragraph 6 of resolution AG/RES. 1915 (XXXIII-O/03), “Increasing and Strengthening Civil Society Participation in OAS Activities,” which was presented to the Permanent Council and recommended creation of a specific fund consisting of voluntary contributions made to fund civil society’s participation in OAS activities.

The SAS also presented the document titled “Review of the Rules of Procedure for Civil Society Participation with the Organization of American States,” in compliance with resolution CP/RES. 840 (1361/03), which ordered the preparation and distribution of a single document combining all the existing provisions contained in the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the Permanent Council, the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI), the specialized conferences, and other organs and entities that permit participation by civil society organizations in OAS activities.

On January 25, 2005, this Committee held a special meeting at OAS headquarters, with civil society participating. There, the recommendations from the previous day's roundtable were presented. This Roundtable with Civil Society was held on January 24, 2005, as part of a series of seminars and forums that the Office of the Summits Process programmed with a view to the Fourth Summit of the Americas. The underlying concept is to give civil society organizations an opportunity to present their own ideas as to how to effectively approach the theme of "Creating Jobs to Confront Poverty and Strengthen Democratic Governance."

The SAS also coordinated the registration of 37 civil society organizations in the activities of the OAS, taking into account the "Guidelines for the Participation of Civil Society Organizations in OAS Activities."

Civil Society

As part of the regular session of the OAS General Assembly held in Quito, Ecuador, representatives of over 150 nongovernmental organizations held a working meeting with the Secretary General and 14 ministers of foreign affairs of member states to discuss civil society's role in the implementation of Summit mandates. The dialogue centered on the theme of "Social Development and Democracy, and the Impact of Corruption." The meeting also heard recommendations on fulfilling other Summit mandates. This dialogue was preceded by a seminar on the same subject, held with the support of the *Corporación Latinoamericana para el Desarrollo* and the Government of the United States.

To build up relations with civil society and strengthen its participation in the OAS and in the Summit process, information for a new web page targeted at civil society (www.civil-society.oas.org) was put together and updated, an undertaking funded by the Open Society Institute and USAID. The idea is that the page should provide civil society with current information on OAS activities and the Summit process. The database of nongovernmental organizations registered with the OAS and of those that have taken part in the Summit process was also updated.

- Civil society at the ministerial meetings

The SAS supported the participation of representatives of civil society in the meetings of ministers and specialized conferences held within the framework of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI), including the Second Inter-American Meeting of Ministers and Highest Appropriate Authorities of Culture, the Meeting of Ministers of Science and Technology, and the Meeting of the States Parties to the Inter-American Convention against Corruption, all held under the aegis of the OAS.

- Civil society's participation in the Summit process

Civil society has been invited to present suggestions and recommendations on follow-up and implementation of the Summit mandates through the various forums and dialogues that this Office has organized and as mentioned above. It is important to note that, on instructions from the Office of the Chair of the SIRG, the basic document on the theme of the forthcoming Summit was made available to civil society and a first meeting was held with the SIRG in October 2004, to hear civil society's comments on the document.

Support to the Working Group to Prepare the Draft American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

The SAS provides technical and logistical support to the Permanent Council's Working Group to Prepare the Draft American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The SAS provided its support to the

Working Group's meetings and collaborated in the preparation of its Work Program. Different projects were submitted to a variety of cooperation agencies to get financing to enable representatives of the indigenous peoples to participate in the discussions on the draft Declaration, and to improve communication and a sharing of experiences among the General Secretariat, the member states, and the indigenous peoples. The Working Group is currently examining and discussing the consolidated text of the Draft American Declaration, prepared by the Chair of the Group based on the original proposal of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR).

Pursuant to resolution AG/RES. 1708 (XXX-O/00), the SAS provided its support to the Third and Fourth Meetings of Negotiations in the Quest for Points of Consensus. Both meetings were at OAS headquarters. The third meeting was from April 28 to 30, and the fourth from November 8 to 12, 2004. They provided an opportunity to analyze the Draft American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the progress made in the area of domestic legislation, and the international standards on the subject, as well as the doctrine and practice on traditional forms of ownership, land, territories, and natural resources.

The SAS continued to administer the Specific Fund to Support Preparation of the American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and to maintain the database, which now has over 500 entries. This Specific Fund has received contributions from Canada, Finland, and the United States.

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL

In accordance with Article 115 of the OAS Charter and in keeping with measures and policy decided on by the General Assembly and the respective resolutions of the Councils, the Office of the Assistant Secretary General serves as Secretary of the Permanent Council, provides advisory services to the Secretary General, and is responsible for all activities the latter may entrust to him.

The Office of the Assistant Secretary General provided advisory services to the Secretary General, supported the activities of the various dependencies of the General Secretariat, and made efforts to assist the member states in the search for solutions to topics of critical importance to them.

Support for the organs of the inter-American system

In his capacity as Secretary of the General Assembly, the Assistant Secretary General coordinated technical and operational services for the thirty-fourth regular session of the General Assembly, held in Quito, Ecuador, in June 2004. He also supervised the preparatory technical work for the thirty-fifth regular session of the General Assembly, to be held in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, in June 2005.

As Secretary of the Permanent Council and its subsidiary bodies, the Assistant Secretary General provided them with policy support and guidance and facilitated deliberations on their respective agenda items. The Office of the Secretariat of the General Assembly, the Meeting of Consultation, the Permanent Council, and Subsidiary Organs assisted representatives of the member states and permanent observers in the preparation and conduct of 36 regular meetings of the Council, 25 special meetings, 10 protocolary meetings, a joint meeting of the Council with CEPCIDI, and two private meetings, as well as weekly coordination meetings of the Council chairs and the regional coordinators.

Haiti

The Assistant Secretary General continued to provide steadfast support to the Secretary General in dealing with political issues in OAS member states. These included efforts to seek solutions to the political and institutional crisis in Haiti, which became even more challenging for the OAS after the events of February 29, 2004, with the departure of President Jean Bertrand Aristide. Under the guidance of the Assistant Secretary General, the General Secretariat ensured that its actions were strictly in keeping with the applicable provisions of the Haitian Constitution and with the spirit of the CARICOM Action Plan, of January 31, 2004, which had been endorsed in resolutions CP/RES. 861 (1400/04) and CP/RES. 862 (1401/04).

Following the adoption of United Nations Security Council resolutions 1529 and 1542 and in an effort to ensure the fullest possible cooperation between the OAS and the United Nations on the situation in Haiti, the Assistant Secretary General held extensive consultations with senior officials of the United Nations. These discussions focused on the need for early elections in Haiti; recommendations regarding the size, structure, and mandate of the Stabilization Mission (MINUSTAH), approved by the Security Council; and cooperation between the OAS and UN in Haiti. The outcome was an agreement to negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) concerning the modalities for cooperation between the OAS and the UN on electoral matters in Haiti, which was signed by both organizations on November 3. In accordance with the MOU, the OAS is responsible for “conducting the voter registration exercise,” plans for the implementation of which are at an advanced stage. The Assistant Secretary General was a member of the delegation which the Permanent Council dispatched to Haiti from September 9 to 11, 2004 to “foster the full restoration of democracy” in that country.

Belize-Guatemala (territorial differendum)

The continuing efforts of the Organization to help resolve the territorial differendum between Belize and Guatemala was another issue for which the Assistant Secretary General provided critical support. Following the failure of the Facilitators' Proposals to end the controversy, over the course of 2004, the Assistant Secretary General convened a series of ministerial meetings at OAS headquarters between Belizean and Guatemalan delegations. He also visited both capitals in order to find common ground and devise strategies for resolving the dispute.

The Office of the Assistant Secretary General also guided the work of the Office of the General Secretariat in the Adjacency Zone, which is responsible for monitoring compliance by the two Governments of a series of confidence-building measures designed to lower tensions in the Adjacency Zone between Belize and Guatemala and ensure respect of the human rights of settlers in the area. The Office in the Adjacency Zone completed a resettlement and housing project for approximately 35 Guatemalan families who were living on the eastern-side of the Adjacency Line, or very near the Line.

El Salvador-Honduras (border demarcation)

The Office of the Assistant Secretary General was also instrumental in providing timely technical and political support to complete the demarcation of the El Salvador-Honduras border. In keeping with the request from both governments for technical assistance from the General Secretariat of the OAS and from the Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH), an advisor in the Office of the Assistant Secretary General and Mr. John O. Gates, of the PAIGH, continued their work on the border, under the overall guidance of the Assistant Secretary General. The OAS-PAIGH team was able, on the basis of these on-site observations, the text of the 1992 Court judgment, documents provided by the Special Honduras-El Salvador Demarcation Commission, satellite imagery, and other technical tools, to provide definitive solutions, respected by both countries, to the technical problems encountered by the Commission.

Dominican Republic

The Assistant Secretary General accompanied the OAS Electoral Observation Mission for the presidential and legislative elections in the Dominican Republic, held on May 20, 2004. He also represented the Organization at the inauguration of President Leonel Fernández, on August 18, 2004.

Responsibility for the General Secretariat

Finally, in the absence of the Secretary General on several occasions during the period covered by this report, the Assistant Secretary General was in charge of the General Secretariat. On October 16, 2005, following the resignation of Miguel Ángel Rodríguez and in keeping with Article 108 of the OAS Charter, the Assistant Secretary General assumed the duties of the Secretary General.

Office of Conferences and Meetings

The mission of the Office of Conferences and Meetings is to identify, integrate, administer, and modernize the conference services that the General Secretariat must provide to the OAS governing bodies. The Office of Conferences and Meetings is composed of the Office of the Director and three divisions, whose functions are to coordinate conference services, services in the official languages, and the production and distribution of documents and information.

Management and coordination of conferences and meetings

The process of replacement and modernization of the conference services equipment and facilities continued, which included the equipment used to ask for the floor and installation of digital monitors in the conference rooms of the General Services building. This state-of-the-art digital equipment provides the usual services for requesting the floor and multimedia audio and video services that are integrated and compatible with the services provided by the Department of Public Information, including real-time videoconferencing via videophone, and with simultaneous interpretation services in the Organization's four languages.

The Office of Conferences and Meetings and the Department of Administration and Finance worked together on developing administrative procedures in the OASES System for executing the Organization's budget for meetings. For systems development and operation, the Office increased its collaboration with the Office of Information Technology Services to put together the computerized conference-services platform. Access to these services via the Internet has become easier and more user-friendly. It is now possible online to check the schedule of meetings and to obtain official meeting documents and information stored in a database of references accessible to the public. The databases are being revamped to combine existing services with the administrative systems.

Conference Services

The Office provided logistical support for the organization and holding of 815 meetings. A total of 745 meetings of the governing and technical bodies, the Permanent Council and its subsidiary organs, CIDI and its subsidiary organs, and the other specialized organizations and entities like the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM), the Inter-American Telecommunication Commission (CITEL), the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD), and the Inter-American Children's Institute (IIN), were held at headquarters. Another 70 meetings were held in the member states, such as the thirty-fourth regular session of the General Assembly, the thirty-fifth and thirty-sixth regular sessions of the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD), technical meetings of the IACHR, CITEL, CICAD, and others, which meant that human and technological resources had to be mobilized from OAS headquarters and taken to the countries hosting these meetings. During this reporting period, the Office updated a semiannual schedule of the Organization's meetings, which it uses as a tool to make more efficient use of the resources needed for conference services.

Language Services

The Language Services Division provided translation and simultaneous interpretation services in the four languages, to all meetings of organs, agencies, and entities of the Organization, at headquarters and in the member states. The total number of events serviced came to 815, which included informal meetings with services and meetings of the Style Committee. The policy of modernizing equipment and programs for language services continued and the 6.5 version of TRADOS was acquired, which is the translation memory program that generates a database and interacts with a four-language glossary called MultiTerm. The Division also kept up inter-institutional contacts for sharing glossaries and terminology with other international organizations and expanded the e-library of OAS documents on the Internet.

The list of outside translators and interpreters continues to grow, with the addition of the names of professionals from throughout the Hemisphere, now grouped into areas of specialization. An added effort has been made to test candidates and to add the names of more freelance translators and interpreters living in all the member states, which represents a significant savings for the host countries when meetings are held away from headquarters.

Documents and Information Services

The Division of Printing, Distribution, and Information Services played a central role in printing and distributing the General Secretariat's official documents and storing information. It provided the permanent missions of the member states and the permanent observers with assistance in finding information. During this reporting period, the Division printed and distributed 4,298 documents involving a total of 3,671,389 pages. It also printed and sent out 15,500 invitations for the Art Museum of the Americas and the Protocol Office.

The Division continued to use the electronic documents processing and storage program (IDMS), which allows accurate control of documents from their inception to final storage. Information assistance was provided to all the missions and entities that requested these services, and to the Permanent Council and its working groups.

Support Services to the Model OAS General Assembly (MOAS)

Support was provided for the "Edgar Maya" Model OAS General Assembly for Universities, held from April 4 to 9, 2004, in Washington, D.C. This Model General Assembly was cosponsored by the Inter-American Institute of Diplomacy, a nonprofit whose board is composed of university professors with a long history of cooperating with the OAS Model General Assembly.

In 2004, the XXIII Model OAS General Assembly for high-school students (XXIII-MOAS) was held from December 1 to 4, 2004, at OAS headquarters in Washington, D.C. Some 320 high school students from 24 schools participated, advised by 37 professors. They came from high schools in the United States (including one from Puerto Rico). The students represented 29 countries (28 member states and 1 permanent observer), the Communications Center, and the OAS General Secretariat. Three days of exhaustive debate and discussion centering on the resolutions approved by the OAS General Assembly at its thirty-fourth regular session, held in Quito, Ecuador, in June 2004, gave students an opportunity to examine current problems in the Americas and to draft their own resolutions. After being evaluated by a committee composed of professors, officers elected by the MOAS, and officials from the OAS General Secretariat, a number of resolutions were approved. Also, students had an opportunity to meet with representatives of the permanent missions of the member states. This is one of the highlights of their MOAS experience. Participating in the XXIII/MOAS was Mr. Adrian Fenty, a former student and now a distinguished member of the Washington, D.C., City Council. He was a special speaker at the closing ceremony.

Because no offers were received to host the Model OAS General Assembly for Universities in 2004, it was not held. It is hoped that some country will come forward as a host in 2005.

Under an agreement between the General Secretariat and the MOAS Inter-American Studies Foundation, the General Secretariat continued to provide support to the Foundation in the form of the use of OAS premises and equipment. Under Executive Order 05-03, starting in 2005 the MOAS program will be under the Office of Public Relations and Information in the Organization's Department of Communications and External Relations.

Columbus Memorial Library

The Columbus Memorial Library was created by the First International Conference of American States on April 18, 1890. The Library serves as a modern information and documentation center, providing essential information to the OAS General Secretariat, the permanent missions, the diplomatic community, and the general public interested in the Organization's work and the work of the inter-American system.

The Library is the repository of the institutional memory of the OAS, the Pan American Union, and the inter-American system. Over the course of the years, the Library has evolved from a traditional library program and now includes archives and records management of the General Secretariat. It is also the depository of OAS official documents.

In 2002 the Permanent Council assigned the Columbus Memorial Library the sum of US\$300,000 from the Reserve Subfund, to give users online access to documents and archives. As part of that undertaking, in 2004 work continued on the Documents Catalog Retrospective Conversion Project, with the scanning of 18,497 catalogue cards of OAS publications. The project is in its final stage and upon completion the files will appear in standard OCLC MARC format to be made available on the On Line Public Access Catalogue (OPAC), and will reach a broad client base via the Internet.

Competitive bidding was conducted for the Preservation and Digitalization Project. Once the Library completed a technical evaluation of the offers tendered, the Contract Awards Committee recommended that the OCLC "Online Computer Library Center" be awarded the contract for the project, which will provide digital images of a select group of Permanent Council resolutions and declarations and Proceedings and Documents of the General Assembly. The first phase of the project has gotten under way and 50,000 images have been identified for digitization.

Bids were also tendered for an Integrated Library Automation System. The Library signed a contract with TLC ("The Library Corporation") to provide services that will automate all the functions of the library, including acquisitions, serials, circulation, OAS documents, and cataloguing. In the end, the public will have access to the rich collection that the Columbus Memorial Library has on the inter-American system.

In all these projects, the Library has worked very closely with the Office of Information Technology Services to evaluate technical standards and compatibility of software and hardware.

Acquisitions: Donations helped supplement the Library's insufficient budget. A total of 2,249 books and periodicals were received and processed, and 76 purchase orders were prepared from requisitions received from other departments of the OAS for the purchase of books and other materials.

Cataloging: The Documents Retrospective Conversion Project continued with the scanning of 18,497 catalogue records of OAS publications. The goal of this project is to make the catalogue of OAS publications accessible to the public online. The Library continues to assign the International Standard Book Number (ISBN) and CIP ("Cataloging-in-Publication") data for new OAS publications and documents. This ensures that new OAS publications and documents will be immediately available in the online catalogue. The Library also continues to publish the "Selective List of Books Accessioned and New Periodicals Received in the Columbus Memorial Library." This information can be found in the Library's Public Folder on the Intranet.

Reference services: The demand for reference services is still on the rise, even as the Library also provides access to resources that support OAS programs. The Library is helping with current research needs and the Archives is documenting and giving access to historical actions already taken.

The Library circulated approximately 15,000 books and 5,000 periodicals and answered 6,000 requests for information. A total of 173 cubic feet of photographs of historical value were used to respond to those requests. The Documents Control Unit also saw an increase in requests and answered some 2,000 requests for information. The Archives Management Unit answered 382 requests. Approximately 9,000 photocopies were taken for the General Secretariat, the missions, and outside users.

The use of various databases has enabled Reference Services to provide better service. The Library subscribes to “First Search” and can have access to information in 70 databases covering a wide range of subject matters and providing access to thousands of libraries worldwide and to 5.9 million articles in electronic format, taken from 9,000 periodicals, including 3,500 e-zines.

The search version of the “Hispanic American Periodicals Index” (HAPI) provides global data on Central America, South America, Mexico and the Caribbean, the U.S.-Mexican border region, and Hispanics in the United States. The Library continues to have access to “WorldCat,” the “United Nations Treaty Collection Database,” and “Lexis-Nexis.” It also subscribes to “The Economic Intelligence Unit – Selected Country Profiles” and the “Official Document System of the United Nations On Line”.

OAS documents and publications: Some 48,000 documents were received, processed, and circulated. The Library assisted the Office of the Secretary General with preparation of the index for the publication titled: “The OAS 1994-2004: A Decade of Transformation.” The index of documents of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, 1960-2004, and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, 1980-2004, was brought up to date.

Preservation: The Library processed and microfilmed the OAS Official Records Series 2000 and then sent it to university and specialized libraries. It also updated the Series of Official Documents of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. Proceeds from sales help the Library fulfill its mandate of seeking external sources of funding. Those proceeds resulted in deposits of \$42,127.07 into the Hipólito Unanue account.

Archives and Records Management Service (ARMS): ARMS has a contract with “Iron Mountain” for storage of the Organization’s records at a site removed from headquarters. A total of 4,311 boxes are stored with the outside contractor. The Archives and Records Management Center received 364 boxes of semi-active documents for storage; it sent 607 empty boxes to offices for transferal of their records to ARMS; and it permanently processed valuable records and incorporated them into the OAS Archives. ARMS has 10,335 cubic feet of General Secretariat files in its custody.

Exhibits: The Columbus Memorial Library mounted eight exhibits on the themes of Haiti, Cities of the Americas, Celebrations of Pan American Day, Secretaries General of the OAS, Central America, Gabriela Mistral 1889-1957, Columbus and America, and Jewels from the Rare Book Collection.

Interns and volunteers: The Columbus Memorial Library has benefited greatly by the contribution made by the interns and volunteers assigned to specific projects. They help compensate for the staffing shortage. The interns come from secondary schools and universities in the United States, Latin America, and the Caribbean, and from some of the permanent observer countries as well. With their help, several guides and bibliographies have been completed.

Inter-American Children’s Institute and Inter-American Commission of Women

Information regarding the activities of the Inter-American Children’s Institute and the Permanent Secretariat of the Inter-American Commission of Women, entities which are under the purview of the Assistant Secretary General, can be found in the chapter on Specialized Organizations.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT OF THE INTER-AMERICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

The Mission of the Executive Secretariat of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights is to assist the Commission in fulfilling its function of promoting the observance and protection of human rights and serving as a consultative organ of the Organization of American States on these matters.

Visits and other activities

- Bolivia

At the Bolivian Government's invitation and in response to a resolution passed by the Bolivian Congress recommending that "the Executive Branch request that the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the Organization of American States be present to assist with the investigation of the events of October 2003," the Executive Secretary of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights visited the Republic of Bolivia from February 16 to 20. His was an exploratory visit in anticipation of the visit he will make in 2005.

- Haiti

At the Haitian Government's invitation, a delegation from the Commission visited the Republic of Haiti from September 1 to 3, 2004. The delegation was headed by Commissioner Clare K. Roberts, First Vice President and Rapporteur for Haiti. The visit was the first the Commission had made since the period of armed violence that Haiti experienced in early 2004 and that led to the departure of former President Aristide and the installation of the current transitional government.

Meetings were held with the President of the Republic, Mr. Boniface Alexander; the Prime Minister, Mr. Gérard Latortue; the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Yvon Siméon; the Minister of Justice and Public Safety, Mr. Bernard Gousse; the Minister of the Interior, Mr. Hérard Abraham; the Minister of Women's Affairs, Mrs. Adeline Magloire Chancy; the Director General of the National Police of Haiti, Mr. Leon Charles; and the Ombudsman of Haiti, Mr. Necker Dessables. The delegation also met with representatives of various sectors of civil society and with international agencies.

At the end of the visit, the Commission issued a press release with a preliminary report, available at www.cidh.org. The following are some of the observations in that report:

- Based upon the information gathered during its visit, the Commission remained concerned over the precarious political situation in Haiti as well as the many serious problems that the state continued to face in protecting human rights. At the same time, the Commission came away with a sense of hope that the present government, in cooperation with the international community, would seize this opportunity to break away from the difficulties of the past and move Haiti toward a future in which the rule of law, democracy, and respect for human rights could be fully realized.
- The Commission was particularly concerned regarding the security situation in Haiti, where armed groups appeared to control security in significant areas of the country and where the state was not providing effective protection to the people living in those regions. The Commission emphasized the state's obligation to guarantee the safety of its population and to ensure their right to judicial protection, and called upon the Haitian state, in collaboration

with the international community, to take the urgent steps necessary to disarm these groups and ensure the security of the people.

- The Commission also emphasized the importance of the elections to be held in Haiti, planned for 2005, which would provide an opportunity to establish greater stability for the future of the country. In this and all other challenges facing Haiti and its people, the Commission called upon the international community to provide Haiti with the support and assistance necessary to break away from the difficulties of the past and move Haiti toward a future in which the rule of law, democracy, and respect for human rights could be fully realized.
- The Commission thanked the Government and people of Haiti for the cooperation, facilities, and hospitality provided in the course of the Commission's visit; the OAS Special Mission for its vital assistance in organizing and executing the visit; and the nongovernmental organizations, civil society institutions, and international organizations concerned for their valuable participation in the Commission's activities.

- Guatemala

The Commission's Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Women visited Guatemala. Made at the invitation of the Government of President Oscar Berger and at the request of representatives of civil society who were disturbed over the number of murders and other forms of violence being committed against women in Guatemala, the visit was from September 12 to 18, 2004. The Rapporteur met with the highest-ranking authorities of the Guatemalan state and with victims, relatives of victims, members of the academic community, and civil society organizations involved in defending and promoting women's rights in Guatemala City, Escuintla, Villanueva, Palín, and Santa Cruz del Quiché.

The visit took place in a year that marked the 10th anniversary of the American Convention for the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women ("Convention of Belém do Pará"), which upholds women's right to live free from violence and discrimination and to have access to effective justice to protect these rights. It is worth noting that Guatemala signed and ratified the Convention on April 4, 1995.

The Rapporteur on Women's Rights offered some initial observations on the visit, which are available at www.cidh.org. Those observations can be summarized as follows:

- Violence against Guatemalan women these days is also rooted in the violence, discrimination, and exclusion that gripped the country during its 36 years of civil conflict. The peace accords contain a series of important commitments to combat and overcome the obstacles that stand in the way of the enjoyment of these human, and specifically, women's rights. A number of these commitments remain pending, and must be carried out. They include: defining sexual harassment as a crime subject to public prosecution, a review of civil and criminal legislation to eliminate all forms of discrimination based on gender, equal participation in decision making, equal access to education, and obligations to provide health care benefits, among others.

- El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras

On December 4, 2004, the IACHR and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) completed a joint visit to El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. The Commission's delegation was composed of the Rapporteur on the Rights of Children, Commission member Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, who also served as an independent expert of the United Nations for the Secretary-General's study on violence against children. Also on the delegation was the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons Deprived of Freedom, Commissioner Florentín Meléndez.

In keeping with the Rules of Procedure of the IACHR, Dr. Florentín Meléndez, a Salvadoran national, did not participate in the visit to El Salvador. UNICEF was represented by Dr. María Jesús Conde, Child Protection Adviser for Latin America and the Caribbean. The main objectives of the visit were to gather information on the situation of children and adolescents involved in groups known as *maras* or *pandillas* (gangs), and to learn about the living conditions of persons deprived of freedom. The delegation met with the President of Honduras, the Honorable Ricardo Maduro; the Vice President of Guatemala, Eduardo Stein; and the Vice President of El Salvador, Ana Wilma Albanez de Escobar. It also met with other high-ranking officials and representatives of civil society.

At the conclusion of their visit, the IACHR and UNICEF expressed concern over the human rights situation of thousands of children and adolescents who belong to the *maras* or *pandillas*, or did so in the past. They pointed out that they were aware of the violence and insecurity caused by the gangs and offered their solidarity to the victims of such actions. At the same time, they emphasized that the right and the obligation of states to ensure public safety were not incompatible with respect for human rights.

They observed that many children from the poorest sectors of the population lacked access to education, food, housing, health care, personal safety, family protection, and employment opportunities. Faced with that situation, many chose to join the *maras* or *pandillas* in search of support, protection, and respect. After joining, they usually lived together in their urban communities, for the avowed purpose of mutual care and defense, and of defending the neighborhood in which they lived against rival *maras* or *pandillas*. Many carry weapons and engage in criminal activities, including homicide, robbery, theft, and armed confrontations with other gangs—often with fatal results. In the months ahead, a report will be prepared on the situation of children and adolescents who belong to *maras* or *pandillas* in the countries visited.

- Colombia

Between July 11 and 17, 2004, a delegation from the Commission traveled to Colombia to apprise itself firsthand of the initiatives undertaken to demobilize lawless armed groups and to see what the applicable laws were and what mechanisms were in place to ensure that the process was carried out in accordance with Colombia's international obligations. The delegation was composed of the Second Vice President and Rapporteur for Colombia, the Executive Secretary of the Commission, and one administrative assistant.

The Commission's delegation met with high-ranking government officials, including the following: the Vice President of the Republic, Francisco Santos; the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Carolina Barco; the Minister of Defense, Jorge Alberto Uribe Echavarría; the High Commissioner for Peace, Luis Carlos Restrepo Ramírez; and the Attorney General of the Nation, Luis Camilo Osorio. The delegation also visited the MAPP/OAS offices in Bogotá, where it was welcomed by Sergio Caramagna and his team. It traveled to Medellín, where it met with Mayor Sergio Fajardo Valderrama and the officials in charge of the program for demobilization of the *Bloque Cacique Nutibara*, and with officials of the Office of the Special Prosecutor (*Fiscalía Especializada*) of Medellín and members of what is known as the Facilitating Commission (*Comisión Facilitadora*) of Antioquia.

The delegation of the IACHR also met with representatives of various civil society organizations, including peace organizations, human rights organizations, and members of the Church. During its stay in the city of Medellín, the IACHR had the opportunity to hear the views of persons who had benefited from the collective demobilization of members of the *Bloque Cacique Nutibara*, affiliated with the organization known as "Corporación Democracia." In addition, the IACHR received complaints of human rights violations in the neighborhoods and districts in which this AUC *Bloque* operates.

Once the visit was completed, the IACHR analyzed the situation based on information obtained through contacts with other entities of the international community, civil society, the government, and its on-site observation. Having considered all of the above, the IACHR adopted a report on the issue of demobilization of lawless armed groups, in the framework of its authority to publish reports and its mission of promoting and protecting human rights in the member states. The report is an initial examination of the negotiations between armed actors and the Government of Colombia with the participation of the MAPP Mission as verifier, and the challenges vis-à-vis the state's international obligations in the area of human rights. It sets forth the conclusions that the Commission reached from its impartial observation of the situation, and includes a series of recommendations for those who are participating actively in the situation. It also has a number of recommendations for those taking active part in the process.

- Argentina

A Commission delegation headed by the Rapporteur for Argentina visited the country from December 12 to 18, to follow up on the cases pending with the Commission and, in particular, to view the situation of persons in detention in the Province of Mendoza.

- The Caribbean

One of the Commission's priorities was to strengthen its work with the Caribbean countries, especially the English-speaking countries and Haiti. As part of this effort, trips were made to and seminars conducted in Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Jamaica, Haiti, Trinidad and Tobago, and Saint Kitts and Nevis. CARICOM invited the Commission to participate in the meeting of its Legal Affairs Committee, to be held in Suriname, and in the meeting of the Council of Legal Education.

Fellowships

The Commission carried on its "Rómulo Gallegos Fellowships" program in 2004. During the course of the year, the Commission welcomed 10 Rómulo Gallegos fellows: five in the first half of the year, corresponding to the 2003-2004 period, and five in the second half of the year, corresponding to the 2003-2004 period. It also welcomed another fellow under its indigenous attorneys training program. Finally, the Commission continued a special fellowship for attorneys from the English-speaking Caribbean, and instituted another for the French-speaking countries, focused on the work in Haiti.

Rapporteurs

- Women's rights

The Special Rapporteur on Women's Rights conducted a number of activities between March and October 2004, especially on the subject of women's access to justice and their right to live free from violence and discrimination. Figuring prominently among these activities was a visit made to Guatemala from September 12 to 18, 2004, to examine the situation of the murders and other forms of violence perpetrated against women in that country. The Rapporteur praised the openness with which she was received by the government representatives with whom she met, and the transparency and expeditiousness with which they provided the information requested. She also mentioned the vital role that Guatemalan women are playing in strategies and efforts to promote their fundamental rights, and the dignity and trust shown by the victims and their families as they recounted their painful testimony. The visit's initial findings and recommendations are available at the Commission's web page [CIDH \(www.cidh.org\)](http://www.cidh.org). The Special Rapporteur is preparing a report containing specific recommendations, which will shortly be presented to the Commission.

- Indigenous peoples' rights

The Special Rapporteur for indigenous peoples' rights continued to advise the Working Group charged with preparing the Draft American Convention on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The IACHR is grateful for the member states' efforts in preparing the Draft and is pleased with the progress made, both in terms of substantive progress in the discussion of the text and in actively involving representatives of the indigenous peoples in the drafting process. The Rapporteur has continued to cooperate in processing petitions having to do with the rights of indigenous peoples. There has been a notable increase in the number of collective complaints alleging violations of the right to life, the right to humane treatment, and of indigenous peoples' right to communal property and to their cultural identity. In September 2004, the Rapporteur participated in the visit made to Guatemala. During that visit, information was received from organizations of indigenous women about patterns of discrimination based on ethnic origin. That discrimination was present in various realms of everyday life in Guatemala. As for promotional activities, the Rapporteur joined PAHO in participating in the "Training Workshop on the Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities Living in the Region of Gracias a Dios, Honduras."

- The rights of children

The Special Rapporteurship on the Rights of Children recently completed a program to support children's rights, carried out on the basis of a cooperation agreement signed with the IDB. Under that agreement, the Rapporteurship published the book titled "The Rights of the Child in the Inter-American System for Human Rights," in English, Spanish, and Portuguese. The focus of the Rapporteurship's work during this period was on the situation of children and adolescents in trouble with the law. It is disturbed by some public policies and changes to the law being proposed that make punishment of children and adolescents in trouble with the law the centerpiece of the solution for dealing with such children, without taking into account international guidelines on the subject. In this connection, the Rapporteur is preparing to visit some Central American countries to look into this situation.

- Rights of migrant workers and their families

On April 16, 2004, the Special Rapporteur for this topic participated in the special meeting held by the Working Group of the Permanent Council's Committee on Juridical and Political Affairs charged with preparing an inter-American program to promote and protect the human rights of migrants, including migrant workers and their families. Later in the year, on September 30, 2004, he represented the IACHR at the working meeting on "Identification of proposals, best practices, and concrete activities" for preparation of that program. The Special Rapporteur also represented the IACHR at the 92nd meeting of the International Labour Conference, held in Geneva, Switzerland, in June 2004.

- Rights of persons deprived of their liberty

The rights of persons deprived of liberty and the conditions under which such persons are held continues to be a serious problem detrimental to the human rights of the people of the region. The Rapporteur for this topic prepared a three-year work program and presented it to the Commission. It involves activities aimed at promoting the development of standards in the inter-American system, through adoption of an inter-American declaration on principles, guarantees, and minimum standards for the protection of persons deprived of their liberty. It also involves activities to prepare a report on incarceration conditions in the Americas, which includes visits to various countries of the Hemisphere and the gathering of pertinent data on this subject. Finally, the plan also makes provision for a number of activities to promote an awareness of this problem.

- Right to freedom of expression

The Special Rapporteurship on Freedom of Expression is a permanent office, functionally independent, and with a budget of its own. It was created by the Commission and operates within its legal framework. The Special Rapporteurship reported that in a number of member states, the incidence of violence against journalists and against persons who voice their opinions is on the rise. The Special Rapporteurship organized seminars in Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala, intended to provide instruction on the law regarding freedom of expression in the inter-American system. Promotional materials have recently been published, such as the book “Access to Public Information in the Americas.” A CD was released containing a collection of materials within the inter-American system related to exercise of free speech. A new version of the Internet portal also came online.

DEPARTMENT OF DEMOCRATIC AND POLITICAL AFFAIRS

The Department of Democratic and Political Affairs is responsible for all political matters, including promotion of democracy and prevention and resolution of conflicts. It also coordinates the Offices of the General Secretariat in the Member States. The Department is composed of the Office for the Prevention and Resolution of Conflicts; the Office for the Promotion of Democracy; and the Offices of the General Secretariat in the Member States.

Office for the Prevention and Resolution of Conflicts (OPRC)

The Office for the Prevention and Resolution of Conflicts (OPRC) helps build the capability of governments to analyze conflicts, manage institutional crises, and design and implement conflict prevention and resolution mechanisms in the Hemisphere.

In 2004, the OPRC advanced implementation of the Program to Strengthen Democratic Dialogue in Central America (PCA), based on an institutional framework developed in conjunction with the countries of the region. This subregional program provided technical assistance to the National Dialogue in Honduras and began to supply technical support to Guatemala's Presidential Office for Legal Assistance and Resolution of Land Disputes (CONTIERRA). It also provided technical assistance to the Government of Nicaragua in connection with the "Sectoral Dialogue Tables" in that country, a three-way dialogue process involving government, civil society, and the cooperating community. In Panama, the subregional program provided technical advisory services to the Government through the Ombudsman's Office, whereas in El Salvador it assisted the Presidential Commission for Democratic Governance and crafted a course on the Inter-American Democratic Charter for officials of the Foreign Ministry. During this reporting period, work was also done to help establish a Central American School of Higher Learning on Promoting Dialogue and Conflict Resolution. The OPRC carried on efforts to set up a Conflict Prevention and Resolution Systems Program in Bolivia (PSPRC).

In January 2004, the Government of Colombia and the OAS General Secretariat (GS/OAS) signed an agreement to establish the Mission to Support the Peace Process in Colombia (MAPP/OAS). Then, with resolution CP/RES. 859 (1397/04) of February 6, the Permanent Council authorized the establishment of the Mission and spelled out the technical nature of its mandate, whereupon the Mission got under way. Since then, the Mission has focused on carrying out its mandate: verification of the ceasefire and cessation of hostilities, demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration initiatives. During this same period, negotiations between the Government and the *Autodefensas* (Self-defense Forces) have made good progress. The demobilization of 3,000 paramilitary by the end of 2004 figures among the major accomplishments. The MAPP has received funding from the Bahamas, Colombia, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the United States.

The OPRC and the Government of Peru staged the "Regional Forum: Latin American Experiences in Dialogue and Consensus-Building and the Challenge of Institutionalizing Them," in Lima, Peru, from March 17 to 19, 2004.

The OPRC teamed up with the Inter-American Defense College (IDC) and the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) to conduct an International Seminar on Conflict and Crisis Management, from June 6 to 10, 2004.

In cooperation with the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), work got under way to design a handbook on dialogue.

Within the Organization, the Office worked with the Department of Human Resource Services (DHRS) on conducting the Special Program to plan, design, and stage a series of workshops on conflict resolution for staff of the General Secretariat and its offices. The curriculum was devised and the first workshops were targeted at supervisors. These workshops are intended to build a capacity within the Organization to manage, prevent, and resolve conflicts in the workplace.

Office for the Promotion of Democracy (OPD)

This Office's mission is to support the democratic development of member states that request its advisory services or assistance to preserve or strengthen democratic policies and procedures. It also stimulates dialogue about democratic values and principles in the Hemisphere, manages the Organization's electoral observation missions, and engages in other activities.

Program for the Promotion of Democratic Leadership and Citizenry

During this reporting period, the OPD's Program for the Promotion of Democratic Leadership and Citizenry trained more than 300 young leaders in courses on democratic institutions, values, and practices. The Fourth Regional Course on Democracy and Political Management for Young Leaders from MERCOSUR (Mar del Plata, Argentina, August 2004) and the First Regional Course for Young Women Leaders in the Southern Cone on Democratic Governance (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, November 2004) were also held. Technical and financial assistance was provided to design and execute the Regional Course for MERCOSUR and its associate members on Political Management, "Forming the Leaders of the Twenty-first Century" (Punta del Este, Uruguay, May 2004); and the First Latin American Course on Institutional Development and Strengthening of Political Parties (Brasilia, Brazil, November 2004). With IDB financial support, the Program of National Courses to Train Political Democratic Leaders (CALIDEM) conducted seven courses on democratic institutions, values, and practices. The courses were given in Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, and Paraguay.

In 2004, the OPD teamed up with the Office of Education, Science, and Technology (OEST) to assist the Permanent Council in preparing for its special meeting on "Promotion of Democratic Culture through Education," held in April 2004. With support from the United States' Center for Civic Education, the Office organized the Inter-American Seminar on Education for Democracy in September, and the Seminar on Teaching Democratic Values and Practices in the Formal Education System, held in Montevideo, Uruguay, which reached more than 30,000 Uruguayan students.

Education in Democratic Values and Practices

The project on the "Distance Education Course for Teachers: The Inter-American Democratic Charter as an Instrument for Teaching Democratic Practices and Values" completed the preliminary phase for developing content and design and testing the course online. In the second half of 2004, an advisory group did an evaluation of the educational proposal and its recommendations were incorporated into the project. In January 2005, a group of experts was formed to produce the course content, transform that content into virtual format, and put it online. In March 2004, the Government of Peru formally expressed its interest in hosting the pilot project, to train over 1,500 teachers.

Strengthening the Legislative Branch of Government

Under the Program to Support the Strengthening of Legislative Institutions (PAFIL), the Office continued to provide technical assistance for subregional research and activities of the Forum of Speakers of the Legislative Bodies of Central America (FOPREL) and its Central American Institute of Legislative

Studies (ICEL). Advisory services were provided for planning the work agendas of its interparliamentary committees in Costa Rica, El Salvador, and Guatemala on combating corruption, terrorism, and drug trafficking and on free trade and legislative modernization. The Political Management Refresher Seminar was held for deputies in the Guatemalan Congress; a Working Table of the Special Interparliamentary Committee of FOPREL was held in Costa Rica's Legislative Assembly on the Central American Free Trade Agreement. Work was completed on the job of putting together a study on variables, indicators, and indices of the Legislative Information System (SIL). An official visit to Washington, D.C. was arranged for the FOPREL legislative speakers.

The "Project on Democratic Institution-Building and Good Governance for the Guatemalan Congress" was conducted. A work program was prepared that was used to steer the preparation of studies and the refresher seminars given for advisors and lawmakers on strengthening "policy monitoring and budget auditing" and on "representation/civil society outreach," and public hearings and amendments to the Interior Regime Law and the Institutional Plan of Action. In coordination with USAID and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, a plan was devised to raise support.

The Office also supported the Joint Parliamentary Commission of MERCOSUR (CPCM) and the office of the Speaker of the Congress of Paraguay, to organize the "Second Meeting of Speakers of MERCOSUR Congresses." At the invitation of the Vice President of Argentina, which is also Leader of the Senate, the Office also provided advisory services for organization of the Third Meeting of Congressional Speakers of South America and Mexico. The final declaration that came out of that meeting underscored the importance of creating a permanent mechanism for holding regular meetings of this kind among the Congresses of the MERCOSUR countries and those of the Andean Region and Mexico, with a view to establishing an inter-American forum of Summits of Legislative Speakers of the Americas. The ODP also helped with the visit that officials of Argentina's Chamber of Deputies made to its Brazilian counterpart.

An important event held during this reporting period was the "Inter-American Forum on Legislative Modernization," organized in Mexico's Congress under the auspices of the State University of New York. In attendance were over 80 lawmakers, parliamentary advisors, and representatives of nongovernmental organizations and cooperation agencies.

In the area of combating corruption and promoting transparency in legislative affairs, the ODP provided technical advisory services throughout the year to the Latin American Parliamentarians against Corruption (PLACC).

In compliance with mandates contained in the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism and the Declaration of San Salvador, the ODP continued to carry out the "Project on Legislative Counter-Terrorism Action in Central America." Bogotá, Colombia, was the site of the Fourth Forum of Speakers of the Andean Legislative Bodies."

Inter-American Forum on Political Parties (IAFPP)

The Democratic Values and Political Management Program, which is part of the IAFPP, received financial support from the Governments of Norway and Sweden, to carry on activities in Guatemala related to political parties, promotion of women and indigenous sectors in political structures, democratic training, and the generation of new knowledge.

At the request of the Government of Honduras and of a number of political parties in that country, the OAS introduced its Regional Program on Democratic Values and Political Management in 2004. Also, the Central American Program organized a regional workshop titled "What kind of democracy do we

want?: Challenges to women’s political participation.” The Central American Program augmented the regional workshop with a series of national workshops in Central America and the Dominican Republic. In the Andean region, the OAS, at the request of the Bolivian Government, organized a series of workshops in five cities with a view to the referendum on the use of hydrocarbons.

To match the research being done in the academic world to the needs of hands-on politics, the IAFPP has expanded its collection of research studies in the areas of political financing and party systems. At the same time, throughout the year the IAFPP kept an up-to-date database of political parties in the 34 countries of the region, which can be accessed via the Internet.

In conjunction with Georgetown University’s Center for Latin American Studies, the ODP organized an international seminar on the Situation and Perspectives on Presidentialism and Parliamentarism in Latin America. The event combined an academic workshop with a political dialogue session in which leaders from various political parties, prominent academicians, specialists, and representatives of the international community took part.

The Fourth Meeting of the IAFPP was in Brasilia, Brazil, from November 9 to 11. The discussions centered around four basic areas: political parties at the crossroads of economic and social development; the challenge of representation and inclusion; the ethics and practice of campaign and political party finance; and country case studies of recently enacted reform in Argentina, Brazil, Central America, Mexico, and Suriname.

Strengthening electoral processes and systems

The strengthening, modernization, and automation of electoral bodies, voter rolls, voting, vote count, tabulation and transmission of results, modernization of civil registries, and monitoring of legislative reform processes have been the areas of primary focus.

During this reporting period, 10 electoral observation missions were conducted: El Salvador (presidential elections, March 2004); Panama (presidential elections, May 2004); the Dominican Republic (presidential elections, May 2004); Venezuela (gathering of signatures, presidential recall referendum, August 2004); Bolivia (referendum, July 2004, and municipal elections, December 2004); Ecuador (municipal elections, October 2004); Nicaragua, (municipal elections, November 2004); Bolivia (municipal elections, December 2004); and Honduras (primaries, February 2005).

The OPD conducted a number of initiatives to promote and develop electoral democracy in the following countries:

- Ecuador: Election technology technical assistance program;
- El Salvador: Technical advisory services and certification of the use of preliminary vote count;
- Guatemala: Program to support legislative election reforms (includes the possible issuance of a national identity document);
- Honduras: Project to support management of civil registries and purging of the national census so that it conforms to the legislative reforms that separated the civil registry from the electoral service;
- Paraguay: Program to modernize civil registries (MORECIV);
- Peru: Technical assistance to election authorities by creating an automated system for registering political organizations, and the virtual library system.

At the request of Belize and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, the national projects continued (with the basic data-automation phase) to build a secure and efficient registration and identification system that makes the public more confident about the documents used for identification, including voter rolls and vital statistics documents. In December 2004, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed to conduct a similar project in Dominica in 2005.

This project also has two subregional components: a comparative study on laws and registry management, in the hands of Professor Albert K. Fiadjoe of the Law Faculty of the University of the West Indies (Cave Hill, Barbados), and a discussion on the same topic in which the OAS will serve as a facilitator of horizontal cooperation between the OAS and the member states. The eventual objective is to convene a ministerial conference on strengthening and modernizing Caribbean registries. Talks also got under way with the Government of Jamaica and its registries (the General Register Office and the Jamaica Electoral Office).

Under the OAS special program in Haiti, electoral technical assistance activities got under way in that country. Their purpose is to provide solid support to the highest Haitian electoral authority to organize and run the elections slated for 2005.

In the area of horizontal cooperation initiatives and pursuant to agreements signed with Brazil, Canada, Panama, and Paraguay, specific technical cooperation projects were agreed upon with election authorities in Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Panama, and Paraguay, especially “automation of voting.”

There were major cooperative initiatives in the area of electoral organization, technology, and civic education, involving various electoral authorities in Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, and Paraguay.

The Inter-American Electoral Technology Program (PITE) was also conducted, which publicized the advances that various member states have developed in the area of applications of election technology. Pilot projects in e-voting were conducted. The Second Inter-American Meeting of Electoral Technology was held in Panama, and the web page hosting the Inter-American Electoral Technology Network (RITE) was improved and modernized.

The OAS continued to carry out special programs in Nicaragua through the Rural Judicial Facilitators Program; the Project on Democracy and Governance in the Central Rural Area, Atlantic side; and the Program for Housing Reconstruction through Partnership. The last of these projects ended in March 2004.

Program of Support for Decentralization Processes

The OPD continued to serve as technical secretariat of the High-Level Inter-American Network on Decentralization, Local Government, and Citizen Participation (RIAD), which steers the activities it carries out under the mandates of the Declaration of La Paz (2001) and the Plan of Action of Mexico City (2003). The activities concentrated on the following priority areas: cooperation on strategic guidelines and priority areas of the Plan of Action of Mexico City, exchanges of information on decentralization and local institution-building, and enhancement of RIAD.

The Program of Support for Decentralization Processes was implemented in coordination with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Network—Mexico and Brazil, respectively—and the four subregional vice chairs (Guatemala, Jamaica, Mexico, and Peru). That Executive Committee (composed of the chair and vice chairs) met in Brasilia in May 2004 to establish the Network’s operating guidelines.

The Program has provided assistance to the following activities:

In the English-speaking Caribbean, the Program has cooperated with the Government of Jamaica, Regional Vice Chair representing CARICOM and the Commonwealth Local Government Forum, on a regional symposium in April 2004. The participants approved the Program of Action of Montego Bay, which establishes a Caribbean Forum of Ministers Responsible for Decentralization, Local Government, Community and Citizen Participation. That Forum will be orchestrating a subregional position on these issues.

In Central America, the Program has been instrumental in efforts to promote dialogue and the establishment of linkages among the different sectors involved in decentralization processes. In April, a session of the Forum for Cooperation on Local Government in Latin America and the Caribbean was held, focusing on Central America and on advancing local development processes in that region. In October, the Program collaborated with Guatemala, Vice Chair for Central America, to organize a dialogue between central governments and the presidencies of municipal associations. Lastly, the project “Support to Strengthen the Processes of Political Decentralization in Central America” was carried out.

Progress has been made on the creation of a financial and technical support group, pursuant to the decisions made in the Plan of Action of Mexico City. The idea is to ensure that financial and technical resources will be available to help further RIAD’s objectives. Agencies like the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), and others have been forthcoming with their assistance. With resources and technical assistance provided by ICMA under its cooperation agreement with USAID, the OPD has started organizing a fair on decentralization and municipal best practices that will be timed to coincide with the third ministerial meeting of the RIAD. An advisory committee has been formed and is composed of international and regional agencies conducting decentralization programs. The committee will advise on the technical aspects of the Fair. This RIAD activity is calculated to demonstrate the progress that the region has made toward decentralization and the subnational level’s contribution to development and democratic governance.

Finally, it is worth noting that the Network’s Internet page has been reorganized to help advance the Network’s mission.

Coordinating Office and Offices of the General Secretariat in the Member States

The Coordinating Office of the Offices of the General Secretariat in the Member States is responsible for general coordination of each of the 28 Offices of the General Secretariat located in various countries of the Hemisphere. This coordination includes, *inter alia*, supporting the cooperation and technical training activities that the OAS conducts in the member states; heightening and supporting the Organization’s institutional presence in the member states; publicizing OAS scholarships and fellowships and providing public information on OAS activities, conferences, and meetings in the member states; supporting the activities that the departments, offices, and other dependencies of the General Secretariat conduct in the course of discharging their various assigned functions and responsibilities; preparing substantive and administrative reports and documents within its area of competence; promoting, supporting, and coordinating opportunities to increase cooperation with offices of other international organizations in the member states; promoting cooperation and coordination among the organizations and other entities of the inter-American system; advising the Director of the DDPA and keeping that person abreast of all activities in this Office’s area of responsibility; and performing any other task that the Director of the DDPA, the Secretary General, and the Assistant Secretary General might assign to it.

During this reporting period, the General Secretariat embarked upon a number of efforts to raise resources to better enable the Offices of the General Secretariat in the Member States to perform their functions. Recently, the Acting Secretary General undertook an initiative to contact the directors of those offices to

enlist them in the job of improving coordination and cooperation with the organizations and other entities of the inter-American system.

To this end, in November 2004 the Acting Secretary General held meetings with the President of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB); the Director of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO); the Director General of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), and the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), in order to get this initiative started and to map a new plan for relations among the various inter-American organizations and institutions.

For the third consecutive year, and in keeping with General Assembly resolution AG/RES. 1974 (XXXIII-O/03), the Secretariat presented a document on the work done by the programs and a report listing all funds or subsidies received from the host government.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT FOR INTEGRAL DEVELOPMENT

The Executive Secretariat for Integral Development (SEDI) consists of the Executive Office of the Director, who also serves as Executive Secretary for Integral Development and Director General of the Inter-American Agency for Cooperation and Development (IACD). The Executive Secretary therefore supervises the Office of Education, Science, and Technology; the Office of Sustainable Development and Environment; the Office of Scholarships, Training, and Information Technology; the Office of Trade, Growth, and Competitiveness; the Office of Development Policies and Programs; and the Secretariat of the Inter-American Telecommunication Commission (CITEL).

Through active coordination with its constituent offices, in 2004 the SEDI continued to support the policy-making bodies within the framework of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI). Through those offices and the Inter-American Agency for Cooperation and Development (IACD), the SEDI carried on its efforts to implement projects calculated to meet the member states' vital needs. Furthermore, it continued its activities to mobilize and attract external resources to support the efforts the countries are making in the cause of their own development and that of the region.

During this reporting period, the Executive Secretariat provided its support for the successful holding of ministerial or high-level meetings, as well as meetings of the inter-American committees within the Inter-American Council for Integral Development and its subsidiary organs. SEDI's offices provided support of various kinds to the countries, to carry out development activities. The Educational Portal of the Americas was successfully consolidated and was used to offer a variety of distance-learning opportunities for the most impoverished and unattended rural areas of the Hemisphere. Also in the area of education, the Scholarship and Training Programs were greatly expanded and saw a sizable increase in the number of scholarships awarded. The Program of Innovations and Partnerships for Development was implemented, its purpose being to encourage horizontal cooperation among the governments of the region and to enlist greater private sector participation. To that end, a number of agreements with the private sector were implemented. Finally, in this reporting year, the Special Multilateral Fund of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (FEMCIDI) was strengthened.

The Trust for the Americas, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, operates under the umbrella of the IACD. 2004 was a particularly successful year for the Trust, as it raised close to 3 million dollars for social development projects everywhere in the Hemisphere. These funds are contributions and donations from the public and private sectors. More detailed information on the Trust for the Americas appears in the part of this report dedicated to foundations.

Executive Office of the Director

New Cooperation Mechanisms (Innovations and Partnerships for Development)

In 2004 the "best practices" program shifted to the more flexible and representative concept of "*Innovations and Partnerships for Development*." With this new institutional image, the program features two main thrusts: horizontal cooperation and private sector participation. The programs carried out focus mainly on the topics of e-government and government procurement on the one hand, and municipal development on the other. However, other topics such as occupational health and safety, corporate social responsibility, and refurbishment of computers are also included. More and more, other offices of the General Secretariat, such as the Office of Education, Science, and Technology; the Office of Trade, Growth and Competitiveness; and the Office for the Promotion of Democracy are providing their support to the program's activities. When the program was originally established, the bulk of the support came

from the United States Mission to the OAS. Now, however, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Institute for Connectivity in the Americas (ICA), and the Andean Development Corporation (CAF) are also providing their support. Based on the results achieved in previous years, the following results stand out in 2004.

E-Government and Government Procurement

The results in the area of e-government/government procurement at the central level can be subdivided into three main elements: technical cooperation activities, training, and partnerships. The results for e-government at the local/municipal level are described in the pertinent section below.

- Technical cooperation activities
 - In conjunction with ICA, creation and consolidation of the Network of E-Government Leaders in Latin America and the Caribbean (Red GEALC), with representatives of 17 countries.
 - Two workshops, organized in conjunction with ICA, on best practices in e-government: Peru (April), attended by 20 participants, and Brazil (May), attended by 24.
 - Again in conjunction with ICA, creation of a Horizontal Cooperation Fund (FOCOH), which supports exchanges of experts in e-government between countries.
 - Support to horizontal cooperation activities among Colombia, Chile, Mexico, and the Dominican Republic.
 - OAS support and technical assistance missions to: Honduras, Brazil, Peru, Ecuador, Panama, Mexico, and the Dominican Republic.
 - The RIFGE Network (Inter-American Network on E-Government Training), created jointly with the Inter-American Development Bank, ICA, and the Inter-American Organization for Higher Education (IOHE).
 - As part of the Best Practices Forum of the Americas: publication of the document summarizing the E-Government Best Practices Forum and organization of the Forum on Government Procurement (experiences of Chile, Mexico, the United States, and Costa Rica), which will end in early 2005.
- Training
 - Three editions of the course in Spanish and one in English. Total number of students: 535 from all subregions of the OAS.
 - Agreement concluded with UNISUL (Brazil) and the IOHE for adaptation, translation, and announcement of the course in Portuguese in the first half of 2005.
- Partnerships
 - Strategic collaboration with ICA was significantly bolstered in 2004 as it supported most of the activities in e-government.
 - An agreement was concluded with SONDA (Chile) offering e-government portals valued at \$3.6 million.
 - Under the agreement with Microsoft, the following materialized: the Portal of El Salvador's Ministry of Government; tele-center management tools in Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Venezuela; donation of an application for development of a management platform for the White Helmets Program (Argentina).
 - FLACSO collaborated with the OAS on publication of the book *América Latina Puntogob*.

Municipal Development

In 2004, the municipal development area focused on the Efficient Transparent Municipalities Program (MuNet), whose goal is to strengthen municipal services in two main areas: cadastre/registration and e-government. CIDA poured its full support into the program from the beginning, and that support was then used to leverage similar support from the CAF. In the end, the support for MuNet was a *de facto* three-way collaboration: CIDA, CAF, and OAS.

- Cadastre/registration
 - Guatemala City was the site of the second MuNet workshop on “Development and Application of Municipal Cadastre and Registration Systems,” held between May 31 and June 3, 2004. This workshop targeted the municipalities of Central America, Mexico, and the Dominican Republic. Participating were cadastre experts from Bogotá (Colombia), the Malvinas Cadastre Office (Argentina), the City Government of Gijón (Spain), and the Cadastre and Registration Institute of Sonora, Mexico. They shared their experiences and expertise in cadastre and land registration with the more than 140 participants, who represented 50 municipal governments.
 - In an example of horizontal cooperation and with MuNet’s support, Guadalajara advised the Municipal Government of Quito on how to design a cadastre system. Follow-up activities are planned for 2005.
 - With ICA’s support, a virtual discussion group was formed with some 150 cadastre/registration experts from the region.
 - Under an agreement with Stewart Information International, the final proposal for implementation of a combined cadastre/registration and tax collection system in Antigua and Barbuda was prepared, and approved for implementation in 2005. The hope is that this will be the foundation for developing a solution that can be applied in all countries of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS).

- E-government
 - The e-government course mentioned earlier was attended by more than 100 students from municipalities in Latin America.
 - Under the MuNet program, a tool was designed to study and monitor the implementation of e-government, which will be put into practice in 2005.
 - Under the agreement with Microsoft, the following were introduced: Municipal portals at San Borja and Puente Piedra in Peru, and municipal portals for Artigas and Paysandú in Uruguay.
 - As an example of horizontal cooperation, the municipality of Guayaquil is helping the Government of Ushuaia (Argentina) to design and implement its e-government strategy.

- Best Practices Forum
 - With CIDA’s support, the virtual “Best Practices” Forum on the role of municipal associations was held from June to September 2004, featuring experiences in Chile, Brazil, and the United States. The document summarizing the experiences and the Forum discussions will be published in 2005.

Occupational Health and Safety

Working in conjunction with the Unit for Social Development and Education, a cooperation agreement signed in 2003 with the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work began to be implemented in 2004. Under that agreement, the OAS is part of that Agency's sophisticated data system. The most salient aspect of this agreement's implementation has been the development, thanks to a contribution from Colombia's Axesnet, of a virtual platform to host data on occupational health and safety transmitted through focal points in the region. This portal is already online and the network of focal points is under construction.

Corporate Social Responsibility

On the subject of corporate social responsibility, the program that the IACD and the EMPRESA Forum developed jointly and that the IDB's Multilateral Investment Fund and the IACD approved, commenced operations in 2004. In the early stages, the focus was on strengthening the network of EMPRESA member groups and identifying successful experiences that will be used as the basis for the training given in the project's four pilot countries (Chile, Peru, Brazil, and El Salvador).

Refurbishment of Computers/"Computers for Schools"

The "Computers for Schools (CFS)" Program seeks to encourage the refurbishment of used computers and is primarily based on the Canadian "Computers for Schools" model. In 2004, the OAS, ICA, and the Ministry of Industry of Canada (IC) partnered to coordinate two regional events. The first was for South America and was held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, from March 1 to 4, 2004. It was attended by representatives of 11 countries in the region. The second event was for the Central American region and was held in Managua from September 21 to 24, 2004. The six Central American countries, Mexico, and the Dominican Republic were represented. These events were accompanied by an online Virtual Mentoring Network (VMN) facilitating contact over long distances. At the present time, Guatemala, Chile, and the Dominican Republic are actively engaged in planning a computer refurbishment program. The three partner organizations hosted a workshop for the Caribbean region, held in Jamaica in February 2005.

Web page: Innovations and Partnerships

As part of the agreement with Colombia's Axesnet, a web page was designed and put online, titled "Innovations and Partnerships," which enables wider circulation of the results of horizontal cooperation and private sector participation. It also enables the OAS to report on the portfolio of successes in e-government, municipal development, and occupational health and safety. In Spanish, the page is available at www.oainnovacionesyalanzas.org, and in English at www.oasinnovationsandpartnerships.org. It currently has over 1,000 registered users.

Office of Education, Science, and Technology

The main mission of the Office of Education, Science, and Technology (OEST) is to support efforts to increase the capabilities of the member states' human capital in the areas of education, culture, labor, technology, and science, within a more cohesive social environment in which cultural diversity is respected.

The OEST is internally organized into three program areas: education and culture; science and technology; and social development. Its main functions within each are to: (i) promote inter-American dialogue and provide technical and operational support to the specialized policy-making forums,

especially the ministerial meetings and the meetings of the inter-American committees and/or working groups; (ii) promote partnership for development, particularly horizontal cooperation based on a transfer of knowledge and successful experiences in the application of policies and programs; and (iii) coordinate activities carried out in conjunction with other international organizations, cooperation agencies, governmental and nongovernmental institutions, and civil society and aimed at promoting poverty eradication and social, educational, technological, and scientific development.

The OEST is the result of a merger of the then-existing Unit for Social Development and Education and the Office of Science and Technology. In 2004, the OEST's activities were steered by the mandates received from the Summits, the resolutions of the General Assembly and other policy-making organs of the OAS, and the decisions emanating from the ministerial meetings and meetings of committees and/or working groups in the program areas.

Education

As Technical Secretariat of the meetings of ministers of education within the framework of CIDI and of the Inter-American Committee on Education (CIE), the OEST continued to provide its advisory services and its technical, operational, and policy-related support on design, development, systematization, evaluation, and dissemination of public policies and strategies. In this capacity, it coordinated the design and development of studies and research and their application to education. It conducted activities that provided a means by which experiences could be shared, as well as other training activities. The Office identified educational challenges and best practices for horizontal cooperation. It encouraged the use of new technologies and cooperative ventures among countries, international cooperation and development agencies, and governmental and nongovernmental institutions, to form a hemispheric partnership in the cause of education. In all these activities, the Secretariat worked in close collaboration with the Office for the Promotion of Democracy (OPD); the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM); the Office of Scholarships, Training, and Information Technology; the Office of Science and Technology; the Educational Portal of the Americas, and others.

The OEST served as Technical Secretariat of the Second and Third Meetings of Authorities and of the Executive Committee of the CIE, held at OAS headquarters on April 15 and 16 and on October 17, 2004. It also assisted the Informal Meeting that the CIE held in Mexico on June 28, 2004. At these meetings, the OEST was assigned the following undertakings: (a) working jointly with the United States and Mexico, prepare a questionnaire identifying the general practices and lessons learned on reporting the results of educational systems, a task entrusted to it by the Special Summit in Monterrey; (b) administer the funds from the Special Education Subfund for the Summit Projects, the Regional Program on Educational Indicators (PRIE), and the Forum for Evaluating the Quality of Education; (c) monitor execution of hemispheric and related projects; (d) join efforts on issues of democratic culture, science and technology, and gender; and (e) prepare a document on the CIE's participation in the Nonpermanent Specialized Committee (CENPE) on Education.

The Office also assisted the Second Regular Meeting of the CIE, convoked by Mexico and held at OAS headquarters on October 18 and 19, 2004. That meeting examined the progress that the hemispheric and related projects had made and the challenges they faced. The Meeting also discussed issues related to the preparations for the Fourth Meeting of Ministers of Education, slated for Trinidad and Tobago in August 2005. The CIE decided to hold a Meeting of Ministers of Education of the Caribbean in March 2005, where the education authorities of Trinidad and Tobago will present a draft agenda and draft calendar for the Fourth Meeting of Ministers and for the meetings with civil society and international agencies.

The following were among the tasks that the CIE entrusted to the OEST: (a) monitor the organization and execution of the activities associated with the Fourth Meeting of Ministers of Education and the Inter-

American Program for Education in Democratic Values for Peace and Human Rights, in coordination with the Office for the Promotion of Democracy; (b) support the ad hoc working groups on: (i) health, labor, and education in coordination with the Hemispheric Project on Secondary Education; (ii) health-promoting schools, in association with the Hemispheric Project on Equity and Quality; (iii) teaching of sciences from an early age, in coordination with the Hemispheric Project on Teacher Training; (c) prepare a report on a debt-for-education swap; and (d) propose measures to bolster national policies and measures by means of the questionnaire on current practices in educational reporting.

In December 2004, a technical document was prepared on alternatives for the CIE's involvement in the process of selecting projects to be considered for FEMCIDI financing. That document was presented to the Authorities and Executive Committee of the CIE. Further work will be done on this subject in 2005.

The three hemispheric projects—equity and quality, teacher training, and secondary education and labor competencies—moved forward on their planned activities and the coordinator states reiterated their political willingness to implement those projects and requested that the deadline for execution of the 2004 budget be extended. Activities were coordinated with the Inter-American Agency for Cooperation and Development. The Office was instrumental in executing the activities under the hemispheric projects and related projects coordinated by El Salvador, Mexico, and Peru. It also played an active role in the workshops conducted under the teacher-training project organized by Trinidad and Tobago in August and November and, in conjunction with the Inter-American Organization for Higher Education (IOHE), conducted the workshop on strategies for teacher training and professional retraining, Washington, D.C. (September). It also participated in the workshops on secondary education and labor competencies in Costa Rica (May), Mexico (May and August), and Trinidad and Tobago (August).

As regards the related projects in teacher training, El Salvador redesigned teacher training and evaluation and began operating in the virtual forum among the countries of the Central American subregion on development, performance, and evaluation. Mexico is organizing a global meeting on this topic, slated for April 2005.

In the case of the Summit Projects, the PRIE, coordinated by Mexico, held meetings for adjustments, planning, and 2004-2007 programming and continued to examine the five main categories of indicators: demographic, social, and economic context; access, participation, and progress; education resources; quality of education; and social impact of education. The United States Department of Education supported efforts to obtain additional funding from USAID.

The forum to evaluate the Summit Project coordinated by Brazil held reprogramming meetings. In May 2005, the second hemispheric session will be held in Brazil.

The Permanent Portfolio of Consolidated Programs continued to be updated. This is a strategy to strengthen horizontal cooperation among countries through seminars devoted to transferring educational experiences. In May, Nuevo León, Mexico was the site of the Seminar Workshop on “Ready to Learn: Quality Early Education to Prevent School Dropout,” which nine Caribbean countries attended and where they observed the experiences of the Child Development Centers (CEDI). Based on the joint OEA/CONARED publication, the World Bank extended an invitation for the resumption of the joint Bank/OEST partnership to update and preserve data on childhood development for Latin America, which is published at the World Bank's website.

Following the guidelines of the Third Summit of the Americas and the Inter-American Democratic Charter, as well as the mandate contained in resolution AG/RES. 1869 (XXXII-O/02), "Promotion of Democratic Culture," the OEST conducted a study on introducing the values and principles of democracy in educational curricula in the member states. In January 2004, the final report was distributed and was

titled “Strengthening Democracy in the Americas through Civic Education.” The report was presented at a special meeting of the Permanent Council (April) and at the Second Meeting of the Inter-American Committee on Education (October). Furthermore, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education of Chile, a workshop was organized and held in Santiago (August) to examine the study’s findings and conclusions.

The mandate from the Special Summit held in Nuevo León, Mexico, requested that a questionnaire be developed on current practices in educational reporting. The OEST developed this questionnaire with help from the United States Department of Education and contributions from Mexico and Canada. The findings of the questionnaire, which was answered by 32 ministries of education, were presented to the CIE at its October meeting and then published, together with the database. The CIE also instructed the Office to provide its support to a United States-coordinated working group on current practices in educational reporting that would, *inter alia*, plan a workshop on educational reporting, to be held in April 2005 in Brazil.

The OEST benefited from the program of cooperation between the OAS and Harvard University’s Rockefeller Center, as six Harvard students provided their assistance in the summer of 2004. Prominent among their activities was the research done to assist with the hemispheric projects and the questionnaire on educational reporting practices.

Culture

The Second Inter-American Meeting of Ministers of Culture and Highest Appropriate Authorities, convoked within the framework of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI), was held in Mexico City, on August 23 and 24, 2004. It centered on the question “What role does culture play in social development and economic integration in our Hemisphere?” The debate was divided into three sub-themes: (1) Culture as an engine for economic growth, employment, and development; (2) Challenges faced by cultural industries; and (3) Culture as a tool for social cohesion and the fight against poverty. To facilitate the discussions, the OEST, as Technical Secretariat, commissioned studies by specialists on each of the three themes.

At the end of the meeting, the ministers approved the Declaration of Mexico and Plan of Action, which underscored, *inter alia*, the contributions that culture makes to the economic and social development of the countries of the region and urged the states to continue to develop indicators and to conduct studies analyzing culture’s impact, to consider mechanisms to help create jobs in the cultural sector, and to formulate educational and cultural policies and programs in which creative expression can flourish.

The ministers approved the first phase of the Work Program of the Inter-American Cultural Policy Observatory (ICPO), which was based on a multiphase plan to be implemented gradually, using a network of similar organizations and Internet portals in the region. An interactive ICPO pilot portal was introduced. The Second Ministerial instructed the OEST to develop, with outside funding and based on that virtual model, the first phase through subregional nodes (Brazil, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Barbados, and Nicaragua).

For the Second Ministerial in Mexico, coordination meetings were held to further the Plan of Action of Mexico. Also participating were the Inter-American Development Bank, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), the Andrés Bello Agreement (CAB), the Andean Development Corporation (CAF), the Latin American School of Social Sciences, Mexico campus (FLACSO-Mexico), the Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture (OEI), and UNESCO. The commitments made were presented to the ministers by the OEI’s representative, who was the elected spokesperson. The OEST will be responsible for following up on a number of these initiatives.

To discuss civil society's contributions to the main themes of the Second Ministerial, work continued to be accomplished through the OEST's "Virtual Forum-Civil Society." A workshop to confer with civil society was held (Chile, July 26-27), with representatives from coalitions and networks of various cultural federations participating. The document "Perspectives from Society" was signed, which reflects civil society's concerns and recommendations. Two spokespersons then presented it at the Second Ministerial.

The Permanent Portfolio of Consolidated Programs in Culture continues to be updated. It contains the programs that the ministries of culture and high-level authorities want to share with their counterparts and is a fundamental piece in the horizontal-cooperation strategy that the General Secretariat coordinates.

Science and technology

The OEST is the Secretariat of the Inter-American Committee on Science and Technology (COMCYT) and of the Meeting of Ministers and High Authorities of Science and Technology within the Framework of CIDI. It is also Executive Secretariat of the Inter-American Metrology System (SIM) and maintains close ties with the Committee for Scientific and Technological Development of Central America and Panama (CTCAP), the Pan American Standards Commission (COPANT), and the Inter-American Accreditation Cooperation (IAAC). In this capacity, the OEST provided permanent technical advisory services to national councils of science and technology, regional bodies, and internal organs of the OAS, including the IACD, CIDI, and COMCYT.

The OEST continued to develop the Program of Activities in Science and Technology for Hemispheric Cooperation, which has provided input for the preparations for the meeting of ministers and the Office's areas of activity. Under this Project, the fourth workshop on "Science and Technology for Social Development" was held in Jamaica (March), while the workshop on "Consolidation of Hemispheric Policies in Science and Technology" was held in Washington, D.C. (April), where the policies and recommendations from the four previous workshops were consolidated. The Fourth Regular Meeting of COMCYT was held in Washington, D.C. Its decisions formed the foundation of the preparations for the First Meeting of Ministers and High Authorities of Science and Technology, held in Lima, Peru, on November 11 and 12, 2004. In preparation for that meeting, two meetings were held in Washington, D.C. (June and September), as were informal meetings of the working subgroup.

Delegates of 21 countries participated in the Ministerial, which was held under the joint auspices of the National Council on Science and Technology of Peru (CONCYTEC). They adopted the Declaration and Plan of Action of Lima, whose principles attach due importance to science, technology, engineering, innovation, and education as major factors driving the economic and social development of the countries of the Hemisphere, while recognizing the need to create employment as a response to poverty and to strengthen democratic governance. The delegates deliberated on and approved 15 hemispheric initiatives. The Ministerial also recognized the efforts of young scientists, awarding prizes to 15 young scientists who were the winners of national science fairs; it encouraged closer relations with civil society, thereby marking the start of that sector's participation in the discussion of science and technology within the OAS; it also encouraged closer ties with economic and scientific authorities, inviting them to participate in a seminar on science and technology financing and priorities in Latin America and the Caribbean, cosponsored by the IDB and ECLAC. The findings of that seminar were shared at the ministerial meeting.

The hemispheric initiatives prepared for the ministerial meeting are taken from topics of interest being developed in the member states and in the OAS, such as:

In the technological services sector, the Office continued to support efforts to consolidate SIM and the IAAC. Technical advisory services were provided to both, and the Office participated in SIM's General Assembly, held on Margarita Island, Venezuela, in November 2004. It also participated in the meetings of its Council. In preparation for the meeting of ministers, hemispheric projects were envisioned, including

legal metrology for the Caribbean; productive competitiveness and employment, geared toward improving the productive sector; and engineering for the Americas, to build up local capacity in this realm, with support from Hewlett-Packard.

In biotechnology and food technology, the Office continued to support the arguments in favor of a hemispheric instrument for building biotechnology indicators. The Office participated in the World Biotechnology Forum, held in Chile in March 2004; and a biotechnology initiative was submitted to the meeting of ministers for consideration, prepared on the basis of the recommendations made by the workshop on “Scientific and Technological Development in the Americas,” held in Ecuador in December 2003.

On the subject of information technologies and telecommunications, the Office continued to support the interconnectivity efforts that will facilitate access to the new generation of advanced Internet technologies and applications in the region. During the meeting of ministers, initiatives were proposed advocating the interconnection of national educational and research networks, including CLARA (Latin American Advanced Networks Cooperation); development of advanced networks for the Caribbean; and development of databases, portals, scientific publications, and journals. The Office also participated in meetings of Internet2, Red ScienTI, and others.

The Office supported consolidation of specialized data networks, such as SIM, SIMBIOSIS (Multinational System of Specialized Information on Biotechnology and Foods), RICYT (Ibero-American/Inter-American Network on Science and Technology Indicators), INFOCYT (Science and Technology Information Network for Latin America and the Caribbean), and RELAQ (Latin American Chemistry Network). The Office also maintained the mirror pages of RICYT, INFOCYT, and RELAQ and the Internet pages of SIM, SIMBIOSIS, the meeting of ministers, and others. A virtual room was introduced for the meeting of ministers and for the dialogue with civil society.

On the subject of science and technology indicators, the support provided for the activities of RICYT was in the form of technical advisory services, in conjunction with the Ibero-American Program in Science and Technology for Development (CYTED). An initiative was approved seeking the creation of a regional program of science and technology indicators.

The collaboration with CYTED is ongoing. The Office participated as an observer in its XXIV General Assembly, held in Chile.

With regard to gender and science and technology, mainstreaming the gender perspective into science and technology policies and programs in the Americas was a priority. With support from the International Development Research Centre (IDRC)-Canada, two situational studies were prepared that served as a frame of reference for a Meeting of Experts on Gender and Science and Technology, held in Washington, D.C., (August) and organized in collaboration with the CIM and the UNCSTD’s Gender Advisory Board. The results of that event were used to prepare a document titled “Recommendations for Integrating a Gender Perspective in Science and Technology Policies and Programs in the Americas.” That proposal was approved at the meeting of ministers as a hemispheric initiative. Other activities in this area are being carried out in cooperation with UNESCO.

On the subject of digital government, based on the initiative approved by the Meeting of Ministers and with support from the United States’ National Science Foundation (NSF), experts in digital government discussed issues related to the establishment and development of successful national and regional efforts in digital government, emphasizing the digitalization of government functions. The Project on Transnational Digital Government continued to be carried out. Being executed in collaboration with Belize and the Dominican Republic, this project applies five advanced information technologies to

national procedures for controlling immigration in remote border areas. In 2004, the experimental system was presented to Dominican officials. National and transnational tests will be conducted in 2005 and the system installed. This system can be used for other government functions as well.

Working in coordination with NSF, hemispheric initiatives were prepared in the areas of materials and global change, associated with the efforts under the Inter-American Collaboration in Materials Research (CIAM) and the Inter-American Institute for Global Change (IAI). The goal is to strengthen those institutions' programs in the region and to encourage greater participation on the part of the countries.

In collaboration with the Inter-American Network of Academies of Sciences (IANAS), an initiative was formulated that promotes scientific education; another initiative, this one with the Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH), promotes the use of geographic information systems for the integral development of the countries; still a third initiative promoting the popularization of science is being carried out in collaboration with Brazil's Ministry of Science and Technology.

Social development and combating poverty

The First Meeting of the Inter-American Committee on Social Development (CIDES) within the Framework of CIDI was held in Santiago, Chile, in April 2004. The following were among its most salient results: (1) adoption of the rules of procedure and election of the officers of CIDES, Chile (Chair), El Salvador (Vice Chair), and Jamaica (Vice Chair); (2) approval of the steps to follow to update the Inter-American Program to Combat Poverty and Discrimination; (3) approval of the terms for preparation of the CIDES work program by the Committee's officers; and (4) El Salvador's offer to host the Meeting of Ministers of Social Development in 2005. The Meeting's final report was drawn up. Formulation of the CIDES work program was completed as were the preparations to carry out that program in 2005.

The OEST continued to serve as Technical Secretariat of the Social Network of Latin America and the Caribbean in 2004. In discharging this function, its duty was to administer the Network's voluntary fund and lend a hand in conducting the activities planned in the Network's 2004 work program. It provided its support for workshops where experiences and knowledge could be shared and passed along: in Honduras (January), in Peru (August), and in Uruguay (November). It was also instrumental in organizing and staging the First Meeting of the Network's Coordinating Committee in Santiago, Chile (April), and the Social Network's Ninth Annual Conference, held in San Pedro Sula, Honduras (September).

Under an agreement signed with the IDB, the General Secretariat serves as executing agency of the Inter-Regional Program of Internships among the Social Network's member institutions. Under this program, the OEST prepared the final report covering execution of the Network's activities.

Following the guidelines contained in the OAS' Inter-American Program to Combat Poverty and Discrimination, particularly as regards the priority attached to vulnerable groups such as children and young people, the Office cooperated with and participated in events organized by academic centers in the region. In September it presented a paper at the Second International Conference "*Crianças e Adolescentes Crescendo em Contextos de Pobreza, Marginalidade e Violência na América Latina*," held under the auspices of the Pontificia Universidade Católica of Rio de Janeiro. In November, it collaborated with Chile's Universidad Diego Portales on its Master's Degree Program in Social Policy and the Rights of Children and the Family.

Employment and labor development

A workshop was held in conjunction with the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) on the impact of trade and integration on labor (May). It was attended by international experts and representatives from

the ministries of labor of 21 member states. In response to a recommendation of Working Group 1 of the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor (IACML) on the Labor Dimensions of the Summit of the Americas Process, studies were done on the challenges and opportunities that labor markets might face as a result of economic integration within the Summit process.

The meeting of the working groups of the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor (IACML) was organized and held at OAS headquarters (May 12 through 14, 2004). Working Group 1: Labor Dimensions of the Summit of the Americas Process, examined how labor is dealt with in the free trade agreements and the implications of globalization and integration for the informal sector, among other matters. Working Group 2: Institutional Strengthening of the Ministries of Labor, discussed the development of mechanisms to modernize ministries of labor and ways to use their resources to maximum advantage. Participating in this meeting were representatives of 21 ministries of labor, COSATE, CEATAL, and the key international organizations in the IACML process, namely the World Bank, the IDB, the ILO, and PAHO.

Under the Horizontal Cooperation Strategy, the OEST, working in cooperation with the Ministry of Labor and Social Security of El Salvador, conducted the Workshop on Occupational Health and Safety in San Salvador (April 29 and 30, 2004). The Workshop examined the issue of the health and safety of workers against the backdrop of the integration processes in the Hemisphere. In attendance were all the ministers of labor of Central America, representatives of the ministries of the other subregions, international organizations (ILO, PAHO, IDB, SICA), and specialized centers. The Workshop also provided an opportunity to do some critical analysis of the subregional experience of the Regional Occupational Health and Safety Center (CERSSO) as a model for other subregions. The Ministry of Labor of Belize offered to help the CARICOM member countries analyze a critical transfer of the CERSSO model. The participating countries and organizations issued the Recommendations of San Salvador, a document that includes key issues that the region should target in connection with occupational health and safety.

The ministers of labor who attended the XIII IACML, held in Brazil in September 2003, decided to have a feasibility study done with a view to developing an inter-American mechanism “with the objective of deepening international collaboration and coordination to modernize labour administrations and support the IACML in its mandate to strengthen the capacities of the Ministries of Labour in the Hemisphere.” They also instructed the past, present, and future Chairs pro tempore of the IACML (the troika) to take the lead in a study conducted with the support of the Secretariat under the OEST’s responsibility. The study was done by three experts, from Brazil, Canada, and Mexico, with technical assistance from the OAS. The latter convened three coordination meetings that were also attended by the ILO and other organizations. It also provided advice on the presentation of a preliminary version of the study to the meeting of the working groups of the IACML (May 2004). The study was completed in November and will be presented at the meetings of the IACML working groups, slated for April 2005.

The 45th Directing Council of PAHO established, for the first time, a dialogue with the IACML on the subject of workers’ health and safety. The PAHO Directing Council welcomed the past, present, and future Chairs pro tempore of the IACML and representatives of the ministries of labor from other countries of the region. They gave a presentation on the progress of the XII, XIII, and forthcoming XIV IACML in the area of worker health and safety. The Directing Council of PAHO adopted a resolution to continue working to build a strategic alliance between the health and labor sectors.

The XVII World Congress on Safety and Health at Work, sponsored by the NSC, the ILO, and the USDOL/OSHA, will be held in September 2005. The III Hispanic Forum will be among its activities. In preparation for this Congress, the NSC, PAHO, and the OAS convened an Occupational Health and Safety Hemispheric Leadership Meeting, attended by the Ministries of Labor of El Salvador, Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Canada, Peru, and the United States.

The Ministerial Council on the North American Agreement on Labor Cooperation (ACLAN), in coordination with the OEST, organized and financed the Workshop on Supporting Economic Growth through Effective Employment Services” (held in Cancún, Mexico, September 29-30, 2004), as a contribution toward implementation of the Plan of Action of the XIII IACML. The purpose of the Workshop was to serve as a forum to discuss effective employment services for the contribution they can make to economic growth. It featured lessons learned on the design and application of various models of employment services within the region’s labor markets. It also examined the cooperative initiatives among countries, with a view to developing, within the IACML framework, proposals for ongoing cooperative activities to make better and more effective use of employment services systems.

Because skills certification plays an absolutely central role in making the workforce more employable, the OEST has been putting together a Virtual Course on Certification of Labor Competencies. It draws mainly upon the experience of the Labor Competency Standardization and Certification Council (CONOCER) of Mexico. Expectations are that this course will be delivered through the Educational Portal of the Americas sometime in 2005.

Office of Sustainable Development and Environment

The Office of Sustainable Development and Environment (OSDE) is the office of the Secretariat that bears chief responsibility in the area of sustainable development and environment in the region.

The General Assembly and the Inter-American Committee on Sustainable Development (CIDS-III) have issued mandates directly to the Office. Furthermore, in the Plan of Action for the Sustainable Development of the Americas, adopted in Bolivia in 1996, the Heads of State and Government entrusted the OAS with a number of mandates. The Plans of Action adopted at the Santiago and Quebec Summits underscored the Organization’s role in following up on the Bolivia Summit. The Office’s activities are in response to the measures called for in the Inter-American Program for Sustainable Development, which is an integral part of the Strategic Plan for Partnership for Development 2002-2005 and will steer the work that the OAS will do in carrying out the Summit mandates. Its work also serves to carry out Agenda 21, the “Millennium Development Goals,” and other agreements emanating from the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Rio de Janeiro, 1992); the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (Barbados, 1994); the United Nations World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 2002); and other regional and global meetings on the topic. The Office will also respond to the actions that member states adopted in the area of sustainable development, as follow-up to the agreements reached in the Declaration of Nuevo León, adopted at the Special Summit of the Americas, held in Monterrey, Mexico, in January 2004.

The Office is also committed to continuing to provide the member states with support in critical areas of sustainable development and environment, and to assisting the countries in the design, development, and execution of policies, projects, and programs to enable the member states to better cope with the challenges they face in the area of integrated management of water resources, preservation and conservation of the biological diversity, adaptation to climate change, renewable energy, management of natural hazards risks, and environmental management and economics.

Activities related to the Summit in Bolivia

The activities conducted to follow up on the Santa Cruz de la Sierra Plan of Action continued. The Office provided its support to the Working Group on Sustainable Development, established by CEPCIDI in 2002 in response to the recommendation received from the Third Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Committee on Sustainable Development (CIDS).

In furtherance of the mandates related to the Santa Cruz de la Sierra Plan of Action and the Third Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Committee on Sustainable Development, the Office conducted the following activities:

- Inter-American Biodiversity Information Network

Because of the importance of protecting the biodiversity of the Americas, the Inter-American Biodiversity Information Network (IABIN) was created by mandate of the Summit of the Americas on Sustainable Development to serve as an Internet-based technical and scientific cooperation forum seeking to increase coordination among the countries of the Hemisphere in compiling and sharing biodiversity-related information and then using that information in decision-making and education. The purpose of IABIN is to promote the conservation, use, and sustainable development of the biological diversity in the Americas by better managing biological data and making more information available for decision-making. While IABIN is planned as a decentralized system of data suppliers in which the information is preserved and controlled by the suppliers themselves, one of its key features is the existence of a single point for accessing the network's combined resources.

In 2002, the IABIN Council asked the OAS to serve as executing agency for IABIN's plan of action. The latter involves activities totaling US\$35 million. Recently, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) approved financing of US\$6 million for that plan's implementation, which the OAS General Secretariat will execute by way of the OSDE.

Furthermore, agreements were reached on the priorities for sharing data on biodiversity with the Americas' pioneering information technology institutions in that area. Cofinancing totaling US\$28.9 million, coming from 76 regional or national institutions and programs, has been identified. The project will work to: (a) develop an Internet-based network, under decentralized administration, to provide access to scientifically reliable information on biodiversity—data now available in individual institutions and agencies of the Americas; (b) provide the tools needed to learn from that wealth of resources, which in turn will provide the premise for constructive decisions on how best to preserve that biodiversity; and (c) provide a means for sharing information in the Americas that is relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of the biological diversity, and thus promote and facilitate technical and scientific cooperation to help accomplish the mandate of the Clearing-House Mechanism (CHM) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

The Secretariat is in charge of IABIN's daily activities. The IABIN Council selected the City of Knowledge, a nongovernmental organization headquartered in Panama City, to serve as the host organization of the IABIN Secretariat.

The IABIN access portal is at www.iabin.net and is becoming a gateway to information on biodiversity in the Americas and a means to interconnect data from a variety of institutions and agencies involved in preserving and conserving the biodiversity. The portal provides easy-to-use interfaces to share knowledge. IABIN is also developing a search catalogue for data on biodiversity and information resources that will enable users to identify and locate the content available on the network: databases on biodiversity, publications, museum collections, value-added information (such as points of high biodiversity, eco-regions, and invasive species) and other databases on the subject. Other value-added tools are planned, and will be created through the activities of the Secretariat and the network.

- Environmental law

In the area of environmental law and economic policy, the Office has worked at both the regional and hemispheric levels to strengthen economic, social, and environmental policies so as to ensure that they are

mutually reinforcing and contribute to sustainable development. The Office has also focused on building up capacities for environmental management amid the economic integration and liberalization of trade in the region. Its Inter-American Forum on Environmental Law (FIDA) strengthens the agenda on environmental cooperation, to help the OAS member states comply with environmental and health standards required for market access. The Office has started environmental impact assessments in MERCOSUR, the Andean Region, Central America, and the Caribbean on the environmental effects of trade and the legal-institutional options and options for sustainable policies within the framework of economic integration. The projects in this area include the following:

The project “Institutional Capacity-Building in the Context of the Free Market” does environmental impact assessments associated with trade and economic integration. The assessments of Argentina and Brazil have been completed, and the studies done of Paraguay, Uruguay, Costa Rica, and Guatemala are currently under review. Similar studies are in progress for Colombia, Peru, Ecuador, and the Caribbean.

The project “Capacity-Building Needs and Priorities in Trade and the Environment in Central America” is intended to identify lessons learned on trade assessments, with the emphasis on building up institutional capacity in El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua. The plan is to develop an agenda for cooperation that focuses primarily on the new challenges that the region faces as a result of the new economic and trade reforms. With these developments in mind, OAS/OSDE organized an informal meeting with the ministers of environment of Costa Rica, Guatemala, and Nicaragua, which enabled all parties to discuss the immediate priorities at both the national and regional levels. The priority areas of emphasis will be agriculture, tourism, and textiles.

This project “Challenges Posed by Economic Integration for the Agricultural Sector” features activities in environmental management in El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua, to give the countries of the region an overview of the principal environmental problems and trends in trade in the agricultural sector.

The purpose of the “Trade and Environmental Health Initiative” is to develop a joint initiative between the Office of Sustainable Development and Environment and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) on the implications that globalization and trade have for environmental health in the Americas.

Activities related to the Summits of the Americas

- Property registration

With a view to furthering the progress accomplished with implementation of the program to improve property registration systems in compliance with the mandates of the Second and Third Summits of the Americas, the OSDE has continued to cooperate with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). That program is conducted through the Virtual Office of the Inter-Summit Property Systems Initiative (IPSI), a mechanism that USAID and the OAS created for that purpose with USAID funding.

- Renewable energy

The Office continued to serve as Technical Secretariat of the Renewable Energy in the Americas Initiative (REIA). It supported the countries’ efforts to promote sustainable energy use in Latin America and the Caribbean.

In Chajul, El Quiche, Guatemala, the Initiative helped build a small hydroelectric plant. REIA carried on its activities within the Global Sustainable Energy Islands Initiative (GSEII), raising significant amounts of external funding from the United Nations Foundation/UNIDO. That Initiative has identified a number

of potential renewable energy projects in Dominica, Grenada, and Saint Lucia and is working with local businesses to carry out those projects. GSEII is also establishing a program to fund solar energy in Saint Lucia, which will be supervised by the Saint Lucia Cooperative League. The program will offer loans to homeowners to purchase solar-run water heaters for their homes. The Office is also serving as executing agency for the Eastern Caribbean Geothermal Development Project, financed by the Global Environment Facility (Geo-Caraibes) in Dominica, Saint Lucia, and Saint Kitts and Nevis. The project is in its development phase (PDF-B). Technical missions have already been conducted in the three countries and complete explorations have been done in Saint Kitts and Nevis. Assistance was also provided to the countries to introduce legal reforms, policy changes, and capacity-building activities. Work has also gotten started on the design of the Geothermal Drilling Risk Fund.

The Office has been designated as Regional Secretariat for the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership (REEEP) for Latin America and the Caribbean. As Regional Secretariat, the Office develops databases on renewable and efficient energy at the regional level, while providing support to regional projects and to requests for financing filed with the Partnership's International Secretariat. The Office is also in charge of promoting and advocating the development of renewable energy and energy efficiency in the region by coordinating capacity-building initiatives, organizing informative seminars, and enabling the formation of partnerships among project donors and the exchange of information.

- Management of Natural Hazards Risk

In keeping with the mandates from the Summit, the Office continued to develop projects designed to help reduce vulnerability to natural hazards. It continued to provide member states with support in executing the Inter-American Strategy for Policy on Vulnerability Reduction, Risk Management and Disaster Reduction. The Office also provided assistance to the Permanent Council's Committee on Hemispheric Security and its working groups on issues related to FONDEM, the Inter-American Committee on Natural Disaster Reduction (IACNDR), risk management, and reconstruction in the wake of the 2004 hurricanes.

The Office took part in the interagency technical meetings of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and its Working Group on Risk, Vulnerability and Disaster Impact Assessment, and participated in the Presiding Council of the ProVention Consortium with the World Bank, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO, regional multilateral banks, and nongovernmental organizations. It provided advisory services in ProVention projects on assessment of mitigation options and community-risk assessment.

In the Caribbean Hazard Mitigation Capacity Building Project (CHAMP), the Office collaborates with the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA) and with the Caribbean Development Bank's Disaster Mitigation Facility (CDB/DMFC) on the formulation of a Model National Policy for Disaster Mitigation. Steps were taken to begin adapting this model in the four pilot countries: the British Virgin Islands, Grenada, Saint Lucia, and Belize. Consultations were conducted to put together safer building practices and a curriculum for safer building practices, to be completed in early 2005. The program's central focus is generation of a common digital database (CDD) to be used to steer the evaluation of activities in hazard mapping and vulnerability assessment (HMVA), and thus facilitate hazard mitigation planning. CHAMP's activities have been reprogrammed to tackle the new problems created by the region's catastrophic 2004 hurricane season.

In cooperation with UNESCO and the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, the Hemispheric Plan for Reducing the Education Sector's Vulnerability to Disasters (EDUPLANhemisférico) featured prominently in a Latin American Conference on Education and Disaster Reduction as a contribution to the World Conference on Disaster Reduction. Another program also got under way with hemisphere-wide participation, namely, Disaster Reduction on University

Campuses in the Americas (DRUCA). One objective is its possible presentation at the Third Hemispheric Conference on Disaster Reduction in the Education Sector, to be held in July 2005.

Cooperating with international financial institutions (IFIs), the Office worked with the World Bank to prepare an analysis of opportunities for natural hazards risk management in Central America, considering its experience in disasters and its regional, national, and sectoral plans. Through training and technical advisory services, the Office continued to provide advisory services to the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) in natural hazards risk management.

The Office is partnering with the International Red Cross and its Regional Delegation in Panama in the Program on Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA) for Latin America and the Caribbean. The program includes the development of tools that communities can use to make their economic and social infrastructure less vulnerable to hazards.

The Fourth Workshop on Vulnerability Assessment Techniques (VAT-IV) was held in cooperation with the Caribbean Development Bank and the United States' National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The VAT process is on the way to being adopted by the ProVention Consortium, which includes Asia.

- Water management

The Office continued to support the countries' efforts to promote integrated and sustainable management of water resources, particularly in watersheds spanning more than one country and in coastal areas. It also continued to support projects that helped design national and regional policies for integrated management of water resources in the Americas. Specifically, these projects involve the River Plate, Amazon, Bermejo, San Francisco, San Juan, Pantanal, and Upper Paraguay River Basins and the Guarani Aquifer, and are carried out under Cooperation Agreements concluded with UNEP, UNESCO, and the World Bank and with a financial contribution from the Global Environment Facility (GEF), as well as other regional projects and initiatives. The Office also supports execution of other national projects carried out in collaboration with the Government of Brazil. A description of these projects and a brief summary of the activities carried out appear below:

The "Strategic Action Program (SAP) for the Binational Bermejo River Basin" promotes the Basin's sustainable development and prevention of the environmental degradation it is suffering, particularly as regards erosion, sedimentation, and water quality. The implementation phase of the project is in its third year, with funding from the GEF totaling 11.4 million.

The purpose of the "Strategic Action Programs for Integrated Management of Water Resources and the Sustainable Development of the San Juan River Basin and Its Coastal Zone (SJRBC)" is to contribute to the conservation and preservation of ecosystems and the region's social and economic development, and to address transboundary problems in the Basin through integrated management of its water resources and coastal zone. The project is currently finalizing the formulation of a Strategic Action Program (SAP) based on studies carried out of the water resources and the coastal area, which included a survey and analysis of physical, chemical, and biotic data and socioeconomic information, with emphasis on the gender situation and roles, cross-border human migration patterns, human migration between rural and urban areas, and climate variability. Demonstration projects were also completed. From the very outset, civil society—through grassroots organizations, nongovernmental organizations, local governments, and other parties—had a hand in designing these projects. The project has been extended until June 30, 2005, in order to complete the SAP and prepare and negotiate a bridge project to be submitted to the GEF, for close to one million dollars. Its purpose would basically be to get into place the institutional, administrative, technical, and legal infrastructure needed to carry out the SAP.

The purpose of the project “Integrated Management of Land-based Activities in the São Francisco River Basin” is to contribute to the sustainable development of the San Francisco River Basin and its adjacent coastal area. It includes an environmental analysis to identify and measure the priority issues; execute a plan involving key stakeholders, namely, the public and interested groups; strengthen and improve laws and institutions; and craft an integrated watershed management program. The project completed its activities when the Basin Committee was installed and preparation of the Ten-Year Plan for the Water Resources in the São Francisco Basin (2004-2013) was completed, approved by the Committee, and accepted by the stakeholders in the Basin.

The project “Execution of Integrated Watershed Management Practices for the Pantanal and Upper Paraguay River Basin” is for execution of the watershed management program for the Pantanal and the Upper Paraguay River Basin. The activities in this project focused on strengthening and restoring the environmental health of the ecological system, providing protection to threatened species within the Pantanal, and executing strategic activities to get to and deal with the root causes of the degradation. The project completed all the studies, test projects, and formulation of the Strategic Action Plan for Integrated Management of the Upper Paraguay River Basin and the Pantanal. That material is now being edited and will be published shortly.

The purpose of the “Guarani Aquifer System Project (GUARAS)” is to assist Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay with joint preparation and execution of a common institutional, legal, and technical framework to manage and preserve the Guarani Aquifer System for current and future generations. In the past year, the main calls for tenders have been announced, which include construction of a base map and preparation of an overall hydrogeological study. Four pilot projects have been developed and negotiated and will get under way next year. Twelve memoranda of understanding were signed with universities in the four countries, to conduct nine studies being funded by the Government of the Netherlands. A total of 24 projects in environmental education were selected to be part of the Citizenship Fund. This fund was established to encourage civil society’s active participation in the project, most especially by indigenous groups. The communication and reporting strategy was mapped out and efforts were made to publicize the activities and create an awareness of the project and its proposal in regional and national forums, including MERCOSUR, where an ad hoc group was established for the GUARAS.

The main objective of the project “Strengthening of the Water Sector in Brazil (SRH)” is to bolster the initiatives of Brazil’s Secretariat of Water Resources vis-à-vis formulation and execution of national policies in the water sector.

The project “Sustainable Development of the Parnaíba River Valley” promotes execution of an irrigation infrastructure plan for the Parnaíba River Valley. It involves a diagnostic study of the Parnaíba Basin and its socioeconomic potential. The project is crafting a plan of action for the Valley’s integrated development, including strategic goals that have to be accomplished to achieve the Basin’s sustainable development.

The project “Integrated Actions for Planning the Sustainable Development of Amazonia (PRODESAM)” is intended to help complete a development plan for Brazil’s Amazon region. It includes updating a database on that region, in order to update, expand, and modernize the existing database and assist with formulation of development plans in Brazil’s Amazonian states.

The project “Formulation of a Framework for the Sustainable Management of the Transboundary Water Resources of the River Plate Basin” is intended to develop a framework for coordinated action to move in the direction of a more integrated vision of the Basin. The project focuses particularly on the role that surface and underground waters play in mitigating the effects of climate change, and on developing a

water use strategy that will resolve or ease the stress of areas currently undergoing deterioration and/or desertification and the semi-arid area of the Gran Chaco, including proposals for pilot or demonstration activities. During the reporting period, work was done on the Transboundary Diagnostic Analyses and National Overviews for the five participating countries. A proposal is being prepared for the GEF for formulation of the Strategic Action Program. The project was extended until June 2005 in order to complete the activities in which climate-prediction models and hydrometeorological monitoring systems are being created and to complete the final documents and negotiate the next phase of the project with the GEF.

As Technical Secretariat, the Office continued to provide its assistance to the Executive Committee, the Advisory Council, and the Foundation of the Inter-American Water Resources Network (IWRN).

The Project “Development and Implementation of Mechanisms to Disseminate Lessons and Experiences in Integrated Transboundary Water Resources Management in Latin America and the Caribbean–DELTAMERICA Project” continued. Its main objective is to develop mechanisms and tools to pass along lessons learned and best practices in integrated water resource management. In 2004, the project focused on subregional dialogue and on developing and implementing virtual nodes. Web portals for Brazil and the Southern Cone (located in the Office of Argentina’s Deputy Secretary of Water Resources) were launched. Also, an interface was developed enabling portals to relay data directly to the IWRN’s central portal. Further progress was made in compiling the lessons and best practices learned from the GEF projects conducted under its International Waters Program (International River Basins and Aquifers) and other relevant projects in the Americas.

The Office continued to serve as a hub enabling articulation among the national focal points of the Inter-American Water Resources Network with regard to the Hemispheric Follow-up Meeting to the IV World Water Forum.

Activities associated with General Assembly mandates

As a follow-up to the efforts started under the Caribbean Planning for Adaptation to Climate Change Project (CPACC), the Office received a request from the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to execute a one-year project funded by the Global Environment Facility. The goal of the project will be to improve Saint Vincent and the Grenadines’ preparedness to respond and adapt to climate change. The project got under way in April 2004 and will be completed in early 2005. The activities include an improved capacity to monitor sea level and climate; an evaluation of the technological needs to adapt them to climate change; an update of greenhouse gas emissions, and a campaign to educate the public and make it aware of the activities on climate change, targeted at both the general public and at specific sectors.

Adaptation to climate change is being introduced into Caribbean development plans through an initiative adopted by the Caribbean Development Bank in conjunction with the OAS and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). The objective of the initiative is to make natural disaster assessment and climate change a factor in the preparation of projects and the Bank’s own review process, in partnership with the participating countries. The Office is providing its support to this initiative by integrating policies on climate-change adaptation and disaster mitigation for Saint Lucia.

Execution of CIDI’s integral cooperation project

The Office is conducting a FEMCIDI-financed project in the border region between Suriname and Brazil, jointly with the indigenous communities of Trio and Wayana. The purpose of the project is to preserve and expand the cultural and physical environment, sustainable development, education, capacity-building,

health, and safety of the communities in that region. Some of the activities completed in 2004 were the creation of lanes to enable communities to communicate with each other; general training in health, and surveillance and supervision of indigenous lands to prevent outside incursions.

Activities with international organizations

The Office collaborated with the IDB on the preparations for the Regional Policy Dialogue among Vice Ministers of Environment of the Americas. It also took part in the subregional preparatory meetings that the IDB organized with the Vice Ministers, and collaborated in preparing the report that the IDB and other agencies will present to the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The Office also worked with UNEP's Geneva office to prepare a report on building capacities for environmental management in a trade-liberalization environment.

Office of Scholarships, Training, and Information Technology

The mission of the Office is to help develop the human resources of the countries of the region through the Scholarship and Training Programs and use of the new information and communication technologies. The Office is made up of the scholarships and training area and the information technology area, both geared toward developing human potential.

In 2004, the Office of Scholarships, Training, and Information Technology continued to help build capacities in the countries of the region by putting into practice a number of strategies geared toward expanding the scholarship programs and using its resources more efficiently. The strategies put into practice have focused on the following:

- Maximizing the number of scholarships awarded with the available funds by using innovative mechanisms to improve the program's cost-benefit ratio.
- Identifying and implementing strategies for greater access to higher education and professional and technical training.
- Establishing new mechanisms that better match national development priorities.
- Developing alliances and partnerships with existing scholarship programs in the member states and in the permanent observer states.
- Consolidating and expanding the use of new information and communication technologies (ICTs) to train human resources.

Here, the Office has two main objectives. The first has to do with execution of the Scholarship and Training Programs, cooperating with the member states in their efforts to achieve their integral development objectives by cultivating and modernizing their human resources in the priority areas established by the Summits of the Americas, in CIDI's Strategic Plan for Partnership for Development, and by the Organization's General Assembly. In furtherance of that objective, in 2004 the OAS Scholarship and Training Programs awarded almost 1,300 on-campus and distance-education scholarships to qualified persons from the OAS member states. The second objective is to expand human-resource training through the use of ICTs; to accomplish that objective, in 2004 it helped train over 5,500 people through the Educational Portal of the Americas.

More efficient use of resources

The co-funding of OAS scholarships by a broad consortium of universities in the region, in combination with the OAS' mechanism for placing scholarship recipients, has been one of the most effective initiatives put into practice in recent years. Between 2001 and 2004, partnerships of this type multiplied the funds

available to the OAS Scholarship and Training Programs by combining those funds with the resources of the universities participating in the consortium. Thus far, cofinancing agreements have been concluded with almost 60 universities in Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Jamaica, Mexico, Peru, the United States, Uruguay, and Venezuela. By more effectively using the Organization's resources, the number of scholarships for studies has gradually but markedly increased in the last three years, thereby maximizing the return on the budgeted funds assigned to the Office for graduate scholarships. It is important to note that the scholarships for graduate studies and research account for around 88 percent of the funds appropriated in the budget for scholarships and training. However, as Table 1 shows, there has been an increase of almost 50 percent between 2001 and 2004.

Table 1: Evolution of Scholarships for Graduate Studies and Research

	2001	2002	2003	2004	% change 2001-2004
Number of scholarships and extensions granted	282	348	469	421	49.3
Approved budget (US\$ thousands)	6,364.4	5,603.0	5,603.0	5,603.0	-12.0

Greater access to higher education and training

In 2004, the Office of Scholarships, Training, and Information Technology stepped up its efforts to expand its distance-education activities. This is the area that offers the greatest potential because, in cost-benefit terms, it can do more to open doors to higher education and training. Distance education has made important strides in pedagogical efficiency. Accordingly, the Office is currently in an advanced stage of negotiations with Spain's Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (UNED) and with Mexico's Instituto Tecnológico de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey (ITESM). Once those negotiations have concluded, they will open up greater distance-education opportunities, enabling qualified persons from Latin America and the Caribbean to pursue online studies.

Establishment of strategic partnerships with other entities that grant scholarships

Partnership with scholarship programs in the member states to cofinance scholarships for studies abroad was another effective strategy for maximizing efficiency in the use of funds from national scholarship programs both by supplementing the OAS funds and by capitalizing the agreements that the OAS has concluded with numerous universities and interagency programs.

In addition to the joint fellowship program in ecology that the OAS Scholarship and Training Programs have had with the Fulbright Program for some years now, in December 2004 the General Secretariat of the OAS, the Ministry of Planning and Cooperation of Chile (MIDEPLAN), and Chile's International Cooperation Agency signed a cooperation agreement setting out the terms and conditions for cofinancing Chilean scholarship recipients pursuing studies in universities or specialized centers of excellence in the OAS member states. Under the terms of this agreement, the "Presidente de la República" Scholarship Program will have access to the institutions of higher learning that are part of the OAS University Consortium, thereby getting the advantage of the lower tuition fees and other financial aid mechanisms established under the agreements signed with the OAS. Similar negotiations are under way with national institutions in Argentina, Brazil, and Colombia.

Talks are also in progress with the Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional (AECI) for a graduate scholarship program jointly funded by the two organizations, and with the Fundación Carolina, also of Spain.

Convergence with national priorities

The chief criterion for selecting scholarship recipients are the priority areas listed in CIDI's Strategic Plan. Thus, the Office reviews the Strategic Plan and extracts from it a list of eligible areas of study. The Office also examines the results of the regional programming meetings for FEMCIDI-funded projects, and the needs and priorities of the member states.

Accordingly, efforts have been made to have provisions incorporated into the policies and regulations governing the OAS scholarship programs to make such agreements procedurally possible.

Scholarships awarded in 2004

- Academic Studies Scholarships

The Graduate Studies Program awards scholarships for graduate (master's and doctoral) studies in institutions of higher learning in the region. The number of students pursuing master's degrees and doctorates with OAS scholarships has increased steadily. Nonetheless, the demand for the educational opportunities required to build institutional capacities in new areas is growing exponentially and has been a topic of particular concern at the Summits of the Americas and in OAS mandates. In 2004, the OAS awarded a total of 421 scholarships for on-campus graduate studies: of these, 265 were new scholarships and 156 were extensions of existing scholarships. The estimated worth of those scholarships is approximately US\$5.6 million. A breakdown of the scholarships awarded in 2004 appears in Appendix F to this report.

For its part, the Undergraduate Studies Program awards scholarships to eligible students to complete the last two years of undergraduate studies for a bachelor's degree, *Licenciado*, or equivalent degree. While the program is for English-speaking students from the Caribbean, General Assembly resolution AG/RES. 1387 (XXVI-O/96) directed that the benefits of this program be extended to Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Paraguay, provided external resources were obtained. In 2004, the OAS awarded 114 scholarships for undergraduate on-campus studies: of these, 102 were new scholarships and the other 12 were extensions of existing scholarships. The estimated cost is approximately US\$0.7 million.

- Professional Development Scholarships

The professional development scholarships offer opportunities for people to update their professional expertise in areas of specialization related to the priority areas of the OAS and CIDI. These scholarships are offered by the governments of the OAS member states and permanent observers, regional or international organizations, public and private institutions, and institutions of higher learning through the OAS and with OAS co-funding. They are awarded for on-campus training or distance education, through programs offered online and by the Educational Portal of the Americas and other institutions. Professional development scholarships are also offered for specific programs of studies proposed by the inter-American committees of the OAS or by the technical units of the General Secretariat. This type of scholarship has been awarded primarily in the areas of telecommunications, international law, human rights, and journalism. In 2004, the OAS awarded a total of 727 professional development scholarships, at an approximate cost of US\$1.3 million.

The Educational Portal of the Americas

Established pursuant to a mandate from the Third Summit of the Americas and officially inaugurated in September 2001 during the Meeting of Ministers of Education (Punta del Este, Uruguay), the Portal was created to help train human resources through the use of information and communications technologies (ICTs). In existence for three years, the Educational Portal of the Americas (www.educoea.org) has by now helped to train more than 10,000 professionals across the region. It has reached more than 200 countries and territories worldwide, with over 184 million visits and approximately a thousand new users registered each month (additional information is available in Appendix F to this report).

Its Virtual Classroom, an online interactive teaching-learning environment, has continued to offer such courses as “Quality in Basic Education” (in English, Spanish, and Portuguese); “Introduction to the Formulation of E-Government Strategies” (in Spanish and English); “Food Education”; “How Should Ethics, Social Capital, and Development Be Taught in the University?”; and “Science, Technology, and Society: Contributions to be gained from the gender focus.” Some 18 courses in CIDI’s priority areas are in preparation and will be offered in 2005.

One of the most visited services in 2004 was the Portal’s Digital Library, with close to 100 journals and scientific monographs available at no cost, including La Educ@ción, the INTERAMER collection, the Inter-American Review of Bibliography (RIB), and the series “Trends for a Common Future.” The Portal has also continued to maintain and update its database with over 4,500 programs and courses from over 1,500 accredited universities in the region. Also, every month it carries news and events related to distance education in the region, and circulates information on the OAS Scholarship and Training Programs.

Institute of Advanced Studies for the Americas

The Institute of Advanced Studies for the Americas (INEAM), an initiative of the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Inter-American Organization for Higher Education (IOHE), is a virtual campus that uses a combination of traditional, online, and multimedia methods to offer its programs and courses. These include the Educational Portal of the Americas. INEAM also offers educational services by availing itself of contributions from universities and centers of excellence everywhere in the region. Thanks to the support received from external sources of funding, INEAM is able to offer financial aid (partial or full) to applicants selected from the member states, as shown in Appendix F.

In mid-2004, an INEAM honorary committee was created to provide guidance and receive support to carry out INEAM’s activities. Its members are academic authorities, former heads of government, and members of civil society and the private sector, as well as observers from international organizations such as the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the World Bank, the United Nations, and UNESCO. INEAM also has other honorary bodies, such as its Governing Council, which oversees INEAM’s plans, projects, and activities, and four technical advisory committees composed of experts in their respective areas: (a) the Academic Committee, which assesses the current needs for human-resource development with a view to the region’s prospective development; (b) the Accreditation Committee, which evaluates online and/or multimedia educational offerings to determine whether they qualify for academic accreditation at the inter-American level; (c) the Educational Management Committee, which analyzes the current and future capacities of the region’s institutions of higher learning and universities to develop educational services through ICTs; and (d) the Committee on Multimedia, which oversees the educational quality of INEAM’s services through the Educational Portal of the Americas. It is important to underscore the fact that all the members of these bodies provide their services and cooperation *ad honorem*.

The First Meeting of the Accreditation Committee was held at the Universidad de Pompeu Fabra, in Barcelona, Spain, on June 14 and 15, where the group examined and worked on the activities in its work program, prepared recommendations and guiding principles, and elected its officers.

As part of the activities planned for the fourth and final year of organization of the Educational Portal of the Americas and in furtherance of an agreement established in 2000, in December 2004 a memorandum of understanding was signed between the University of New Mexico's ISTEAC (Ibero-American Science and Technology Education Consortium) and the OAS, to create an INEAM regional academic center at ISTEAC headquarters in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The center will host on-site meetings and seminars, further efforts to raise funds from the private sector, hold the first meeting of INEAM's Governing Council in mid-2005, and support and maintain the Portal's technological infrastructure, with no financial implications for the OAS. Moreover, negotiations are in progress to establish subregional INEAM centers in Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, Trinidad and Tobago, and elsewhere.

Special Events

The OAS provided technical and administrative support to the Fifth International Event in Education, Professional Training and New Technologies, Virtual Educa 2004, held in Barcelona, Spain, from June 16 to 18, 2004, as part of the World Forum of Cultures. More than 1,200 people from all the OAS member states and the European Union participated in the many activities, workshops, and meetings staged at that event. The participants also established the International Association Virtual Educa (ASIVE) to organize future events.

With private sector support and as part of Virtual Educa 2004, INEAM awarded the Inter-American Prize in New Technologies to two initiatives: "Robotics and Learning by Design," presented by Costa Rica's Omar Dengo Foundation, and "Portable Technology in the Classroom," presented by the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile. Honorable mentions went to three other initiatives: "*Red Telar*" [*Todos en La Red*] of Argentina; "Digital Geo-technologies at the Secondary Level" from the Universidade do Vale do Paraíba (UNIVAP), Brazil; and "Virtual School" from Caldas, Colombia. Special awards in the field of social responsibility went to the Bizcaya Provincial Council and to REDOX, for their initiative "DEMA Virtual del Futuro"; and "Quality of Education" to Dr. Gabriel Ferraté Pascual, President of the Universidad Abierta de Cataluña for what he has done to develop and strengthen the knowledge society through the virtual "meta campuses."

Office of Trade, Growth, and Competitiveness

With Executive Order 04-01, corr. 1, the Trade Unit became the Office of Trade, Growth, and Competitiveness, responsible for the topics of tourism, growth and competitiveness, trade, and the Foreign Trade Information System (SICE). Upon issuance of Executive Order 05-03, corr. 1, the Office was reorganized and is currently composed of the Division of Trade and Information, the Division of Growth and Competitiveness, the Division of Tourism and Small Enterprise, and the Inter-American Ports Division.

In resolution AG/RES. 2014 (XXXIV-O/04), adopted at its thirty-fourth regular session, held in Quito, Ecuador, the General Assembly reaffirmed the OAS' commitment to supporting the free trade and economic integration process in the Hemisphere. It also reaffirmed its support for the FTAA Hemispheric Cooperation Program.

Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA)

Between February 2004 and February 2005, the Office provided assistance to the member states related to two types of forums in the FTAA process: the meetings of the FTAA Negotiating Groups, and the meeting of the deputy trade ministers held in Puebla, Mexico, in February 2004. These activities were coordinated by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), which are the two institutions partnered with the OAS on the Tripartite Committee (TC).

The work done by the Office to support the Negotiating Groups centered around their mandate and included the compilations, studies, analysis, and technical assistance that those groups requested.

In the Ministerial Declaration of Miami, the Ministers made a number of specific requests of the Tripartite Committee, namely: (1) that the Tripartite Committee and the Consultative Group on Smaller Economies (CGSE) continue to support the Trade Negotiations Committee (TNC) to keep the latter's report on the progress achieved in relation to the treatment of differences in the levels of development and the size of economies in each of the Negotiating Groups up to date; (2) that the CGSE, with the Tripartite Committee's support, "present recommendations to the TNC ... on financing methods and facilities to address the adjustment needs resulting from the differences in the levels of development and size of the economies of the Hemisphere"; and (3) that the countries, with the Tripartite Committee's assistance, finalize the trade capacity-building (TCB) strategies as appropriate and organize subregional meetings with donors to continue discussions on the TCB strategies.

At the present time, FTAA negotiations have been suspended and may resume at any time, whenever the participating governments so decide. The Cochairs of the FTAA (Brazil and the United States) planned a meeting for January 26 and 27, 2005, to try to arrive at a consensus document that will enable the FTAA negotiations to resume.

Foreign Trade Information System

The purpose of the Foreign Trade Information system (SICE) is to provide complete and current information on trade in the Hemisphere, in the OAS' four official languages. Since the SICE data was first entered on a web page (www.sice.oas.org), the number of users has increased steadily. In 2004, the site had 6,000 visitors a day.

SICE has documents on the following topics: the FTAA process; trade agreements and bilateral investment treaties between the member countries of the OAS; commercial arbitration; e-commerce; competition policy; intellectual property rights; technical barriers to trade; services; trade-related institutions; general information on the countries; businesses and chambers of commerce; and quantitative data, including trade flows, tariffs, and prices.

With the Administrative Secretariat of the FTAA, the SICE maintains the FTAA's Document Distribution Service, which was introduced on May 1, 1999. That service allows restricted access to documents generated in the FTAA negotiation process. By late 2004, the documents available at the site numbered over 28,000.

As part of the Tripartite Committee, SICE administers the FTAA's official website (www.ftaa-alca.org). This site contains all the public documents from the FTAA process, databases, publications, information on the progress of the negotiations process, and an expanded section featuring contributions from civil society and the results of the workshops conducted with representatives of civil society.

As a function of mandates received from the ministerial meeting held in November 1999 in Toronto, the Office-SICE, as a member of the Tripartite Committee, is in charge of keeping an updated calendar, with the deadlines set by the negotiating groups to receive input from delegations.

Inter-institutional cooperation

As part of the Tripartite Committee, the Office continues to work in close cooperation with the IDB and ECLAC to provide assistance to the various FTAA bodies. It has also worked on specific projects with other international organizations, such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the World Bank, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and subregional organizations like the Latin American Integration Association (ALADI), the Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI), the Andean Community, the Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery (CRNM), MERCOSUR, and the Secretariat for Central American Economic Integration (SIECA).

Technical cooperation

Following approval of the FTAA Hemispheric Cooperation Program (HCP) and with the inclusion of the topic of cooperation for trade capacity-building in other free trade agreements, the Office has expanded its menu of activities to assist the countries in this area. This menu includes the following areas of support:

- Support in mapping national or subregional trade capacity-building strategies

In 2004, efforts were made to help some countries modernize their trade capacity-building strategies. Those strategies were developed in 2003, during the first meeting of the HCP donors, where the Office worked with 11 countries to assist them in formulating their national or subregional strategies that define, prioritize, and articulate the cooperation they need in the area of trade. The Office's assistance was in three main spheres: preparation for negotiations, implementation of trade commitments, and adaptation to integration, including productive capacity and competitiveness in the region.

- Training of government officials and dialogue with civil society on trade policy

The following were among the Office's activities in 2004:

- *Advanced Training Program for Government Officials on multilateral and regional approaches to trade for the Americas.* Course organized and financed by the OAS, in partnership with the WTO, delivered at the University of the West Indies in Barbados and at Georgetown University, in Washington, D.C. The WTO has recommended that this course serve as a model for short courses on Trade Policy under the Doha Development Agenda.
- *Training Program in Trade Policy for Professionals in Barbados,* in February and March 2004, at the Center for International Services (CIS) of the University of the West Indies and the Centre for Trade Policy and Law (CTPL) at Carleton University in Canada.
- *Master's Degree in Trade Policy, presented in partnership with CIDA and the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus, Barbados.* The purpose of this program is to train, over a three-year period, at least 60 professionals, including 40 from the OECS, in International Trade Policy, to address specific vulnerable areas unique to the subregion. The program is organized to include six months of professional experience on the Cave Hill campus of the University of the West Indies, in an institutional setting where the skill

- sets needed in the OECS and in the other CARICOM countries in the area of international trade policy can be examined.
- *Round of workshops, conferences, and discussions on trade policy, for high-ranking executives, managers, and other leaders.* This training modality, targeted primarily at the entrepreneurial sector, was successfully used in Panama, Central America, and the Andean Community, in partnership with the ministries responsible for trade policy and business associations. This round has been designed to strengthen skills related to trade and to promote dialogue between the public and private sectors and civil society.
 - *Program to Strengthen Capacities for Implementation and Administration of Free Trade Agreements (FTAs).* In May 2004, the Office of the Under Secretary for International Trade Negotiations of Mexico’s Secretariat of Economy organized the Seminar titled “Hemispheric Experiences in the Administration of Free Trade Agreements.” A total of 13 Latin American countries participated. The program had funding from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). Based on the success of this first seminar and in response to requests for follow-up activities, the Office and the Secretariat of Economy of Mexico have designed a Program to Build Trade Capacities related to the Implementation and Administration of FTAs. The program is in large part based on Mexico’s own experience in this area (which the Latin American countries regard as a good model). However, it also takes into account the best practices of countries like Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, and the United States.
 - *“Civil Society and Free Trade”* Projects in Guatemala and Colombia, in conjunction with the Canadian Foundation for the Americas. The Office worked with the Canadian Foundation for the Americas (FOCAL) on implementing projects in Guatemala and Colombia to assist consultations with civil society within the framework of the negotiation of FTAs with the United States. In Guatemala, the project furthered the CAFTA dialogue among the differing groups of Guatemalan civil society. They convened a Consultative Committee that set the guidelines as to how best to present the topic in 20 seminars nationwide. In Colombia, the Office assisted the project with a series of workshops in 16 cities in the country. The workshops were attended by representatives of the private sector, civil society, and the academic community, and by journalists. These workshops will publicize and further the dialogue on the FTA with the United States and will examine issues related to the trade agenda and to the domestic agenda for competitiveness.
 - *Program to support initiatives to modernize government procurement systems.* The Office is working with the member states on an analysis of government procurement systems and on orchestrating technical cooperation initiatives aimed at supporting the development of strategies and the design of projects to modernize government procurement systems. The initial thrust is online publication of information on government procurement transactions. During this reporting period, subregional coordination meetings were held in the Andean Community and in Central America. Furthermore, with the support of Brazil’s Ministry of Planning and the Sao Paulo state government, a Latin American Seminar on Government E-Procurement was held where the Inter-American Network of Government E-Procurement was launched. Also held during this period was the first session of an e-forum on government procurement, which went over the Chilean experience in this area. Future forums were organized to examine the experiences of Mexico, the United States, and Costa Rica in government e-procurement. In addition, national profiles were put together with the history, current state, and trends in the development of government e-procurement systems in 12 member states of the OAS. To do this, the Office has specific contributions from the United States Permanent Mission to the OAS and from the Institute for Connectivity in the Americas

- (ICA). The OAS Office of Scholarships and the United States General Services Administration (GSA) helped with the Latin American Seminar in Brazil.
- *Program to support the participation of micro-, small-, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in government procurement and access to e-markets and online technical services.* The Office compiled information on support for MSMEs' participation in government procurement and e-commerce, with financing from FEMCIDI and from the United States Permanent Mission to the OAS. That information will be circulated over the Internet. The Office has also established cooperative relations with Brazil's Ministry of Planning and SEBRAE, and with the United States General Services Administration (GSA), given the wealth of experience these institutions have in organizing MSME training programs to prepare them to participate in government procurement.
 - *Program to support MSMEs' use of Internet services and information technology in business operations.* The Office has been supporting the countries of Central America and the Andean Community to help them build up the institutional framework that will support modernization of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprise, endeavoring to make better use of Internet services and information and communications technologies to handle the MSMEs' needs in such areas as setting up businesses, association and supply chain, export management, and participation in government procurement. In the FEMCIDI-supported Central American project on this subject, the Office helped stage two meetings of deputy ministers in order to coordinate the project and stage three Central American workshops. One result of these workshops has been the creation of an Ad Hoc Committee of Deputy Ministers for the Promotion and Development of Micro-, Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprises. The ministers and presidents of Central America have already endorsed that committee's creation. This Office is working with the Committee to prepare and promote a Central American Strategy for Development of E-MSMEs in the subregion. The Office has also established the terms of a collaborative effort with the General Secretariat of the Andean Community and with CLAMPI, the Latin American Confederation of Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprise, to promote the E-MSMEs in the countries of the Andean Community.
 - With support from CIDA, the *Program in Trade Capacity-Building for the Caribbean* included execution of the following projects: impact studies, modernization of laws, trade reference centers, public information and a "single window" to facilitate investment, and establishment of a consultative committee.

Tourism

The annual tourism work plan is guided by the mandates and recommendations from the various Summits of the Americas, the Inter-American Program for Sustainable Tourism Development, the Plans of Action of the Inter-American Travel Congresses, and the CIDI Strategic Plan for Partnership for Development 2002-2005.

Support for tourism is rooted in an appreciation of the industry's potential as an engine for sustainable economic growth and development and in the need to keep diversification, innovation, and upgrading of the tourism product ongoing in order to improve the member states' competitiveness in the international tourism marketplace. To accomplish these macro objectives and to use what little human and financial resources it has to maximum advantage, the Office's emphasis has been on an exchange of lessons learned and best practices among member states, particularly as regards the small tourism businesses. This report summarizes the Office's principal activities in 2004 and the first two months of 2005.

- Formulation of Policies and Plans

In 2004, personnel from the Office participated in various subregional meetings in Central America and the Caribbean. Consultations were also conducted with a number of South American countries about their policies and plans.

- Education and Training

Under the *USAID-sponsored Small Tourism Enterprise Project (STEP)*, programs have been implemented for training and certification for small hotels, with partners like CIDA-CPEC and the American Hotel and Lodging Association (AHLA).

As part of the *Local Cuisine and Restaurant Sector Development Project*, financed with FEMCIDI funds, the Office worked with the Culinary Institute of America on implementation of seminars and workshops in the Caribbean.

Under the *Training for Competitiveness and Tourism Growth Project*, the Office began to organize data on the impact that the free trade agreements have on the tourism business and to design activities that increase awareness of these impacts within the tourism sector.

The *Central American Small Hotels Assistance Project (PAPH)* has worked to develop handbooks that focus on quality service, planning, advertising, marketing, and the use of the new digital technologies. These handbooks have been used in training programs in the region.

In the security area, under the STEP Project the Office has run six seminars in the Caribbean region targeting people working in the hospitality business. The Office has also finalized a cooperation agreement with the United States Department of State for implementation of a project on “*Disaster Preparedness of Tourism Infrastructure in CARICOM.*” Under the *Central American Small Hotels Assistance Project (PAPH)*, financed with funds from FEMCIDI, a handbook was developed on “Tourism Security,” adapted to the region’s specific needs.

- Institutional development

Under the cooperation agreement with the Caribbean Tourism Organization, the Office was instrumental in implementing programs to promote careers in tourism and make young people aware of the opportunities it offers. Through this collaboration and with the Caribbean Hotel Association’s participation, a course was held in Barbados to provide instruction to trainers.

- Tourism Product Development

Progress has been made toward creating quality standards. As part of the *Small Tourism Enterprise Project (STEP)*, best practices have been singled out and publicized. Efforts have also been made to make the public more conscious of the environment and its importance. Work has also been done on a program for environmental assessment of tourism establishments by staging a series of eight seminars.

The *Central American Small Hotels Assistance Project (PAPH)* has worked to establish quality standards and a system for rating small hotels in the Central American region. Standards and rules have been established to reduce the impact that these small hotels have on the environment. Small hotel associations are being formed and strengthened in each Central American country and their economic participation is being promoted in the new programs being proposed to complement the project and to be funded by other

institutions. The project has also endeavored to promote the Central American tourism product as a region, and a Guide to Small Hotels in Central America has been put together.

The Office has been providing assistance to the Central American member states to develop the proposed *Coffee Tourism Route Project*. The goal of the Coffee Tourism Route Project is to generate proceeds from local tourism by developing tourism attractions associated with the coffee industry. This will help the participating communities diversify their economies and mitigate the effects of the crisis in the coffee business. The project started in Costa Rica and has spread throughout Central America.

- Data processing and technology transfer systems

Assistance continued to be provided to small businesses in the Caribbean and Central America in the use of computers, their application in the work of the business, the creation of web pages, and the use of the Internet as a communications and marketing tool.

Thanks to the cooperation of the “*Fundación Turismo para Todos*” and its website, a virtual resource center has been created for the small hotels of the Central American region. That website has also been used to circulate training materials. (<http://www.paph-oea-cct.com/mk>)

Finally, as part of the STEP Project new “resource centers” were equipped in two Caribbean member states.

Inter-American Committee on Ports

Established by General Assembly resolution AG/RES. 1573 (XXVIII-0/98), the purpose of the Inter-American Committee on Ports is to serve as a permanent inter-American forum for the member states of the Organization, in order to strengthen cooperation in port development, with active private sector participation.

To rise to the challenges posed by the port sector and to carry out the CIP’s Plan of Action 2004-2007, the Secretariat conducted activities calculated to achieve the following objectives:

- Strengthening the inter-American dialogue on ports

The CIP is the only forum where the highest-ranking government port authorities from the countries of the Americas are able to confer. This kind of dialogue is essential to fulfilling the mandates from its meetings, from the meetings of the Western Hemisphere Transport Initiative, and from the Summits of the Americas. To that end, the Secretariat held the VI Meeting of the Executive Board and meetings of its subcommittees: Policy and Coordination; Port Planning and Management; Statistics, Costs, and Fees; Port Development for Cruise Tourism; River and Lake Port Development; Training; and Regional Port Development (Managua, December 2004). It also held additional meetings of its Subcommittee on Policy and Coordination (Washington D.C., March 2004) and of its Subcommittee on Port Planning and Management (Santiago, Chile, November 2004).

- Cooperation for inter-American port development

With the following activities, geared to enabling port modernization and development, the following was accomplished:

1. Promotion of the Agreement on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance among Inter-American Port Authorities. The agreement, which establishes the legal framework for

that cooperation, was approved by the CIP in 2001. In December 2004, Ecuador, Chile, and Mexico signed the agreement, bringing the total number of parties to 17. Argentina and Peru have already ratified the agreement.

2. Training. Training is the Committee's priority cooperative activity. The Secretariat planned, programmed, and implemented activities and arranged for the additional outside funding needed to carry them out. In all, 600 officials and executives from the member states benefited from these projects.
 - Courses and seminars: Port Security, Efficiency, and Investment, Lima, Peru; Costs and Fee Regulation in Ports, Lima, Peru; Port Management, Madrid, Spain; Port Technology, Operations, and Environmental Management, Santander, Spain; Port Reforms, Managua, Nicaragua; and Strategic Port Tariffs Workshop, Managua, Nicaragua.
 - Western Hemispheric Port Security Conference (Miami, Florida, February 2004) on the Implementation of the International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code of the International Maritime Organization (IMO).
 - Funds were obtained from the Valenciaports Foundation for fellowships to enable executives to participate in master's degree programs in port management and intermodal transport at the Universidad Pontificia de Comillas, Spain.
3. Specialized technical assistance was provided to the port authorities and administrations directly, to meet specific needs. Prominent here was the support to the:
 - General Bureau of Ports, Mexico, the United States Maritime Administration, and Argentina's Transportation Secretariat, for organization of meetings of the Technical Advisory Groups they chair, relations with associate members, publication of an information document, and so forth.
 - Venezuela's INEA, on the subject of "women's participation in the port sector."
 - The Dominican Port Authority, to prepare a project eligible for a grant.
4. Specialized information and promotion of the CIP. Responding to requests for information, the Secretariat prepared reports, studies, documents, the CIP brochure, and a periodic port newsletter. It kept current the CIP's portal at www.oas.org/cip, and started publication of the magazine *CIP* to promote the sector and report port-related information.
 - Intensification of relations with international cooperation agencies and the private sector

Efforts were stepped up to raise funds and other resources and to better earmark those resources for projects of mutual interest. To that end, the Secretariat:

- Signed a memorandum of understanding, between the American Association of Port Authorities (AAPA) and the OAS/CIP, to cooperate in training, technical assistance, participation in events, and sharing of best practices.
- Engaged in activities of mutual interest (courses, seminars, internships) with Spain's *Puertos del Estado*.
- Became a member of the Executive Board of the Ibero-American Port Forum.
- Participated in and supported activities conducted by: the AAPA; the IDB; the World Bank; ECLAC; the Andean Community of Nations; the Port Training Conference; UNCTAD; the Central American Maritime Transportation Council; the Ibero-American Institute of

- Logistics; the Secretariat of the Western Hemisphere Transport Initiative; the International Maritime Organization; the National Port Enterprise, Nicaragua; the Oversight Agency for Private Investment in Transportation Infrastructure, Peru; and Spain's *Puertos del Estado*, Port of Valencia, and Port of Santander.
- The International Association of Ports and Harbors recognized the CIP as one of its "friendly organizations."
 - The following are among the autonomous entities that served as associate members of the CIP's Technical Advisory Groups and contributed technological and financial resources: the *Administración General de Puertos*, the Port of Bahía Blanca, and Mollendo Equipment Co. Inc. (Argentina); the Maritime Security Council, Great Lakes, the Port of Miami, the Port of Houston, the Port of Texas City, Stevedoring Services of America, and Rapiscan Security Products (United States); the Port Security Program (Guatemala); Abarloa, ICAVE, NAVEGA and OCUPA (Mexico); INDESMAR and TISUR (Peru); and the Port of Maracaibo (Venezuela), among others.

The Secretariat provides support to the Committee's officers in the performance of their functions and technical and administrative services to the Committee; coordinates and executes activities and cooperation projects entrusted to it; keeps the CIP's institutional memory; and organizes its meetings. It also raises external resources for its operations and administers those resources. This Office receives funds from the OAS Regular Fund to cover the cost of the Secretary's position; any other expenses are paid out of funds provided by the port authorities and other outside contributions.

Office of Development Policies and Programs

The Office of Development Policies and Programs (ODPP) comprises the Division of Development Policies, which serves as Secretariat of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI) and its subsidiary bodies, and the Division of Development Programs, which administers and evaluates the Special Multilateral Fund of CIDI (FEMCIDI) and other partnership-for-development projects and activities.

Division of Development Policies

The Division coordinated the activities involved in the follow-up of mandates issued by the General Assembly, the Ninth Regular Meeting of CIDI, and those adopted at the various sectoral meetings, both the ministerials and the meetings of the inter-American committees.

In cooperation with other offices of the General Secretariat, the Division planned, coordinated, and supported the preparation and holding of the following sectoral meetings: (1) the First Meeting of the Inter-American Committee on Social Development; (2) the Second Inter-American Meeting of Ministers of Culture and Highest Appropriate Authorities; (3) the Fourth Meeting of the Inter-American Committee on Science and Technology; (4) the Second Meeting of the Inter-American Committee on Education; and (5) the First Meeting of Ministers and High Authorities on Science and Technology. A more detailed account of the agreements that the member states adopted at each meeting appears in the chapter on the activities of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI).

As Secretariat of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI), the Division planned and coordinated CIDI's Ninth Meeting. In preparation for this meeting, the DDP organized the necessary meetings of the various organs and prepared reports and technical documents on the subjects in its assigned area; it also assisted with the exchange of specialized information related to cooperation policies in the Strategic Plan's priority areas that figured on CIDI's agenda.

Finally, the Division was responsible for planning and coordinating the 15th Regular Meeting of the Management Board of the Inter-American Agency for Cooperation and Development (IACD), held at Organization headquarters on May 3, 2004. It also assisted the Board by processing online inquiries concerning the management of the technical cooperation projects financed with funds from the Special Multilateral Fund of CIDI (FEMCIDI).

Division of Development Programs

- FEMCIDI Programming 2004

The Executive Secretariat for Integral Development (SEDI) received 129 project profiles to consider for the programming cycle of the Special Multilateral Fund of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (FEMCIDI) 2004. The member states' pledges to FEMCIDI 2004 totaled US\$7,648,228, distributed among the various sectoral accounts. That breakdown is itemized in the pages that follow.

The project profiles that met the established selection requirements were referred to the specialized units and offices of the General Secretariat with the request that they give their technical opinion on those profiles. Based on those opinions and on the level of pledges in each sectoral account, the Executive Secretariat identified those project profiles that, given their technical merit, could make a contribution toward satisfying the member states' development needs. As a result, 116 projects presented by 33 countries were included in the Preliminary Proposed Programming. As in previous years, the number of projects presented and the amount of funding being requested far exceeded the funds pledged. Consequently, a number of projects were dropped from the Preliminary Proposed Programming, because they were wanting in technical merit and because the needed funds were not available.

The Management Board of the IACD authorized an exception for the FEMCIDI Programming Cycle for 2004 in the form of changes to certain dates in the programming calendar. The changes gave the member states until December 15, 2004, to make good on their pledges. Between October and December, the Secretariat worked with the institutions proposing projects to polish the proposals.

The recommendations that the Nonpermanent Specialized Committees (CENPES) make on these projects in May 2005 will be sent to the IACD's Management Board which by mid-March is to approve the Programming of Partnership Activities FEMCIDI 2004 (for execution in 2005).

- Execution of FEMCIDI 2003

Early in 2004, execution of 99 projects got under way. These were the projects that the CENPES had recommended at their October 2003 meeting and that the IACD's Management Board had approved in November of that year. The total amount involved was US\$9,226,346. The projects funded and a breakdown of the appropriation by sectoral account appears below:

- Trade: 10 projects for US\$798,602;
- Social development: 13 projects for US\$937,289;
- Education for US\$3,026,117;
- Culture: 4 projects for US\$131,843;
- Science and technology: 10 projects for US\$2,047,984;
- Democracy: 6 projects for US\$382,569;
- Tourism: 6 projects for US\$761,406;
- Environment: 10 projects for US\$1,012,842; and
- Integral development: 1 project for US\$ 127,694.

The Division collaborated with the executing institutions on preparation of the project execution plans; it processed transfers of funds; in cooperation with the Offices of General Secretariat in the Member States, it helped monitor execution and analyze progress reports, and made suggestions and technical observations as to the documentation to be presented to the CENPES in the case of multi-year projects.

- Training in project formulation

The Division worked with the member states to train personnel in how to use the instruments needed to formulate regional and national partnership projects that are applying for funding from international financial institutions and from regional and national cooperation agencies. In 2004, workshops were held, targeted at government officials and officials of nongovernmental organizations in the Bahamas, Barbados, Paraguay, Ecuador, Guatemala, Costa Rica, and Nicaragua. In all, over 200 people received training.

- Evaluation of FEMCIDI-financed projects

In 2003, the Division began to coordinate the first round of evaluations of projects funded by FEMCIDI, which ended in the first quarter of 2004. The evaluations of 36 projects (26 multinationals and 10 nationals) were done by independent consultants. The sampling included projects from each geographic subregion of the Organization, and from each priority area set out in the Strategic Plan for Partnership for Development.

It is worth noting that the evaluations indicate that 94 percent of the projects evaluated were very consistent with the governments' policies and priorities and with the priorities that the member states had established within the framework of the OAS. Also, 86 percent achieved the anticipated results, although to differing degrees. Still, 83 percent of the project-executing agencies were judged to have used the resources they were granted to good effect and the ratio between a project's costs and its results was reasonable.

The IACD embarked upon the second round of evaluations in the first half of 2004, with the selection of a sampling of 39 projects whose financing was awarded in 2001 and 2002. The independent consultants will finish up their work when they deliver the reports in the first half of 2005, at which point the results of the evaluation will be reported to the member states.

Secretariat for the Inter-American Telecommunication Commission

The Inter-American Telecommunication Commission (CITEL), established by the General Assembly in 1994, has technical autonomy in the performance of its functions, within the limits set by the OAS Charter, the CITEL Statutes, and the mandates of the General Assembly. It serves as the OAS' principal advisory body in telecommunications-related matters. Its mission is to promote continuous development of telecommunications in the Hemisphere.

The purpose of CITEL's programs is to create a greater awareness of the role that telecommunications play in the region's economic and social development, and to formulate guidelines and standards on critical issues. The objective for the future is to review CITEL's priorities in order to continue and, if possible, expand the assistance provided to the countries in planning, using, modernizing, and maintaining the technologies best suited to providing service to all strata of society and thereby guaranteeing universal access to information and knowledge. More detailed information is available at CITEL's web page, including the schedule of activities planned for 2005.

To meet the expectations of the member states and associate members and thus preserve its standing as one of the region's preeminent intergovernmental organizations in the area of telecommunications, numerous strategic activities were conducted. Of those, the following stand out:

Follow-up and dissemination of the Agenda for Connectivity in the Americas and the Plan of Action of Quito

CITEL continued to disseminate the Agenda for Connectivity in the Americas and the Plan of Action of Quito, which contains the principles and objectives for formulating and implementing connectivity-related activities. Because the document is multilateral in nature, the Office for the Summits Process, in coordination with CITEL, is promoting its development and subsequent implementation. A report is being prepared containing an evaluation of connectivity in the region.

Training for telecommunications professionals

To respond to the increasing need for personnel trained in telecommunications, CITEL has been working with recognized training centers in the region, particularly with the Center of Excellence for the Americas of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), to provide the priority training programs for telecommunications professionals. In 2004, 15 courses (10 distance and 5 on-campus) were offered on policy, regulation, management, and telecommunications technology, awarding more than 270 fellowships to recipients across the region.

Telecommunications policies and regulation

The principles of effective regulation are similar for most countries. With that in mind, CITEL and the ITU have made headway in updating the *The Blue Book: Telecommunication Policies for the Americas*, a manual that provides a broad understanding of the trends and practices in basic regulatory issues so as to strengthen the harmonization process, legislation, and regulation in the region. Three meetings were held to examine the document, which is expected to be completed by mid-2005.

Regulations now in force are being examined to determine whether the provisions governing the provision on satellite communications services, especially to reach regions that land-based communications systems cannot reach, can be simplified in any way. Also, the web page contains the laws and regulations governing the provision of satellite services and all the information that interested parties need in order to apply for licenses in the countries of the Americas, and is kept up to date.

Using information compiled at a Seminar on Cybersecurity, the Inter-American Telecommunication Commission worked with the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism (CICTE) and REMJA's Group of Governmental Experts on Cyber-crime to develop a comprehensive draft cybersecurity strategy for the member states. That strategy takes a multidimensional and multidisciplinary approach to tackling the problem of cybersecurity and was approved by the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth regular session, held in June 2004.

Reports are currently being prepared on strategic issues for the region, among them the following: analysis of the economic aspects of universal service in the countries of the region; a study on the selection of the most appropriate financial resources and updating of the document "Guidelines and Practices for Interconnection Regulation," which provides examples of specific regulations currently in force and used by the countries to implement these principles.

Technical matters, coordination of standards, and telecommunications equipment conformity assessment

Important technical research is being done on how to improve access to telecommunications and the information and communications technologies (ICTs). Prominent here is the work being done to establish the current state of the use of frequency bands on the radioelectrical spectrum and recommendations on how to harmonize the use of the spectrum for fixed and mobile land-based telecommunications services, with particular emphasis on the 400 MHz and 5GHz bands. CITEL also continues to disseminate technical information about new technologies and services, particularly on issues related to the transition from 2.5 Generation to 3rd Generation.

As for coordination of technical standards, two new documents were approved on security issues for communications systems: ITU-T Recommendation X.805 “Security architecture for systems providing end-to-end communications” and IETF RFC 2401 “Security Architecture for the Internet Protocol.” Also approved was a technical document on the “Structure of the study on voice characteristics in converging networks that use IP” to clarify the characteristics and trends of voice over IP (VoIP) – Internet providers within voice services in convergent networks.

Digital terrestrial television opens up new avenues for accessing information and sharing it. Accordingly, more work was done on preparation of a “Guide to Digital Terrestrial Television in the Americas” for rapid implementation of these systems across the region. The multiplier effect of the considerable savings to be had will also help speed the orderly conversion from analog television to digital television. Conversion to digital television service will also make more efficient use of the electromagnetic spectrum.

Recognizing that there are challenges to be surmounted to make efficient and effective use of the Internet, studies have been undertaken on government policies and experiences in managing blocks of IP addresses in the countries of the region, including a comparative analysis of these experiences that identifies “Best Practices.”

To improve the conditions under which products are introduced onto the market, CITELE continued to work on harmonization of conformity assessment processes in the region. It participated in seminars where it explained CITELE’s Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA). A number of countries are already participating in its various phases, while others are taking steps to put the ARM into practice, which may mean amending domestic laws and regulations whenever necessary. An international workshop is planned for 2005 to examine the scope of these procedures. CITELE also continued to update the “Yellow Book on Telecommunication Equipment Conformity Assessment Processes in the Americas.”

Preparation of common hemispheric positions at international meetings

One of CITELE’s priorities is to reconcile viewpoints in the region. A concrete example was the preparation for the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA-04) held in Florianópolis, Brazil, in October. There, CITELE presented a number of proposals to improve methods and standards in the ITU, to ensure that the issues most relevant to developing countries are studied, such as rates, the security of networks, and 3rd Generation mobile systems.

The *travaux préparatoires* are under way for the regional meeting for the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC), the Plenipotentiary Conference of the International Telecommunications Union, and the World Conference on International Telecommunications (WCIT). These three conferences, all slated for 2006, are of particular importance as their purpose is to adopt, on a global scale, the ITU’s development programs, work strategies, and future management, as well as

standards for allocating international telecommunications resources and services, including services that use IP.

Preparations have also gotten under way for the ITU's World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC), which will be held in 2007 and will examine some 30 topics, including the following: the progress made with the new modulation techniques, adapting control techniques and the spectrum requirements for HF broadcasting, and studies to establish criteria for sharing and coordination and notification procedures for satellite networks

Better coordination among subregional, regional, and international organizations

CITEL has established a number of cooperation agreements with the following organizations on issues of mutual interest: the Hispanic-American Association of Research Centers and Telecommunication Enterprises (AHCJET); the Andean Telecommunication Enterprises Association (ASETA); the Alliance for Telecommunications Industry Solutions (ATIS); Committee T1 (EU); the African Telecommunications Union (ATU); Caribbean Latin American Action (C/LAA); the CDMA Development Group (CDG); the European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations (CEPT); the European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI); 3G Americas; the Global VSAT Forum; the International Astronautical Federation (IAF); the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO); the Telecommunications Industry Association (TIA (EU)); the Regional Commonwealth in the Field of Communications (RCC); the Postal Union of the Americas, Spain and Portugal (PUASP); and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). Because these types of agreements make it possible to explore a number of issues early on, they help improve efficiency, avoid duplication of effort, and reduce the time required to resolve problems.

Support to the member states and associate members in sharing information and best practices to deal with the changes in telecommunications

This goal is very much related to the role that CITEL has traditionally played as a forum in which the member states and associate members can provide each other with mutual support. The workshops help to spread specialized knowledge of cutting-edge technologies. In 2004 the following workshops were held:

- Workshop on Cybersecurity, where the legal, technical and political implications of cybersecurity were discussed.
- Workshop on Economic Issues, to examine the cost structures of the major telecommunications services and their relationship to the globalized markets.
- Workshop on next-generation networks (NGN), which analyzed various issues to be considered when introducing these technologies and the international standards and regulations. The workshop also identified users' needs and considered the advisability of regionally-concerted efforts to migrate to NGN.
- Workshop-Videoconference on IP services, in cooperation with USTTI, to promote frank dialogue and open discussion of critical issues related to the introduction of the voice IP transmission technology in the Americas.

During this reporting period, 750 copies of the Joint CITEL/AHCJET Seminar on Broadband Satellite Services, held in 2003, were published electronically. That seminar had presented an overview of broadband service, analyzed existing applications, and established general conditions and requirements for broadband implementation in the Americas.

Also during this reporting period, work began on a plan focusing on the private sector, geared to publicizing CITELE and heightening its profile. One of the steps taken was to begin circulation of the e-bulletin titled "info@CITELE" in July 2004. This is a new tool that the administrations, the private sector, and everyone interested in telecommunications can use to stay abreast of its activities. It is published on a monthly basis.

DEPARTMENT OF MULTIDIMENSIONAL SECURITY

The Department of Multidimensional Security (DMS) was created by Executive Order 04-01 corr. 1, and was further reorganized by Executive Order 05-03. Its chief responsibility is to provide advisory services on all matters pertaining to security, terrorism, ports, and drug abuse. It consists of the following offices: Executive Office of the Director, Office of International Threats; the Secretariat of the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism; and the Executive Secretariat of the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission.

Office of International Threats

This Office provides advice, expertise, and information to the Secretary General and to the policy organs of the OAS, through the Director of the DMS, on matters related to transnational threats. It also conducts studies on international gangs, immigration, environmental pollution, kidnapping, and other relevant matters. The Office also develops and implements projects and programs on these issues, in coordination with the member states and other international organizations.

The Office is moving forward with arrangements for a technical meeting, scheduled for March 2005, on the transnational dimension of criminal gangs active in the United States, Mexico, and some Central American countries. The meeting's main purpose is to compare legal and police strategies and tactics and to determine which have had success and which should be abandoned, and whether the region's capacity to deal with this problem could be improved with more communication and better coordination. The meeting will concern itself with four basic topics: (1) preventive strategies; (2) best practices in law enforcement; (3) differences among the legal systems; and (4) best practices and weaknesses in the prison systems. Drawing upon the meeting's findings, the OAS will prepare a report recommending certain measures.

In pursuing these objectives, the Office has attended, along with other members of the Department of Multidimensional Security, a number of meetings with representatives of the Permanent Mission of Mexico, Mexico's federal and state governments, and the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Secretariat of the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism (CICTE)

CICTE's Work Plan, which the Committee adopted at its Fourth Regular Session, held in Montevideo, Uruguay, has been the Secretariat's roadmap. That plan involves a number of programs calculated to fulfill the new international requirements in the areas of port and airport security, and programs to improve border control measures and cybersecurity.

One especially important development is that Chile, Dominica, Honduras, and Paraguay have deposited their instruments of ratification of the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism, bringing to 12 the total number of member states that have deposited the corresponding instruments. They have all signed the Convention. The Secretary General will soon be convening a meeting of consultation of the states parties, pursuant to Article 18 of that Convention.

During the year, CICTE held eight workshops of experts to provide the member states with technical assistance in drafting legislation for implementation of the global antiterrorism instruments and the Inter-American Convention. The workshops are organized in conjunction with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and with experts from the IMF and from the OAS' Department of Legal Affairs and Services.

A regional workshop was held in Costa Rica for Spanish-speaking countries of the Central American and Andean regions. Also held was a national workshop where 37 officials from the executive and legislative branches of the Costa Rican Government were able to discuss the Costa Rican bill to strengthen antiterrorist legislation. A similar workshop will be held in El Salvador in January 2005. Working in partnership with the UNCTC and the UNODC, CICTE conducted a workshop in Paraguay to assist in the process of adjusting Paraguay's laws to conform to international counterterrorism conventions and protocols. Similar workshops have been held in Colombia, Ecuador, The Bahamas, Jamaica, and Suriname.

As for port security, starting in March, CICTE, in partnership with the United States Maritime Administration (MARAD), undertook responsibility for executing the Inter-American Port Security Training Program (IAPSTP). The program consists of regional courses held to provide information and teach techniques to reduce security vulnerabilities in port facilities and in the movement of cargo and passengers. CICTE has conducted four regional courses--one each in Jamaica, the Dominican Republic, Argentina, and El Salvador--training a total of 217 port security officials from 27 countries. Three more courses are scheduled for 2005.

CICTE is working with the member states on evaluating compliance with obligations under the ISPS Code Book. Those evaluations will be summed up in a report that will provide the respective governments and CICTE with recommendations as to the assistance and training needed to remedy any shortcomings detected. The program is already under way in the Caribbean, starting with an evaluation conducted in Saint Lucia in December. It will continue with the other countries of that subregion and expand elsewhere during the course of 2005.

In collaboration with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the Governments of Canada and the United States, CICTE also conducted a crisis simulation exercise in Barbados to examine the implications of a possible terrorist hijacking of a cruise liner in the Caribbean. More than 75 people participated in the exercise, including observers from 13 Caribbean member states.

In the area of airport security, CICTE teamed up with the United States Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the U.S. Transportation Safety Administration (TSA), and the OAS' Inter-American Agency for Cooperation and Development (IACD) to conduct the following training courses: an Airport Security Training Workshop in El Salvador; a course in Ecuador, given in Spanish, on crisis management; another course--this one in English--in Trinidad and Tobago, and a seminar on air transport of dangerous goods. A total of 70 officials from 18 countries received training.

In the area of border and customs controls, CICTE organized, in partnership with the governments of the United States and Mexico, a series of visits to share technology information and expertise. The visits targeted officials in customs, border control, and immigration from Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay. The visits included port and airport facilities in Miami and various border crossings in those countries.

At the request of Paraguay, CICTE also sponsored a seminar on customs professional responsibility training for assistance aimed at improving the training of its customs and border control officers. The seminar, held in Asunción, was attended by 34 professionals from the area. Similar seminars have been planned for Guatemala, Chile, Peru, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Barbados in 2005.

With support from Canada, CICTE and CICAD cosponsored a symposium on border management and cross-border cooperation, held in Vancouver. It was an opportunity for officials responsible for management and cooperation in that area to share their experiences.

On the issue of cybersecurity, a workshop was held in Ottawa, sponsored by CICTE in cooperation with CITEL and REMJA, to give experts an opportunity to evaluate the matter and come up with the recommendations that resulted in the OAS General Assembly's adoption last June of a comprehensive inter-American strategy to combat threats to cybersecurity.

CICTE has teamed up with the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force (CFATF) for a study on the subject of financing terrorism and its links with drugs. It partnered with CICAD to put together a module on terrorism financing, to be added to the courses on money laundering given by agencies like CICAD itself and the IDB.

Executive Secretariat of the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD)

Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism (MEM)

The Governmental Experts Group (GEG) of the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism (MEM) met in Washington, D.C., in March 2004, to finish drafting the reports on implementation of recommendations from the second evaluation round 2001-2002. Both the national reports and the hemispheric report were approved at CICAD's thirty-fifth regular session and then published and presented to the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth regular session, held in Quito, Ecuador, in June 2004.

In furtherance of the MEM's objective of promoting cooperation in combating drugs in the Hemisphere, at its thirty-fifth regular session CICAD approved 17 requests for financial and technical assistance submitted by member states, to cooperate in carrying out the recommendations from the MEM's second round.

In May, Buenos Aires, Argentina was the site of the GEG's first drafting session for the third round of evaluation, 2003-2004, where the initial drafts of the national reports were prepared. The second drafting session was held in Washington, D.C., in October. There, the preliminary reports were written and provisional recommendations and conclusions were made. The GEG held its third drafting session in Washington, D.C., from February 23 to March 4, 2005, to complete the final draft of the national reports and the hemispheric report. There, the national reports and the hemispheric report for the third evaluation round, 2003-2004, were finalized, which will be presented to CICAD at its thirty-seventh regular session for approval and subsequent publication.

Supply Reduction and Drug Control

To advance efforts at drug control and supply reduction, CICAD continued to support the member states with training and technical assistance, to build up their capacity to reduce production, distribution, and general availability of illicit drugs and drug contraband. In 2004, CICAD conducted five training seminars targeting law enforcement, customs, and other officials and covering a range of specialized areas, such as: chemical control and officer safety; maritime cooperation and boarding and searching of vessels at sea; profiling suspicious containers and passengers; security in maritime ports; and the private sector's participation in port and airport security.

CICAD also provided support to the Andean Community Regional Counterdrug Intelligence School (ERCAIAD), which has completed its fifth year in operation. In 2004, the program included an eight-week seminar on operational analysis of strategic counterdrug intelligence, a second eight-week seminar on operational intelligence, and a two-week program for specialized training on the same subject. CICAD and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) jointly sponsored the second international observer attachment program, which brings together law enforcement officers involved in drug control in a number of countries. The training begins in the classroom; after completing that, participants are posted to RCMP detachments at various places in Canada to work closely with Canadian officers in the field.

CICAD devoted particular attention to cultivating the skills and aptitudes that law enforcement authorities need to deal with organized crime. The training program included seminars on witness protection and handling of informants, undercover operations, and control and classification of organized criminal groups through the use of intelligence and a comparative tool developed by the RCMP.

CICAD, the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism (CICTE), and Foreign Affairs Canada (FAC) jointly sponsored the Symposium on Border Management: A Dialogue on Cross-Border Cooperation and Border Integrity. There, participants examined and exchanged information on the challenges encountered in securing borders and on the best practices to meet those challenges.

CICAD continued its community policing program in the member states by supporting a pilot project on this subject and the corresponding training for the Colonial Area of Santo Domingo, in the Dominican Republic.

In 2004, CICAD convened meetings of the three expert groups focusing on the specialized areas in drug control: the Expert Group on Maritime Drug Trafficking, chaired by Honduras; and the Expert Group on Pharmaceutical Products and the Expert Group on Chemicals, both of which were chaired by Brazil.

Legal Development

CICAD's legal development program participated in activities of the Executive Secretariat of the Commission on the issues of arms control, control of money laundering, and transnational organized crime. At the countries' request, these activities included, *inter alia*, the following: review of proposed national legislation relating to firearms; meetings with lawmakers and officials of Central American and European countries on the subject of firearms; installation of the small arms and light weapons administration system (SALSA) in four Caribbean countries; participation in a number of forums on related issues, including participation in United Nations meetings on organized crime and arms control; attendance at the First Conference of the States Party to the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and Other Related Materials (CIFTA); close coordination with the Secretariat pro tempore of the CIFTA Consultative Committee; legal advisory services provided to the Group of Experts to Control Money Laundering for review of the Model Regulations; and review and negotiation of the agreements concluded by the Commission's Executive Secretariat.

Inter-American Observatory on Drugs (OID)

Technical and financial assistance was provided in this area to conduct drug-related studies in 12 countries, in differing population groups: students, patients in emergency services and treatment centers, street children, and youth in trouble with the law. Moreover, 16 memorandums of understanding were signed. Most were for school surveys and surveys of the general population, to be carried out in 2004 and 2005. Five of the 16 projects were in response to requests from the member states related to MEM assistance priorities.

The Inter-American Observatory published a report comparing drug use in the student population in seven countries, and the 2003 edition of the Statistical Summary on Drugs, with the figures on drug seizures and on matters related to supply, such as cultivation of coca leaves, poppies, and cannabis; discovery of processing labs; and persons arrested, prosecuted, and convicted of drug-related crimes. CICAD also updated specialized software to help the countries compile statistical data of this kind. Training in the use of the software will be provided in the near future.

In cooperation with Spain's Drug Observatory, the OID held the II Ibero-American Encounter of National Drug Observatories, attended by 60 professionals from Spanish-speaking countries and Brazil. There, training was provided in scientific research into drugs.

Working in partnership with the Robert Wood Johnson University Medical School, a method was perfected that will enable member states to estimate the human, social, and economic cost of drugs in their countries. Studies were done on costs in seven countries, and the Instruction Manual was updated to enable other member states to use the method developed.

The OID continues to publish its quarterly e-bulletin, titled *The Observer*. Its purpose is to publicize the work and research being done in the member states. The OID completed a pilot project with the *Observatoire Français des Drogues et des Toxicomanies* [French Observatory on Drugs and Drug Dependency] and six Caribbean countries to provide them with training and the methodological tools with which to conduct qualitative studies that help them identify and analyze emerging trends. The OID also launched an e-training program developed with the IDB.

Control of Money Laundering

CICAD's Group of Experts to Control Money Laundering adopted amendments to the Model Regulations to Control Money Laundering. The amendments concerned special investigative techniques and the classification of money-laundering offenses.

The focus of the training activities was in the area of judges and prosecutors, law enforcement officers, and university professors who have a legal obligation to report suspected money-laundering operations. Support was provided to Argentina and Uruguay to again stage the program "Combating Money Laundering through the Justice System" (an Inter-American Development Bank/CICAD Project); the program was given for the first time in Colombia. In conjunction with the United Nations, mock money-laundering trials were staged in Colombia. Law enforcement agents (police, customs officers, prosecutors, and so on) were trained. The first phase of the Training the Trainers Program was conducted in Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela. As to the new categories of professionals obligated to report money laundering activity, CICAD and the IDB teamed up for a seminar on "The Obligations of Independent Professionals in Preventing Money Laundering."

Through a joint CICAD/IDB project and a CICAD project specifically for Paraguay, technical assistance was provided to develop and create Financial Intelligence Units. The beneficiaries of the CICAD/IDB project are Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela; the project itself provides technical assistance in training, organizational design, and acquisition of technology.

At the invitation of the UN Global Programme against Money Laundering, CICAD took part in drafting the Model Law of the United Nations, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund.

The book *Combate del Lavado de Activos desde el Sistema Judicial*, by Drs. Eduardo Fabián, Isidoro Cordero, and Javier Zaragoza, was published. This book, which gives a global vision of the role of the judiciary in enforcement of anti-money laundering laws, was a joint project of the Inter-American Development Bank and the OAS/CICAD.

Alternative Development

This year the Alternative Development Unit's activities focused on supporting the countries' efforts to conduct domestic programs to reduce, eliminate, and prevent the cultivation of coca, poppies, and cannabis, using a comprehensive approach that will improve the socioeconomic situation of the

population sector involved. By 2004, the projects had matured to the point that the objective was to make them sustainable. The Unit broadened its sphere of activity drawing upon its own experience from the fieldwork it had done to make assessments of current issues, at the direct request of members of the Commission.

One of the most important projects is the Environmental and Human Health Assessment of the effects of aerial spraying with glyphosate and the cultivation of illicit crops, which is now in its final phase of implementation. The project will examine how humans, fauna, flora, and the environment are affected by the aerial spraying of the fungicides and herbicides used in the production of illicit crops. CICAD and the Andean Community of Nations (CAN) jointly sponsored meetings that brought together various agencies involved in alternative development in the Andean countries, to put together a regional initiative in this area. That project will be submitted to the presidents of the member countries of the Andean Community in June 2005 for approval.

The Generalized Land-Use Evaluation and Management Tool (GLEAM) was used in Bolivia this year and produced data that the Deputy Ministry of Alternative Development has used to study and put together new alternative development projects in the Yungas region of La Paz. This year, the organic cacao project in Alto Beni, Bolivia, united the producers of the region behind the idea of generalized development, and behind the idea of diversifying and increasing production of and the yield from the organic cacao crop. Another project being implemented this year is in Dominica, and concerns organic banana growing and integrated management of pests that attack the banana. This project managed to consolidate a niche in the United Kingdom's market and to establish a variety of basic infrastructure works. The CICAD-funded Institute of Tropical Crops (ICT) in Peru has conducted training courses for farmers to teach farming techniques. It also built the infrastructure works needed to fulfill its objectives.

During the year, the first phase and the transition phase of the project on organic bananas for export in Alto Beni, Bolivia, were completed and succeeded in improving the quality of the banana crop, establishing a producer-owned business to market and export the product and thus increase farmers' profits.

In Ecuador, the project to improve farms in Sucumbíos province ended in February 2004. It succeeded in improving the beneficiaries' quality of life by increasing farm productivity and reducing production costs. Finally, during the course of the year, the land titling project in the Yungas of La Paz, Bolivia, was completed; in 2004, however, various setbacks prevented the project from getting even one land title to the intended beneficiaries.

Demand Reduction

In 2004, CICAD's Demand Reduction Unit continued to provide support and assistance in conducting programs in prevention, treatment, and education. On the subject of juvenile gangs, violence, and drugs in Central America, assistance was provided through two pilot projects in prevention and a fieldwork research project through the Salvadoran Anti-drug Commission (CNA).

As for the MEM assistance projects, requests from the first and second rounds of recommendations were acted upon. The multiple requests received in the area of prevention and treatment in prisons in the Caribbean were also answered and, with the Canadian Government's help, horizontal cooperation was established by staging the workshop held on Health, Education and Enforcement in Partnership (HEP).

Under the International Online M.A. Degree in Addictions Studies project, another group of first-year students began the course in March 2004. At CICAD's thirty-fifth regular session, a ceremony was held to salute the first graduating class.

In the area of School-based Substance Abuse Prevention, as part of the MEM's assistance programs, the Costa Rican Government was given US\$70,000 to expand the program "*Aprindo a Valerme por mi mismo*" [*I'm Learning to Value Myself*]. In Panama, CICAD provided the Panamanian Secretariat for Drugs (CONAPRED) with technical assistance in putting together the national program "*Somos Triunfadores*" [*We're All Winners*] with horizontal cooperation from Costa Rica. In Venezuela, CICAD provided technical assistance to prepare the program "Community-based Prevention Education" with financial support from the private banking community (Banco Provincial).

Concerning the support requested by Colombia and Saint Lucia on the subject of coordinating prevention assistance with employment, both countries have been working with CICAD to prepare project proposals that spell out the various project phases, the estimated execution time, and participating agencies apart from CICAD. Those projects should be getting under way in 2005.

In keeping with the recommendations from the Fifth Meeting of the Group of Experts, held in Argentina, Venezuela and Peru are now implementing their own national treatment systems, in coordination with the Ministry of Health and the National Drug Commission, with technical assistance from CICAD in 2004. Belize, Panama, Chile, and Costa Rica have requested CICAD's assistance to craft their own treatment standards and put together their national systems.

At the Sixth Meeting of the Group of Experts on Demand Reduction, additional work was done on the document titled "Hemispheric Guidelines for School-based Substance Abuse Prevention," which CICAD had unanimously approved at its thirty-sixth regular session and which will be used as a standardized baseline for school-based interventions in the countries of the region.

The Nursing Schools Project involves 16 schools of nursing in 10 countries of Latin America. These schools have developed courses on drug issues and related problems and have added them to the undergraduate and graduate programs. The Public Health Project concluded and the technical report was prepared of the study done of the activities of 13 schools on drug and international health-related issues. The Online Regional Specialization Research Program for health professionals and professionals in related areas will begin in March 2005. The Pilot Program on Medical Schools began in 2004 with one School of Medicine--Santo Andre/SP/Brazil--and included drug-related issues on the undergraduate pre-med curriculum as well as research and training for professors. The Schools of Education Project started in 2004 and currently has a study in progress on the activities being conducted on drug-related issues in 70 schools of education in 18 Latin American countries. CICAD approved the Brazil Assessment/MEM Priority Project. The letter of intent between CICAD and SENAD will be signed shortly so as to implement the project between 2005 and 2007.

Institutional Strengthening of the National Drug Commissions

CICAD continued to support the National Drug Commissions (CND) of the Andean countries with preparation and updating of national anti-drug strategies and their decentralization to include local governments; the emphasis was on designing and developing local drug abuse prevention plans. The cooperation includes training for the municipal boards, which are selected by the National Drug Commissions themselves. In coordination with the Inter-American Observatory on Drugs, CICAD continued to cooperate with the Andean National Drug Commissions in developing their own national drug observatories.

Under the Andean Plan of Cooperation for Combating Illicit Drugs and Related Crime, CICAD helped build up Andean anti-drug coordination among the CNDs and respective foreign ministries. It also helped to improve joint efforts to combat the various manifestations of illegal drug trafficking and related

activities, encouraged integration—within the Andean subregion—of the national agencies in charge of reducing supply and demand and of controlling substances subject to special inspection.

CICAD teamed up with Haitian authorities and Haiti's CND to engage in talks to identify viable priority measures that could be carried out in 2005 to combat drugs and related crime.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS

The Department of Communications and External Relations was created by Executive Order 04-01 corr. and was further reorganized by Executive Order 05-03. The Department consists of a merger of pre-existing offices of the General Secretariat; the Department The Department represents and supports the General Secretariat in all matters related to communications, external relations, protocol, public relations, and cultural activities.

The Department's mission is to advise the various departments, offices, and units of the General Secretariat and the governing bodies on all activities related to external relations, while promoting and maintaining contacts with the permanent observers, the nongovernmental organizations, academic institutions, the headquarters country of the Organization, the private sector, and non-profits, among others.

Office of External Relations and Resource Mobilization

In the case of activities related to the permanent observers, the Department encourages these countries' active participation and collaboration through informative meetings, an exchange of documents and information, visits by government dignitaries to the Organization, and special events. In 2004, Luxembourg and the People's Republic of China were granted permanent-observer status, bringing the total number of permanent observers to the OAS to 60.

The Organization receives significant contributions, in cash and in kind, from the permanent observers. A significant portion of those contributions were negotiated by the Office of External Relations, acting either directly or as intermediary. Figuring prominently among the events that occurred during the period covered in this report was the visit that the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, Li Zhaoxing, made to the Organization's headquarters, where he met privately with the Secretary General and his staff to discuss opportunities for cooperation.

The OAS has received a steady stream of visitors from high schools, universities, and other institutions. In 2004 some 5,220 visitors were welcomed and a total of 207 tours and informative sessions were conducted, a significant increase over previous years. A special program was launched with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, consisting of on-site visits and discussions for selected groups on the work that these three institutions are doing. In this connection, the three jointly published a brochure whose purpose is to publicize this new initiative and promote the work of the three organizations.

The speakers program featured lectures organized with George Washington University's Latin American Studies Center, on the subjects of the Summit of the Heads of State and Government in Monterrey, Mexico, and the role of the Organization of American States in the twenty-first century. This program, whose purpose is to enrich hemispheric dialogue on issues that are priorities for the member states, attracted more than 600 people from the local community, among them diplomats, academics, experts from research and study centers, and representatives of government, nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector.

In conjunction with the James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy at Rice University in Houston, Texas, an annual seminar for youth leaders was held, titled "The Americas Project." The central theme was "*Civil Society in the Americas: The Missing Link between the Private and Public Sectors.*" This

seminar brought together 17 young leaders from the Hemisphere to discuss and exchange opinions and views on this priority issue.

Finally, the Office continued to maintain and expand its Internet page on permanent observers, the Children's Corner web page, the listing for the Speaker's Bureau and the centralized database, which now has more than 5,000 local contacts incorporated.

Office of Public Information

The purpose of this Office is to conduct information and reporting programs through the press, radio, television, photography, and the Internet in order to publicize the mission, programs, and accomplishments of the Organization in the member states. The Office provides press and strategic communications services, as well as multimedia and radio services. It also includes *Américas Magazine*.

The press and strategic communications area handles daily and long-term contacts with the communications media, in order to get news about the OAS to as large an audience as possible. It works closely with the offices of the General Secretariat, the political bodies, and other OAS entities to promote coverage of OAS activities and headline its most important messages.

The main tools at its disposal are:

Press releases: In 2004, the OAS issued 240 press releases, mainly in English and Spanish. They were distributed to a broad database that includes the Washington-based media and the media elsewhere in the Hemisphere. These press releases and bulletins keep the media abreast of the OAS' daily meetings and activities.

Press conferences: When events so warrant (at the start or the close of a high-level meeting, for example), the Office coordinates press conferences at OAS headquarters.

Web page: The "OAS News" web page offers a picture of the Organization's most recent activities and initiatives. In addition to news in brief and highlights, it also features photographs and links to OAS-related articles that appear in newspapers around the region. It is one of the most visited sites on the Organization's portal.

Media relations: One of the Office's priorities has been to keep up contacts with journalists covering the region, among them the correspondents who cover the region for newspapers in the United States. These contacts are one way to increase coverage of OAS programs and projects in the countries.

Basic information: Every year, prior to the start of the regular session of the OAS General Assembly, a number of documents are prepared providing information on a variety of the OAS' priority issues. In simple and concise language, these documents provide journalists with the basic information they need to do their reporting on such topics as the Inter-American Democratic Charter, OAS efforts to combat corruption, election observation. These materials, updated at least twice a year, are also available at the Organization's web page.

Brochures: In May 2004, a new brochure was published explaining what the OAS is. Titled "A Shared Vision for the Americas," this brochure is available in the four official languages and has been distributed at conferences and meetings and sent to the missions and offices of the OAS General Secretariat in the member states.

The press and strategic communications areas have also played an important role in spotlighting the OAS' important activities away from Washington, including the ministerial meetings; the Special Summit of the Americas, in Monterrey; and the electoral observation missions sent to a number of member states. Having a news specialist on scene to speak with journalists, arrange interviews, and issue press releases has increased the press coverage of these events.

Internally, the News Bulletin is distributed daily to the permanent missions and to the General Secretariat. It summarizes the principal issues influencing debate and dialogue within the OAS.

Through its multimedia services, the Office continued to expand coverage of activities by using electronic media and digital technology. The multimedia area organizes and maintains the OAS Internet portal; creates web pages; prepares data banks; provides video services featuring live and taped broadcasts, digital video, and videoconferences; and produces documentaries on topics of interest to the Organization. It also provides photography services and publishes the *Americas Forum*, an online e-zine distributed each month to over 45,000 subscribers.

In 2004, the OAS portal received an average of 450,000 (individual) visits per month. On June 7, 2004, during the regular session of the General Assembly, the site had a record number of hits: 1,314,014 in a 24-hour period. The number of hits has increased from 8 million in 2002 to 13.5 million per month in 2004, partly due to the increase in the amount of news available. The most requested materials are the delayed video, followed by forms to apply for employment opportunities and for internships.

The photography services are fully digital. There was photographic coverage of more than 250 events and activities. The photos are immediately streamed over the web through a data bank that includes photographers and photographic editors from the major newspapers in the countries of the Hemisphere.

In 2004, 129 video transmissions were done via Internet, including all the meetings of the Permanent Council, the General Assembly, and the inauguration of the Secretary General; visits by presidents, high-ranking officials, and other dignitaries to the OAS; ceremonies at which conventions were signed and/or instruments of ratification deposited; and various ministerial and high-level meetings. The session of the General Assembly in Quito and the Secretary General's inauguration were carried live over the OAS portal with broadband video. Whenever interpretation services are available, the broadcasts are in the four official languages.

Live and delayed broadcasts were arranged for television channels in the member states, especially via CNN, AP-TV, Univisión, and television channels in Brazil, Ecuador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Peru, and Suriname.

Working in cooperation with the Office for the Promotion of Democracy (OPD), 30-second "spots" were produced in the four official languages, on the Inter-American Democratic Charter, to be distributed to television channels in the member states for broadcast. In cooperation with the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM), programs are being prepared focusing on women's leadership in the Americas. In addition, documentaries were done on the permanent missions' cultural activities, which the Art Museum of the Americas is now distributing in DVD format. The Office produced three new CD-ROMs containing documents, videos, and photos of the General Assembly. It also produced a number of DVDs.

Multimedia services are offered to the other offices of the General Secretariat and to the specialized organizations of the OAS. Broadcast services have been provided to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and to the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD). The Office also does video-tape reproductions, transfer to DVD, and digital imaging for the web. An

interactive video was produced for the OPD; 20 interactive videoconferences were staged with OAS officials and representatives of the member states participating. The Office also filled requests for tapes of the TV series “America Live,” which are commercially available.

The daily Spanish-language radio programming for Latin America and the English-language programming for the Caribbean continued to be broadcast via satellite. The correspondents service continues to be one of the most effective means of publicizing OAS activities via radio. These news briefs are short reports easily incorporated into radio newscasts in the region and are available over the Internet at the OAS Radio web page.

Programs that use the talk-show format have also found a large following, particularly in the Caribbean. The weekly programs “Focus on the Americas” in English and “Escenario” in Spanish were also produced and carried by a number of broadcasters in the region.

A number of events were broadcast live, such as the visit of President Álvaro Uribe of Colombia in March 2004; President Oscar Berger of Guatemala in April 2004; President Rinaldo Ronal Venetian of Suriname; President Alejandro Toledo of Peru; President Elias Antonio Saca of El Salvador in September 2004, and Gerard Latortue, Prime Minister of the Interim Government of Haiti. There was also coverage of such matters as the report to the Permanent Council by the Electoral Observation Mission sent to observe the presidential recall referendum, and the meetings of the CIM, CICAD, the IACHR, and the Summit of the Americas.

Live broadcasts of interviews with chiefs of state, high-ranking OAS officials, and other dignitaries were also part of the OAS radio programming, in cooperation with broadcasters in Latin America and the Caribbean, such as LOVE-FM in Belize, ABS in Antigua and Barbuda, DBS in Dominica, WINN-FM in Saint Kitts and Nevis, YSKL in El Salvador, Radio Union, Radio Caracas Radio, and Radio Nacional in Venezuela, RPP and Radio Nacional in Peru, Radio in Argentina, Radio Libre in Paraguay, Radio Quito and the ALER Chain in Ecuador, and others. One project continues to be the possible digitalization of radio.

Américas Magazine

Six issues of *Américas Magazine*, in Spanish and English, were published in 2004. Some 50,000 copies of each issue were printed: of these, approximately 28,000 were sent out to subscribers around the world; another 16,000 were sold at newsstands in the United States and Canada. There was also a sizable controlled circulation that sent the magazines to governments and institutions in the member states, both directly and through the General Secretariat’s national offices. Proceeds from subscriptions and sales covered approximately 50 percent of the publication’s total cost.

A number of campaigns were conducted to increase and promote sales of the magazine using a variety of marketing strategies. As part of the winter 2004 sales campaign, over 450,000 letters were sent to potential subscribers, offering a 2004 *Américas* agenda as a bonus for subscribing. The 2004 agenda is dedicated to the theme of democracy and was produced with the cooperation of the Office for the Promotion of Democracy. *Américas Magazine* is also sold over the Internet at the MagazineCity.net and doctormag.com portals. All proceeds from sales of the magazine were used to pay production and printing costs.

Art Museum of the Americas

The Art Museum of the Americas was created back in 1976 by a resolution of the Permanent Council. Its purpose is to stimulate an interest in and awareness of the artistic expression produced in the OAS member states, to increase inter-American cultural exchange, and to promote artistic endeavors in the

Hemisphere. The Museum is a unique institution that promotes and documents the art of the Hemisphere through exhibits, collections, educational programs, and reference services. The following are some of the activities carried out during the period covered by this report that are most representative of the Museum's singular mission.

Exhibits: Temporary exhibits open up one's eyes to of the rich diversity of artistic expression in the Americas and stimulate cultural exchanges. During this period a total of five exhibits were organized: ABCDF: Portraits of a City (April-June 2004), with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mexico and the Mexican Cultural Institute; Sculptures in Four Dimensions (July-September 2004), a juried exhibition celebrating 20 years of the Washington Sculptors Group (WSG), with the support of the WSG and the Distribution of Colombia's Committee on Arts and Humanities; Federico Uribe and Carlos Lersundy of Colombia (June-September 2004); Artists of the Americas (September 2004-January 2005), an exhibit of works from the permanent collection, representing the 34 member states of the Organization and put on with the support of the art programs of the IDB and World Bank; The Art of the Print (February 2005), with works from the permanent collection to celebrate the Annual International Conference of the Southern Graphics Council in Washington, D.C. A number of exhibits were covered in the local press during this period, including: Express Entertainment Weekly, La Gaceta Iberoamericana, Washington City Paper, the Washington Post, the Washington Times, the WETA program "Around Town", the web page of the Southern Graphics Council, and the InPrint Newsletter.

Permanent Collection: The Museum has been collecting, preserving, and documenting the work of leading artists in the Hemisphere since 1949. During the period covered in this report, 21 new pieces were added to the permanent collection. Donations from outside sources include a study (pencil on paper) by José Clemente Orozco of Mexico, a gift from Mark Landis; a painting by Lola Fernández of Costa Rica, donated by Mirtha de Perea; a mixed technique piece by Álvaro Barrios of Colombia, donated by the Friends of the Museum; and a painting by Antonio Seguí of Argentina. The Museum also received gifts from a number of artists who participated in the program of temporary exhibits, including photographs by Daniel Hernández-Salazar of Guatemala, Trinidad Carillo of Peru, and Jorge Alban of Costa Rica. Internally, 214 works of art from the permanent collection are on loan to the buildings at headquarters as part of the "art-in-office" program; another 72 works from the collection were included in the Museum's exhibits. Nine paintings from the permanent collection were loaned to the IDB for an exhibit of Latin American artists of Japanese ancestry.

Conservation and preservation: Preventive conservation work was done, including cleaning, changing the glass to UV Plexiglas, consolidation of pictorial layers, and inpainting of colors in the case of 21 works in the permanent collection that were put out on loan as part of the "art-in-office" program or for exhibits. In-depth treatments were done on three works in the collection, involving removing backing, application of new canvas backing, color integration, and paper de-acidification. To support the temporary exhibits staged during this period, stretchers and frames were built for paintings and graphic arts. For the ABCDF exhibit, special mounts were built to display large-scale photographs and video-art. The sculptures in the garden collection were given a general cleaning and re-waxing.

Archives of art and audiovisual materials: The archives of the Art Museum of the Americas are a one-of-a-kind source for the study of Latin American and Caribbean art. The Museum continues to collect materials to add to the archives, and offers reference services to students, researchers, and collectors. In the case of the audiovisual program, 70 videos were sold on the art of the member states and reproductions of 25 works in the permanent collection appeared in various publications, including the schoolbooks *Art Connections 2005*, Student Edition; *¿Como se Dice?*; *VISTAS*; *World Masterpieces*; and *Puntos En Breve*. Some 220 new slides were produced to document the temporary exhibits and for use in publications, the press, and at the Museum's web page.

Education: Catalogues, pamphlets, and other instructional materials were prepared for the exhibits, to deepen the learning experience. Through the Museum's web page, information continues to be provided on the temporary exhibits, the permanent collection, and art in the member states. Other activities included a series of four workshops (July-August) on framing works of art. With the Association of the Friends of the Art Museum of the Americas, a series of four workshops were held for children, exploring topics related to the exhibit on Artists of the Americas. The Museum continues to offer guided tours of the exhibits for universities, high schools, cultural associations, and other groups.

Special activities: In 2004, the sum of \$23,695 was raised from renting the Museum to outside groups and from the sale of videos, slides, catalogues, reproduction fees, and other sources. The Museum continues to collaborate with the "Neighbors to the President" Consortium in staging activities and projects that promote their collections and programs. The Museum also cooperated with the OAS Staff Association in staging the "VI Annual Art Exhibit" and with the e-zine *Pinceladas*.

Office of Protocol

The Office of Protocol plans and coordinates the official ceremonies of the Organization's political bodies, the Permanent Council, the Secretary General and Assistant Secretary General, and the departments of the General Secretariat. It also serves as liaison between the Department of State and the permanent missions on matters related to registration and visas of staff of the missions and the privileges and immunities of the diplomats accredited to the Organization. It also organizes and coordinates the use of the Main Building for protocolary or social-cultural functions and publishes the Directory of Permanent Missions on the Internet and keeps it current.

Protocol and ceremony

Protocolary meetings were held for the visits by the Presidents of Colombia, El Salvador, Honduras, Suriname, Peru, and Guatemala, and United States Senator Richard Lugar. Ceremonies were organized and protocolary meetings held to mark Pan American Day and the birth date of Simón Bolívar and to commemorate the Discovery of America-Encounter of Two Worlds. The office also coordinated the ceremonies at which 10 permanent representatives and the permanent observers from France, Italy, and Spain presented their credentials, as well as courtesy visits made by various permanent observers. Farewell receptions were organized for the ambassadors of El Salvador, Brazil, Paraguay, Colombia, Mexico, Panama, Costa Rica, Haiti, Peru, the Dominican Republic, and France and for outgoing Secretary General Gárriga.

The Protocol Office also organized the ceremony at which Secretary General Miguel Ángel Rodríguez was inaugurated. In attendance were 12 heads of state, 21 ministers of foreign affairs, 2 former presidents, and approximately 600 guest dignitaries. As part of the event, the Office organized a luncheon for the presidents and a breakfast for the foreign ministers.

Protocol-related assistance was provided for all the openings and exhibits of the Art Museum of the Americas. This office also organized all the ceremonies at which protocols and other agreements between the Organization and the member countries were signed or their instruments of ratification deposited. During the regular session of the General Assembly held in Quito, Ecuador, a breakfast and luncheon were arranged, hosted by the Secretary General, as was a large reception, also hosted by the Secretary General for some 600 invited guests. Organization of the reception involved negotiating with suppliers, arranging for and hiring services, and printing and sending out invitations.

Management of the Main Building

The Protocol Office manages the use of the Main Building. It handles the written contract that has to be concluded between the Organization and the user, coordinates all OAS logistical support for the event, and then bills the user. During the year, 200 receptions, luncheons, dinners, and lectures were held and the proceeds from renting out space in the building during the year totaled about \$95,000. Because the Simón Bolívar Room is being remodeled, the Hall of the Americas has had to be used for meetings of the Permanent Council, which meant that proceeds from renting out the Main Building were less than in years past. Under the coordination of the Protocol Office, 15 “Country Weeks” were staged during which member states and permanent observers hosted cultural or academic events. The Office helped organize three art exhibits and four recitals not associated with the Country Weeks Program. The Office collaborated closely on organization and staging of the Food Festival of the Americas, organized by the Organization of Women of the Americas, an association made up of the wives of the diplomats of the permanent missions to the OAS. Indeed, the Protocol Office collaborates with that organization year-round. The Office also organized and coordinated the following official events: 7 breakfasts, 20 luncheons, 1 dinner, and 16 receptions.

Support to the permanent missions and the General Secretariat, and liaison with the Department of State

The Protocol Office serves as liaison between the permanent missions and the Department of State on matters related to accreditation and registration of personnel. As part of the service it provides, the Office reviews and processes some 4,000 requests from the permanent missions and their staff for accreditation, issuance and renewal of visas, changes to visas, extensions of stays, work permits and their renewal, importation and purchase of duty-free goods, securing and renewal of tax exemption cards and driver’s licenses, and registration of vehicles, registration renewal, proof of insurance, and sale or exportation of vehicles. Visas are arranged for high-ranking OAS officials and letters for driver’s licenses for OAS staff and non-diplomatic personnel of the permanent missions.

The “Directory of Missions, Heads of State/Government, and Senior Government Officials, OAS Organs and Affiliated Entities” was updated and published at the OAS Internet portal and on the Intranet, and was published in early 2005. The Office kept a monthly schedule of activities in the Building. Letters of congratulations were prepared and sent to the permanent representatives and observers on the occasion of their respective independence days.

Coordination and Cooperation with Other Organizations

According to Article 112.h of the Charter, one of the functions of the General Secretariat is to “[e]stablish relations of cooperation, in accordance with decisions reached by the General Assembly or the Councils, with the Specialized Organizations as well as other national and international organizations.”

In accordance with mandates handed down by the regular sessions of the General Assembly held in Santiago, Chile, in 2003, and in Quito, Ecuador, in 2004, and with resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at previous sessions, the General Secretariat continued its program of coordination with other organizations and regional bodies. Coordination and cooperation were at their most intense with the secretariats of the United Nations (UN), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), and the Caribbean Community Secretariat (CARICOM). With specific reference to the UN and CARICOM, one of the most important arenas for cooperation continues to be the efforts to resolve Haiti’s political difficulties.

CARICOM

As in the two previous years, the secretariats of the OAS and CARICOM focused their joint efforts on seeking a solution to the political problems prevailing in Haiti, a member state of both organizations. Following the events of February 29, 2004, officials from the two bodies kept in regular contact to determine the best way for their organizations to assist Haiti during this exceptionally difficult period. In March, the Assistant Secretary General and the Secretary-General of CARICOM met with the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations to discuss specific areas of cooperation for the three organizations under UN resolution 1529 and the establishment of a United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). Subsequently, in May, the Assistant Secretary General and other officials of the OAS General Secretariat met with the Coordinator of CARICOM's Working Group on Haiti and exchanged views regarding that region's support and assistance for Haiti in the wake of the events of February 29.

The Secretary General of the OAS attended and participated in the Conference of Heads of Government of CARICOM, held in Grenada from July 4 to 8. That meeting provided an opportunity for dialogue with the heads of government regarding hemispheric problems and events, including the situation in Haiti. The talks with the CARICOM heads of government were in line with the terms of resolution AG/RES. 2058 (XXXIV-O/04), which instructed the Permanent Council and the General Secretariat to encourage dialogue among all Haiti's political players. In mid-January 2005, the Acting Secretary General received the CARICOM Assistant Secretary-General for foreign and community affairs and used that occasion to examine the level of each organization's commitment toward Haiti, including electoral assistance and alternatives for promoting dialogue among that country's political sectors.

The OAS General Secretariat and CARICOM also pursued joint activities in the area of technical assistance and cooperation. These activities involved several departments and units from the corresponding organizations. Cooperation was particularly intense in the following areas: (i) mitigation of natural disasters, with joint activities by the OAS Unit for Sustainable Development and Environment (USDE) and the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CEDERA); (ii) tourism development, between what was then the Inter-Sectoral Unit for Tourism (UTUR) and is now the Office of Trade, Growth, and Competitiveness, and the Caribbean Tourism Organization; (iii) the environment, with activities and projects carried out jointly through the Unit for Sustainable Development and Environment; and (iv) integral development, through the IACD.

United Nations

Efforts to find a solution to the political difficulties in Haiti were the priority on the cooperation agenda between the United Nations and the OAS over the past year, within the framework of the recently created MINUSTAH. The Acting Secretary General, Luigi R. Einaudi, met on different occasions with senior UN officials to discuss the best way to deploy this cooperation. After months of discussions, in early November the UN and the OAS General Secretariat agreed on and signed a Memorandum of Understanding regarding cooperation on electoral assistance for Haiti. In addition, since the creation of MINUSTAH, it and the OAS Special Mission for Strengthening Democracy in Haiti have provided each other with mutual support and extensive cooperation in this area. The Special Mission is a part of the basic group of countries and organizations chaired by the Head of MINUSTAH.

One of the most significant incidents in OAS/UN cooperation regarding Haiti was the participation of the Head of MINUSTAH, Ambassador Juan Gabriel Valdés, in a meeting of the Permanent Council on January 11, 2005, at which the Secretary General's quarterly report on the situation in that country was discussed. Ambassador Valdés gave an overview of progress in MINUSTAH's efforts to stabilize the

security situation in Haiti and emphasized the importance and level of cooperation between the OAS and the UN in bringing about free and fair elections in Haiti in 2005. He also said that the process of strengthening democracy in Haiti required elections that involved all the political parties. The presence of the Head of MINUSTAH was welcomed by the Council, and one representative suggested that Ambassador Valdés be invited to attend whenever the Council addressed the Haiti situation.

The attendance of the Head of MINUSTAH at the Permanent Council was matched by that of the Acting Secretary General at the meeting of the UN Security Council on Haiti on January 12, which was chaired by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Argentina and attended by several foreign members from Council member states and other member states of the OAS.

The OAS and the United Nations have also worked together on finding a solution to political difficulties in Venezuela and on enforcing the Peace Accords in Guatemala.

The OAS General Secretariat also maintained cooperation among some of its specific departments and their United Nations counterparts. As a result, projects have been carried out with the United Nations in several institutionally related areas, such as assistance with various environmental projects supported by the Unit for Sustainable Development and Environment, and projects to remove landmines and promote good governance and democracy, supported by the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy (UPD). In October, the Assistant Secretary General's Chief of Staff attended a follow-up meeting of regional organizations that had been organized by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, in 2003.

Other organizations

The Organization of American States (OAS) has continued to work on programs and projects with other regional organizations with which it has formal cooperation agreements. These include the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), the Association of Caribbean States, and the Secretariat of the Central American Integration System (SICA). With the Association of Caribbean States, the support has been reciprocal and both organizations have sent representatives to the other's annual meetings. Pursuant to a resolution of the General Assembly, the OAS has partnered with the Association of Caribbean States in joint initiatives addressing specific areas of cooperation. PAHO, the IDB, IICA, and the Pan American Development Foundation actively participate in the Inter-American Committee for Natural Disaster Reduction and cooperate with the OAS General Secretariat in responding to natural disasters and in mitigating risks. This has led to a noticeable increase in the effectiveness of cooperation activities and of the inter-American system as a whole.

DEPARTMENT OF LEGAL AFFAIRS AND SERVICES

The Department of Legal Affairs and Services (DLAS) was created by Executive Order 04-01, of September 15, 2004, by merging the former Secretariat for Legal Affairs with the former Department of Legal Services. The DLAS is composed of the Executive Office of the Director and General Counsel of the General Secretariat, the Office of Inter-American Law and Programs, and the Office of General Legal Services.

The Department's main functions are to provide legal advice and representational services for all the organs of the Organization. It develops, promotes, and implements the Inter-American Program for the Development of International Law, adopted by the General Assembly; supports the follow-up mechanisms for certain inter-American conventions, based on guidelines contained therein and received from the General Assembly; serves as administrative and technical secretariat of the Inter-American Juridical Committee, the OAS Administrative Tribunal, and the Meetings of Ministers of Justice or of Ministers or Attorneys General of the Americas; acts as a depository and source of information for inter-American treaties and agreements of the OAS and its organs; disseminates, through publications and a web page, information on OAS legal instruments and legal programs; and provides other services related to inter-American legal cooperation. The following is a description of the activities carried out by the DLAS and its offices, including those conducted by the former Secretariat for Legal Affairs and the former Department of Legal Services.

Legal Advisory Services to the Political Organs

To the General Assembly

Advisory services were provided to the plenary and to the General Committee at the thirty-fourth regular session of the General Assembly, held in Quito, Ecuador, and to the Preparatory Committee in Washington, D.C. The area also participated in the negotiations with the host country and reviewed the respective agreement for the holding of that session.

To the Permanent Council

Apart from a number of opinions on procedural matters, prepared for the meetings of the Permanent Council, most of the DLAS's advisory services were provided directly to the Chair of the Permanent Council, its committees, and its working groups, as indicated below.

To the Committee on Juridical and Political Affairs (CAJP) and its working groups

The CAJP was advised on the promotion and defense of human rights, particularly in the following areas: strengthening human rights systems pursuant to the Plan of Action of the Third Summit of the Americas; the draft American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (a topic addressed by a specific working group); protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism; protecting the human rights of all migrant workers and their families (a topic addressed by a working group); study of the rights and the care of persons under any form of detention or imprisonment; prevention of racism and all forms of discrimination and intolerance and consideration of preparation of a draft inter-American convention on the subject; human rights defenders: support for the individuals, groups, and organizations of civil society working to promote and protect human rights in the Americas; and combating the commercial sexual exploitation and smuggling of and trafficking in children in the Hemisphere.

As for congresses and conferences, the DLAS advised the CAJP on such topics as the XIX Pan American Child Congress, the Inter-American Specialized Conference on Private International Law, and the Meeting of Ministers of Justice or of Ministers or Attorneys General of the Americas. On the subject of the fight against corruption, the DLAS advised the CAJP on issues related to the joint effort of the Americas to combat corruption and impunity, and the follow-up on the Inter-American Convention against Corruption and its program for cooperation. It provided advisory services related to the Inter-American Program for the Development of International Law; promotion of the International Criminal Court; promotion of and respect for international humanitarian law; the Inter-American Program of Cooperation to Prevent and Remedy Cases of International Abduction of Minors by One of Their Parents; and access to public information: strengthening democracy. The DLAS also assisted the CAJP during its examination of the annual reports of the Inter-American Juridical Committee (CJI), the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

To the Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Affairs (CAAP) and its working groups

The DLAS gave the CAAP its opinion concerning the General Secretariat's contractual obligations to the firm of Deloitte & Touche, and advised the working group charged with review and consideration of the report on the reorganization of the General Secretariat. It also prepared a number of provisions of a structural and administrative nature, for inclusion in the program-budget resolution. Salient among these were the amendments to the General Standards and new provisions on fundraising and foundations. Also, working in partnership with the Department of Administration and Finance, the DLAS advised the CAAP about the options available for solving the financial liquidity crisis of July 2004, and participated in the drafting of the final report.

To the Committee on Hemispheric Security (CSH) and its working groups

The DLAS advised the CSH as it worked through its agenda, focusing on the topics of transparency and confidence- and security-building measures in the Americas; the inter-American strategy to combat threats to cybersecurity, with emphasis on the recommendations emanating from the Meeting of Ministers of Justice or of Ministers or Attorneys General of the Americas (REMJA); and the fight against transnational organized crime in the Hemisphere. Advisory services were also provided on disarmament and nonproliferation of weapons, with emphasis on the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and Other Related Materials.

The DLAS also advised the working groups to review the Statutes of the Inter-American Emergency Aid Fund (FONDEM) and to review the Inter-American Convention to Facilitate Disaster Assistance. The purpose of these groups is to modernize existing inter-American mechanisms for the member states' preparedness for natural disasters and their aftermath.

To other committees and on other activities related to the Permanent Council

The DLAS advised the General Committee and the Special Committee on Inter-American Summits Management and Civil Society Participation in OAS Activities. The Director of the Office of Inter-American Law and Programs served on the High-Level Mission consisting of the Acting Secretary General and the Chair of the Permanent Council which the latter body sent to evaluate the political situation in Nicaragua in October 2004.

To the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI) and its subsidiary bodies

On a number of occasions, the DLAS advised CIDI's Permanent Executive Committee (CEPCIDI) on rules and regulations. However, the bulk of the work for CIDI during the year was in response to inquiries

from the Inter-American Agency for Cooperation and Development (IACD) in connection with agreements, fundraising, and project execution.

To the specialized agencies and other entities

- The Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD)

The Department has an attorney assigned almost full-time to assist with the activities of CICAD's Executive Secretariat in the areas of legal development, arms control, money laundering, and transnational organized crime. These activities figure prominently in CICAD's annual report and include, *inter alia*, the following: review of draft domestic legislation on drug-related issues, at the member states' request; meetings with parliamentarians from Central America and Europe on the issue of firearms; the installation of the SALSA arms-control system in four Caribbean countries; participation in United Nations meetings on organized crime and arms control; attendance at the First Conference of the States Parties to the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and Other Related Materials (CIFTA); close coordination with the Secretariat pro tempore of its Consultative Committee; legal advisory services to the Group of Experts to Control Money Laundering for review of CICAD's Model Regulations on Money Laundering Control; and review and negotiation of the Executive Secretariat's agreements and contracts.

- The Inter-American Telecommunication Commission (CITEL)

For CITEL, the DLAS prepared draft resolutions and advised its Chair and the various delegations participating in the XIV Meeting of the Permanent Executive Committee of CITEL (COM/CITEL), held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in December 2004. The questions ranged from procedural matters to financial and administrative issues.

- The Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM)

The Department collaborated with the XXXII Assembly of Delegates of the CIM and answered the various inquiries made by the Permanent Secretariat during the course of the year, including advice on preparation of the draft Statute of the Mechanism to Follow Up on Implementation of the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women, "Convention of Belém do Pará." The Statute was approved at the Conference of States Parties held in October 2004. It also explained to the members of the Commission the legal ramifications of Executive Order 04-1, and advised the Executive Secretariat on a number of draft cooperation agreements.

- The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA)

Under the Cooperation Agreement with the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), the Department served as legal advisor at the XXIV Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee, held in San José, Costa Rica, in July 2004. It answered several questions on labor and financial matters and reviewed draft contracts. It also drafted, for the Executive Committee's approval, changes to the provisions of the personnel remuneration system and the IICA Staff Rules.

- The Inter-American Children's Institute (IIN)

The DLAS reviewed and drew up the draft amendments to the Statutes and Rules of Procedure of the IIN and participated in the meetings of its Directing Council in Mexico City in October 2004, where it explained those amendments to the delegations. The changes were approved by consensus. The

Department also answered inquiries from the Director General concerning institutional and labor-related matters and on cooperation agreements.

- The Inter-American Committee against Terrorism (CICTE)

The Department provided advisory services and helped draft the amended Statute and Rules of Procedure. It reviewed cooperation agreements proposed by the Committee's Executive Secretariat.

- The Retirement and Pension Committee and the Rowe Fund Committee

The Department advised the Committee and the Secretary Treasurer of the Retirement and Pension Committee and produced a number of written opinions concerning the application of the Plan and of the Regulations, and on tax- and labor-related issues. It also negotiated the withdrawal of a complaint filed against the Fund concerning an unused insurance policy. It provided legal advice to the Rowe Fund Committee and its Secretariat on the subject of its administration, on the documentation required to make loans, and on the guarantee policy.

- The Justice Studies Center of the Americas (JSCA)

At the request of the Office of the Executive Director of the Justice Studies Center of the Americas (JSCA), a legal opinion was prepared concerning the possibility of establishing a JSCA office in Mexico.

- The Inter-American Defense Board (IADB)

For the IADB and the Permanent Council's Committee on Hemispheric Security, the Department prepared a legal opinion and draft resolutions and statutes for modernization and reform of the IADB. It also provided advisory services on issues related to human resources and fundraising.

Legal Advice and Other Legal Services Provided to the General Secretariat

According to the Correspondence Log that the former Department of Legal Services kept for the year 2004, the DLAS answered, in writing, 734 inquiries from various offices of the General Secretariat, from the political bodies, and from the delegations. Of these, 289 were legal opinions. Some 182 agreements were reviewed. Over 80 percent of these requests came from offices of the General Secretariat. The others came from the political organs and from the permanent missions of the member states to the OAS.

The Department's chief clients for advisory services were the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development, which made 175 inquiries; the Department for Democratic and Political Affairs, accounting for another 108; and the Department of Administration and Finance, which accounted for 98 of the total. The other areas that received more than 10 written responses to inquiries were the Office of the Assistant Secretary General and its various units, which accounted for 45; the Retirement and Pension Committee, with 20; the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD), 35; and the Office of the Secretary General's Chief of Staff, 16. The following are some of the more salient examples of these legal consultations and services:

To the Offices of the Secretary General (OSG) and Assistant Secretary General (OASG)

In the first quarter of the year, and at the request of the Secretary General's Office, the Department helped draft an agreement with the Government of Colombia to monitor the peace process in that country. It also

reviewed another agreement with the International Organization for Migration, also intended to serve that peace process.

To facilitate the holding of international meetings in Mexico, the DLAS continued to play a role in the negotiation of the corresponding agreements and in the trust fund set up to administer the resources earmarked to finance those meetings. The Director of the DLAS served as Chair of the Technical Committee that supervised the trust fund; another attorney from the Department was pro-secretary of the Committee. When the trust fund ended, the Department negotiated and prepared an agreement with the Government of Mexico to create a fund to finance fellowships and other cooperative activities with the trust fund's remaining assets.

At the request of one of the permanent missions, the Department prepared and negotiated a cooperation agreement with a university to finance the lectures of the Chair of the Americas. Those lectures will be delivered in 2005.

The Department was always available to provide legal advisory services to the Office of the Acting Secretary General, on different issues having to do with the political bodies and the General Secretariat. At the Acting Secretary General's express request, the DLAS prepared a working paper on the development of policies related to performance contracts.

The DLAS advised the Secretary General and the Acting Secretary General on matters related to the transition and resignation of the Secretary General, his privileges and immunities in the member states, his pension, the powers and title of Acting Secretary General, appointments in positions of trust, and the applicable legal instruments.

Following the guidelines set out by the then Secretary General-elect, the Department prepared, within one week's time, the draft of Executive Order 04-01 on the reorganization of the General Secretariat. Following its publication, the Department worked on polishing it, making changes to it, and then explaining it to the delegations and to the staff.

In response to another request from the Office of the Secretary General, the Department prepared a report, in English and in Spanish, on the activities carried out by the former Department of Legal Services during the 10 years that Secretary General César Gaviria was in office.

For the Office of the Assistant Secretary General (OASG), the Department prepared the legal documents for contracting and payment of consultants to provide services to Haitian Government agencies. It also had a hand in reviewing, negotiating, and finalizing agreements with donors contributing to the special mission in Haiti and, in general, provided legal advice to assist in settling administrative and labor-related matters. When the time came, it also reviewed and negotiated an agreement with the United Nations for the Haitian elections.

The DLAS advised the Office of the Assistant Secretary General on labor-, tax-, and property-related matters having to do with the management of the Offices of the General Secretariat in the Member States, and on the privileges and immunities of those Offices. It also advised the OASG on preparation of an administrative memorandum on its procurement procedures, participated in the drafting and negotiation of various agreements, and provided legal advice in connection with its role as Secretariat of the Permanent Council. The Department counseled the Office of Conferences and Meetings in drafting and reviewing agreements and contracts associated with such meetings as the sessions of the General Assembly, the Model General Assembly, and other conferences and meetings in the member states.

To the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development (SEDI)

As for the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development, which is also the Secretariat of the IACD, the DLAS provided assistance in drafting and negotiating agreements with donors and participants in the public and private sectors for execution of specific projects, such as the Danish Human Rights Program for Central America in Support of the Intersectoral Dialogue on Indigenous Peoples, the cooperation agreement with Jamaica's Cable & Wireless Foundation, and another agreement with Argentina's Federal Investment Council. The Department also assisted SEDI with drafting and polishing model agreements for project execution. It continued to cooperate in preparing legal papers related to Phase III of the Project to Rebuild Housing in Communities Affected by Hurricane Mitch in Honduras, and took part in the respective bidding and contracting. In the person of the then Director of the former Department of Legal Services and current General Counsel, the Department took part in the XIII Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor, held in Washington, D.C., in May 2004, where it presented a paper on alternatives to the creation of entities within the Organization.

The Department also provided its services to the Office of Sustainable Development and Environment, which is part of SEDI. A number of agreements and contracts were reviewed. Prominent among them was a multimillion dollar contract with the World Bank to finance the Inter-American Biodiversity Information Network. It also participated in the selection and contracting of the businesses that would supply services to the Guarani Aquifer System, a resource shared by Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay. It also advised the Tourism and Small Enterprise Division of SEDI's Office of Trade, Growth, and Competitiveness, on preparation and review of agreements for projects in different countries, and for establishment of a fund to raise external resources for the development of small hotels in the Caribbean.

To the Department of Democratic and Political Affairs (DDPA)

The DLAS worked with the Department of Democratic and Political Affairs on putting together and reviewing agreements and contracts for the electoral observation missions, as in the case, for example, of the missions sent to observe the municipal elections in Bolivia and the recall referendum held in Venezuela in August 2004. It also advised that Department on the agreements associated with execution of demining operations and their funding, projects on election automation in various electoral processes, and projects in state modernization and promotion of citizen participation in electoral processes. It provided advisory services in the negotiation and drafting of agreements with a number of donors that contribute to various programs administered by the Department of Democratic and Political Affairs. The Director of the DLAS participated in the electoral observation mission conducted for the recall referendum held in Venezuela in August 2004.

To the Department of Administration and Finance (DAF)

The DLAS advised the DAF on the negotiation and drafting of various legal documents, such as the lease contracts for the office space located in the General Secretariat Building, the building contracts for renovation of the Simón Bolívar Room in the Main Building, and other important service contracts. It continued to provide advisory services on administrative issues having to do with the interpretation of rules to be applied in concrete cases, such as requests for hearings and reconsideration, repatriation benefits, application of the education allowance, home leave, and personnel policies.

The DLAS also prepared a legal opinion on the legal consequences of failure to comply with the reimbursement for payment of taxes to staff members who are so entitled. It also drafted a legal opinion for the DAF and a letter to facilitate an arrangement with the Government of Canada on the reimbursement of taxes to Canadian staff members of the General Secretariat. It drafted a written opinion on the expiration of the contracts for positions of trust and prepared the respective documentation.

In conjunction with the Office of Human Resources Services, it drafted new guidelines and forms for contracting temporary personnel. It also helped explain these guidelines and forms in the training exercises held for that purpose.

To the Department of Communications and External Relations

The DLAS prepared a lengthy opinion on copyright, on the question of whether the OAS news service could publish, for both internal and external consumption, articles originally published by other newspapers. It analyzed a number of contractual problems associated with *Américas Magazine* and drafted the corresponding legal opinions. It approved and drafted a number of copyright permits requested through the Columbus Memorial Library. It also gave lectures on legal issues to groups of lawyers, judges, prosecutors, and law students, as part of the activities of the former Office of External Relations and Resource Mobilization.

To other departments and offices

The DLAS continued to cooperate with the Office of the Inspector General by reviewing the terms of reference of the contracts to conduct audits in the various member states, by answering inquiries, and by participating in audits done of projects and cases, providing the proper legal foundation.

The DLAS also continued to provide advice on incorporation and taxes to non-profits having ties with the OAS, such as the Trust for the Americas, the Model OAS General Assembly (MOAS) Inter-American Studies Foundation, the Organization of Women of the Americas, and the Young Americas Business Trust.

The Department continued to serve on various committees and working groups of the General Secretariat as members and/or legal advisors. These included the Insurance Committee, the Selection and Promotion Committee, the Selection and Awards Committee, the Publications Committee, and the Sales Committee.

Legal Representation in Litigious Forums

The DLAS successfully represented the Secretary General in the two cases filed with the OAS Administrative Tribunal: Torre v. Secretary General, Judgment No. 150 (2004), and Louisy v. Secretary General, Judgment No. 151 (2004). The complaints concerned the expiration of the contracts of the two complainants and other employment-related matters and were seeking in excess of a half million dollars in damages and injuries. The Tribunal, however, dismissed the two complaints. The judgments appear at the DLAS web page under the heading of “Judgments of Administrative Tribunal.” Invoking its privileges and immunities and through legal representation retained in Brazil, the DLAS also prevailed in the two labor complaints that independent contractors filed in the local courts.

Inter-American Treaties and Bilateral Cooperation Agreements

In 2004 the DLAS was active in ensuring compliance with the formalities and procedures required for signature of inter-American multilateral treaties, deposit of the corresponding instruments of ratification and/or accession, reservations and other declarations, denunciation, and other legal procedures—such as designation of central authorities. In this regard, proper procedure was followed in receiving requests from the member states, reviewing the documents presented (full powers, instruments of ratification and/or accession), coordinating with the Office of Protocol, the Office of the Secretary General, the Office of the Assistant Secretary General, and the Department of Communications and External Relations for the respective ceremony, preparing the minutes and speeches, recording the event, and sending notification thereof to the member states and interested agencies.

Legal advisory services were provided to the representatives of the member states and to the organs, agencies, and other entities of the Organization as regards those formalities and procedures. In 2004, the DLAS participated in one signing, 31 ceremonies in which instruments of ratification or accession were deposited, and 16 in which a central authority was designated.

Certifications were drawn up and, upon request, current and complete information was provided on those treaties (their texts, current status of the signatures and ratifications, and so on) to the governments of the member states, to permanent missions of the member states and permanent observers to the OAS, to the organs, agencies, and entities of the Organization, to the Offices of the General Secretariat in the Member States, to other governmental and nongovernmental international organizations, and to private individuals in general. That same information was also reported on the web page.

In the case of the bilateral agreements, 97 agreements in various areas were registered and recorded in 2004. In most cases, the bilateral cooperation agreements were given a final review before being signed. The full text of the bilateral agreements recorded in 2004 was published online in PDF format.

It is important to note that in 2004 a number of changes were introduced in the texts of the inter-American treaties for which the General Secretariat is depository. Those appear in Appendix C to the present report.

Technical and Administrative Secretariat Services

To the Inter-American Juridical Committee (CJI)

The annotated agendas were prepared for both sessions held in 2004 and trace the evolution of each item on the CJI agenda. The DLAS drafted documents summarizing the General Assembly's mandates for the Committee; provided its assistance in drafting the corresponding draft resolutions; helped edit the reports presented by the members of the CJI; put together summary minutes of the CJI's proceedings; and was in charge of preparing the Committee's Annual Report to the General Assembly. The Department offered advisory assistance on most of the topics on the agenda, which are described in detail in the section of this report that deals with the Inter-American Juridical Committee.

During the interval between sessions of the CJI, the DLAS assisted the rapporteurs with development of their respective topics; it organized the participation of Committee members as observers at various meetings and discharged the mandates contained in the CJI's resolutions and decisions. In particular, it collaborated on all the work being done to organize the Centennial of the Inter-American Juridical Committee, which will be in 2006. It took the necessary measures and engaged in the *travaux préparatoires* so that the CJI might hold its March 2005 session in the city of Managua, Nicaragua.

To the Administrative Tribunal

As Secretariat of the Administrative Tribunal, the DLAS provided technical services related to the preparations for and coordination of the LII Regular Session of the Tribunal, and provided legal assistance and secretariat services during that session, held from May 12 to 18, 2004.

As part of the technical services provided to the Administrative Tribunal, general information about the Tribunal has been supplied to staff members of the General Secretariat at and away from headquarters. A record has been kept of the judgments delivered by the Administrative Tribunal and of the list of pending cases. The DLAS has prepared Volume IV of the Judgments of the Tribunal and has entered the corresponding information on the Tribunal's web page. The DLAS continues to work on the introduction of the Database, started in September 2003. In addition to the Administrative Tribunal's judgments it will

contain a collection and analytical index of the jurisprudence of the tribunals of other international organizations, such as the Administrative Tribunal of the International Labour Organization (ILO).

The Administrative Tribunal continues to maintain contact and share information and assistance with the administrative tribunals of the World Bank, the IDB, the IMF, and the ILO. Under the auspices of the World Bank, the secretaries of the various administrative tribunals held their usual working meeting on April 22, 2004, to discuss such issues as joinder of proceedings or cases, anonymity for litigation purposes and the appropriate time to decide this issue, the inadmissibility of complaints, the objection challenging jurisdiction, and the non-retroactivity of the law.

To the Meetings of Ministers of Justice or of Ministers or Attorneys General of the Americas (REMJA)

In its capacity as Technical Secretariat of the REMJA, the Department provided assistance to the Fifth Meeting (REMJA-V), held in April 2004. Technical support was provided to the REMJA group of government experts in mutual legal assistance in criminal matters, which met in September 2004 to strengthen and consolidate this type of assistance and to which end it agreed to carry out specific tasks.

Technical support was provided to the working group on hemispheric cooperation in combating cybercrime. Pursuant to a decision of this group, the DLAS organized technical workshops for the member states in the techniques of drafting legislation on the subject of cybercrime. These workshops are intended to help the member states prepare or improve the laws in order to cope with the various aspects of this criminal behavior and are held under the joint auspices of REMJA and the Government of the United States. In 2004, three workshops were held, targeting the Central American countries, the member countries of MERCOSUR, and the countries of the Andean Group. The workshop for the Caribbean countries is already scheduled for next year. Pursuant to a recommendation from REMJA-V, the DLAS established an Internet information exchange system having to do with prison policies, available at the following web address: www.oas.org/juridico/spanish/gapeca_sp.htm.

Follow-up Mechanisms

Of the Inter-American Convention against Corruption (MESICIC)

In discharging the functions entrusted to the General Secretariat since 2001 when the MESICIC was conceived, technical secretariat services have been provided to the First Meeting of the Conference of States Parties to the MESICIC, held in Washington, D.C., in April 2004. Out of that meeting came important conclusions as well as recommendations as to concrete measures to strengthen this Mechanism. Technical secretariat services were also provided to the Meeting of the States Parties to the Inter-American Convention against Corruption (CICC), held in Managua in July 2004. That Meeting adopted the documents titled “Declaration of Managua” and the “Plan of Action of Managua on Additional Concrete Measures to Increase Transparency and Combat Corruption within the Framework of the Inter-American Convention against Corruption.” Both documents contain agreements reached on this subject.

The area continued to provide technical secretariat services to the Committee of Experts of the MESICIC, which met twice in 2004, the first time from February 2 to 6 and then again from July 26 to 30, 2004. Eight country reports were adopted concerning the implementation of the CICC provisions selected to be examined during the first round (those countries were Uruguay, Panama, Ecuador, Chile, Bolivia, Peru, Costa Rica, and Venezuela). The six draft country reports that will be taken up at the first of the two regular meetings the Committee will hold next year have already been prepared and are being processed in accordance with the procedures set forth in the Rules of Procedure of the Committee of Experts of the MESICIC.

Since the Plan of Action of Managua assigns the Permanent Council certain functions in the fight against corruption, the DLAS has been providing that body with legal advisory services and technical assistance to carry out those functions to the fullest. Cooperative activities have been organized with other international organizations, mainly with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), such as the forum held in Rio de Janeiro in May 2004, in cooperation with both those organizations and the Government of Brazil, concerning “Conflict of Interest Policies in the Public Services in Latin America and the Caribbean.”

As part of those technical cooperation activities, through the Organization’s web page, a network has been maintained so that information on hemispheric developments in this area can be shared.

Of the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and Other Related Materials (CIFTA)

Article XXVIII of this Convention provides that five years after the entry into force of this Convention, the General Secretariat, as depository of the treaty, shall convene a conference of the states parties to examine the functioning and application of this Convention. In furtherance of this mandate, the Department provided technical secretariat services when the Conference was held in Bogotá on March 8 and 9, 2004.

Legal advisory services continued to be provided to the Consultative Committee of the CIFTA and to its Secretariat pro tempore. In so doing, the Department participated in preparations for its Fifth Regular Meeting, held in Washington, D.C., on May 10, 2004, and helped carry out activities planned in the Work Program 2004-2005, which was adopted at that meeting. These services included the following: states parties’ replies to the questionnaire on the Convention’s implementation were received and analyzed and an up-to-date inventory was kept of the measures that they had taken in furtherance of the Convention’s provisions; national agencies or points of contact were constantly updated to facilitate mutual legal assistance; the CIFTA’s website was kept current, additions were made and the site was consolidated; a proposed methodology was devised for drafting the model legislation recommended under point 6 of the Declaration of Bogotá (concerning areas that the CIFTA addresses but are not already provided for in CICAD’s model regulations); and draft agendas and other documents were prepared for the meetings held under the Committee’s aegis (of national authorities responsible for granting the authorizations or permits to which the CIFTA refers; national authorities or single points of contact; and central authorities for mutual legal assistance).

Inter-American Program for the Development of International Law

Courses and Workshops

Course on International Law: In conjunction with the CJI, the Department organized the XXXI Course on International Law, held from August 2 to 27, 2004. Participating in the course were 25 professors from various countries of the Hemisphere, as well as 27 OAS fellowship recipients and 10 students who paid their own expenses. The central theme of the course was “International Law, Trade, Finance, and Development.”

International Law Workshops: Santiago, Chile, was the site of the Workshops on International Law held from November 29 to December 2, 2004. The Chilean Association of International Law was instrumental in organizing the event, as was a group of academic institutions that included the Universidad de Chile; the Universidad Católica; the Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez, and the Academia Diplomática de Chile. The Workshops were attended by 14 professors from abroad and 25 Chilean professors, all specialists in public and private international law.

Chair in Inter-American Law: The Department made a contribution toward the recently created Chair in Inter-American Law at the Universidad Nacional de Córdoba in Argentina, by donating publications in the area of international law.

Other courses: The Department also worked with the former Unit for the Promotion of Democracy by delivering two lectures on the legal aspects of the Inter-American Democratic Charter (San Salvador, November 2004). In February 2004, it collaborated with the School of Law of the Universidad Central de Venezuela on preparing for and staging a course in the graduate program in private international law.

Legal Publications

The Department edited, published, and circulated the XXX Course on International Law, held in 2003, whose title was: “International Law and the Maintenance of International Peace and Security.” The following volumes were organized and published: *Workshops on International Law, held in Lima, Peru, November 17 to 22, 2003*; Third Volume in the *Serie Temática* from the Course on International Law: “Public International Law”; *Los nuevos temas del derecho internacional privado en las áreas del derecho comercial, financiero y ambiental*; and the *Third Volume on the Rio Treaty: “The Application of the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance to the Malvinas Islands Conflict. Twentieth Meeting of Consultation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs.”*

The Department supported publication of the following articles through other sources: “Commercial Arbitration in the Americas in the Integrationist 21st Century,” sent to the *Georgetown Journal* in August 2004, E. Lagos & Michael Solursh, in cooperation with Timothy Rudy on editing and publication; “Investment Protection and Liberalization in the FTAA: Striking a Balance between the Interests of Developed and Developing Countries,” sent to the *Law and Business Review of the Americas*, in September 2004, E. Lagos & Michael Solursh, in cooperation with Timothy Rudy on editing and publication; “*The New Inter-American Topics in Private Law in the Areas of Commercial, Financial and Environmental Law*,” published by the Organization in the second half of 2004; “In Defense of Democracy” (Enrique Lagos & Timothy Rudy), *Inter-American Law Review*, Volume 35, Number 2, Spring 2004; “The Organization of American States and the Fight against Terrorism: The Inter-American Convention against Terrorism and the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism (CICTE),” by E. Lagos and presented at the First Congress of Culture and Comparative Legal Systems, Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas, Mexico, D.F., February 2004; “La Convención Interamericana sobre Tráfico Internacional de Menores: Algunos Comentarios y Reflexiones,” an article written by E. Lagos for the Book in Honor of Professor Didier Operti Badán – *Liber Amicorum*, Uruguay; “The New Inter-American Convention against Terrorism and Human Rights,” submitted by E. Lagos for the Book in Honor of Professor Antonio Cançado Trindade, 2004; “New Developments in Inter-American Law,” an article written by Jean Michel Arrighi for the Book in Honor of Professor Didier Operti Badán; “For the Teaching of Public International Law,” article by Jean Michel Arrighi for the Book in Honor of Professor Antonio Cançado Trindade. At the Department’s web page, it also published a number of essays on the Organization’s internal rules and regulations.

Information Online and on CD-ROM

The content, design, administration and control of the Department’s websites were updated. Discussion forums were devised (a test project). The discussion forums allow virtual communities to interact on certain topics; questions can be asked and comments made. Shortly thereafter, a reply is there for other subscribers to view as well. Such forums are attractive to users because information of mutual interest can be shared. In March 2004, the third edition of the CD-ROM on the activities of the former Secretariat for Legal Affairs and the former Department of Legal Services was introduced.

Online shopping for publications was introduced, featuring a catalogue of 14 publications, management of customer accounts, customer registration, customer comments on the products, shopping carts, e-mail notifications, and arrangements for shipment of the product.

Model Assemblies

On November 17, 2004, the Department gave a presentation for General Secretariat staff who would assist with the work of the XXIII Model Assembly for Secondary School Students. That Model Assembly was held at headquarters from December 1 to 4, 2004.

Participation in International Forums

The Department participated in a number of forums and gave presentations whose purpose was to provide legal advice or report on the activities carried out in the Organization: (i) Workshops of Experts in Formulation of Legislation for Implementation of the Universal Antiterrorism Instruments and the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism, San José, Costa Rica; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. Presentation: *The Inter-American Convention against Terrorism: Some Observations for Its Implementation in the Countries' Domestic Laws*, January 2004; (ii) Fourth Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism (CICTE), Uruguay, January 2004; (iii) Seminar at the Law School of the Universidad Autónoma de México (UNAM) for its degree program in registry law, Guanajuato, Mexico. Presentation: *The Role of Registries or Records in International Development*, January 2004; (iv) Annual seminar on Private International Law (International Law Institute), Washington, D.C. Presentation: *Private International Law at the OAS, its History and Future*, May 2004; (v) IV Forum of Presidents of the Andean Legislative Branches of Government – FOPREL, Bogotá, Colombia. Presentation: *The Fight against Terrorism in the Legislative Arena and the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism*, May 2004; (vi) Meeting of Experts on the Follow-up Mechanism to the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women, Washington, D.C., July 2004; (vii) Meetings for Implementation and Follow-up of the Inter-American Specialized Conferences on Private International Law, held with Mexican officials from the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government, at the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs of Mexico, Mexico City. Presentation: *Joint Implementation of the OAS and UNIDROIT Instruments on International Guarantees of Movable Assets*, October 2004; (viii) Conference of States Parties to the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women, Washington, D.C., October 2004; (ix) XXVIII National Seminar on Private and Comparative International Law of the *Academia Mexicana sobre Derecho Internacional Privado*, A.C., Pachuca, Mexico. Master Lecture: *The Evolution of Inter-American Specialized Conferences on Private International Law (CIDIP) in the OAS and Preparations for CIDIP-VII*, November 2004; (x) International Law Workshops, Santiago, Chile. Presentation: *The Draft American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, December 2004. Presentation: *Challenges for inter-American law*, December 2004; (xi) Third Seminar on the subject of Pensions in International Organizations, held in Brussels, Belgium, April 2004. Presentation: *Governance of Retirement Funds in International Organizations*; (xii) Meeting of Legal Advisers of Ministries of Foreign Affairs, held at United Nations Headquarters in New York, November 2004; (xiii) the Regional Meeting on Adapting Domestic Criminal Law to Treaties in International Humanitarian Law, held in Mexico City. Presentation: Opening – *The OAS and Humanitarian Law*; Closing – *Thoughts on Adapting Domestic Law to International Commitments in International Humanitarian Law*.

Other Cooperation and Exchange Activities

The DLAS conducted a number of coordination and cooperation activities and exchanges in the juridical field with international organizations and national institutions in the member states. Prominent among these were the activities with Georgetown University, George Washington University, American

University, and the American Law Institute (ALI). The Department cooperated with the World Bank through the activities that the Bank's International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) conducts; the American Society of International Law (ASIL); the Inter-American Bar Association (IABA), and the American Bar Association (ABA). It continued its relationship of cooperation and coordination with the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL); the Hague Conference for Private International Law, and the United Nations International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT). The biannual meeting of lawyers with international organizations was held in November 2004 and was widely attended by attorneys from the IDB, the World Bank, the United Nations, PAHO, and the Department, who discussed a number of issues, such as privileges and immunities, relations with the host country, and international administrative law.

DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

The Department of Administration and Finance was created by Executive Order 04-01 and was further reorganized by Executive Order 05-03. It serves as the principal advisory office on all administrative, financial, and budgetary matters of the Organization. It is composed of the Executive Office of the Director of the Department of Administration and Finance; the Office of Human Resource Services; the Office of Procurement and Facilities Management Services; the Office of Budgetary and Financial Services, and the Office of Information Technology Services.

Executive Office of the Director

The specifics of the Department's activities are described in the report of each of its four offices. Summarizing, however, the main activities included coordination of the transition of Secretary General Rodríguez and his reorganization; continuation of the remodeling of the Simón Bolívar Room and the Administration Building; continued cooperation with the member states in seeking ways to strengthen the Organization within the limits imposed by the budget; and efficient management of the large increase in functions related to specific funds.

Office of Human Resource Services

The Office has continued to answer a substantial number of requests for support from throughout the General Secretariat. Although the increase in the number of specific funds has added to the Office's work, the Office has managed to keep pace without an increase in resources or personnel. The Office continues to handle its own particular operations, such as recruitment, competitions for vacancies, classification of posts, administration of benefits, and renewal of insurance. A total of 850 visa applications have been processed for staff members, contract personnel, and their dependents, and for domestics.

While the Office has become more efficient in handling its day-to-day functions, the following special activities that the Office has conducted are worth mentioning.

- The GS/OAS Student Intern Program received approximately 490 applications, from which 185 were selected.
- Through advisory services and training for supervisors in staff management, communications, planning, and other similar management-related skills, the Office continued to provide support to supervisors and staff on issues related to the performance evaluation system.
- In the case of training programs, the Office continues to employ the new reimbursement system. Under this system, GS/OAS gives staff members up to US\$1,000 to help defray the expense of the courses they take during nonworking hours. The new allowance has enabled staff to take more advanced courses, as well as courses in computers, languages, management, and projects. Under the new educational reimbursement system, 53 applications filed by personnel at headquarters and away from headquarters were processed. In 2004, all the funds budgeted for this purpose were used.
- As part of the health care provided for staff, the Health Care Unit handled about 2,941 consultations in 2004 and the physician on duty, contracted through Johns Hopkins University, conducted approximately 160 medical examinations.
- The Oracle Human Resources module continues to be modernized. Improvements were made to the personnel system during this period. The 11.5.7 applications version was added. Then in October 2004, the 11.5.9 applications version was incorporated.

- The Office prepared an Orientation Handbook for the new Secretary General. It also played an active role in advising the transition team. Those services continued in the period following the Secretary General's resignation.
- Under Executive Order 05-03, in the case of performance contracts it is the responsibility of the Office of Human Resource Services to check academic credentials and experience vis-à-vis remuneration. To discharge this new function, an instruction manual is being prepared and adjustments have been made to certain responsibilities of the Office staff.
- An informative seminar was held for headquarters personnel responsible for projects, to instruct them in the procedures for contracting Local Professional Staff and Temporary Support Personnel. (TSP) (Administrative Memorandums 99 and 100).
- In cooperation with the Office for the Promotion of Democracy, a course was conducted on Communication with Respect, which has been given five times to a total of 100 staff members.
- The study on the salary situation in seven Caribbean member states was completed.
- Two Health Fairs were held with staff, retirees, and their dependents and members of the permanent missions in attendance.

Office of Procurement and Facilities Management Services

The principal activities in procurements were as follows:

- Coordination and conduct of bidding, selection of purveyors, and execution of procurement contracts. Prominent here are the following services: external auditing for the OAS; demolition and reconstruction of the Simón Bolívar Room and administrator of its construction and remodeling; conservation and digitalization of documents in the Columbus Memorial Library and a computerized library system; equipment and services for vital statistics in Honduras and election registration in Haiti; installation of a cabling system built for the Administrative and Main Buildings; lease of space to the Juan Valdez coffee house chain, and training in and launch of the new service for providing office supplies.
- Based on requisitions received in the OASES system totaling US\$131,215,000, generation of some 28,500 lines of purchase orders. This represents a 15 percent increase in workload and productivity over the previous year. The aggressive system of periodically reviewing obligations was continued, clearing out approximately 10,000 lines of purchase orders, thereby minimizing the workload of the process at year's end.
- Registration of over 1,100 new assets, costing over \$3,900,000, including building improvements, updating of location or assignment of over 10,000 articles and elimination of over 500, which meant creating more than 28,000 fields and updating over 20,000, in the fixed assets inventory database.

The principal activities in General Services were as follows:

- Focus efforts on completing and continuing important infrastructure construction and maintenance projects.
- Complete the remodeling of the Dr. José Gustavo Guerrero Room, the Delegates Lounge, and a small kitchen in the Main Building. The Guerrero Room, on the second floor, has simultaneous interpretation equipment for the four official languages and adds to the space available for meetings. The Delegates Lounge, on the first floor, has computer facilities, Internet access,

telephones and fax machines. Adjacent to this, an area was set aside for delegates and staff to breakfast or lunch. The cost of this remodeling work was approximately \$750,000.

- Continue the remodeling of the Simón Bolívar Room. The construction company was hired and the architectural designed approved. The demolition work has already been completed.
- Complete the remodeling of the first and second floors of the General Services Building on F Street. The offices and commercial space available were leased to the Pan American Development Foundation, the Development Gateway Foundation, the Juan Valdez coffee house chain, and the Credit Union, resulting in a credit balance of \$1,166,000.
- The general maintenance work on the Secretary General's residence was completed.

Office of Budgetary and Financial Services

Budget-related activities

The proposed program-budget for 2005 was prepared in the amount of \$78.5 million, which would be financed in part by a \$2.2 million increase in quotas. Support services were provided during the analysis done by the Permanent Council's Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Affairs (CAAP). Then the General Assembly approved the budget of the Regular Fund at \$76.3 million. As a result of the administrative reorganization of the General Secretariat and the corresponding Executive Order, technical assistance was provided to the various technical areas to review and reorganize the budget. The savings achieved under the heading of personnel was on the order of \$1.8 million. Those savings were used to finance the Permanent Council's activities and to absorb the increase in the cost-of-living adjustment in Washington, D.C., in 2004. In accordance with the General Standards, periodic reports were prepared on the status of execution of the Regular Fund budget 2004. Those reports also contained information on the Specific Funds.

In 2004, collections of 2004 quotas and quotas in arrears from previous years totaled \$67.1 million, which was 3.73 percent less than the \$69.7 million collected in 2003.

Financial matters

The OAS' financial situation is summarized in the financial statements that appear as Appendix E at the end of this report. They include: (a) the Operations Subfund and Reserve Fund of the Regular Fund (Tables 1 and 2) and the Special Multilateral Fund of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (FEMCIDI) (Tables 3 and 4), whose budgets are approved by the General Assembly; and (b) the Specific Funds (Table 5), financed by unilateral or multilateral contributions to fund activities approved by the governing bodies. The Combined Statements of Assets, Liabilities, and Balances in the Funds show the Organization's financial situation at the end of the fiscal year, while the Combined Statements of Variation in Fund Balances reflects the results of the financial activity during the fiscal period.

As of December 31, 2004, the financial situation of the Regular Fund was weaker because of the decline in quota collections, which was the situation with which the financing of the budget approved for 2004 had to contend. The balance in the Fund as of December 31, 2004, was \$7.7 million, a decline of \$11.4 million since December 31, 2003.

Table 5 illustrates the annual activity associated with Permanent Council resolution CP/RES. 831 (1342/02), "Use of Excess Resources of the Reserve Subfund for Capital Investments and to Meet OAS

Mandates,” which approved a US\$21.0 million budget supplemental. In 2003, \$2.2 million were executed, leaving a carry-over of \$18.8 for 2004, as shown in Table 6. The statement reflects spending during 2004 on the order of \$3.1 million. Of this amount, US\$2.4 million was spent on the activities associated with the remodeling of the Simón Bolívar Room and other meeting rooms and the activities associated with the Summit of the Americas. That figure was 76.7 percent of the amount spent.

Office of Information Technology Services

The Office focused on providing the General Secretariat and its specialized organizations and entities with integrated and more secure technology services, and constant advisory services to maintain a modern and efficient information technology infrastructure. To use its resources to best advantage, improve coordination, and strengthen support to users in the General Secretariat, the technical staff involved in the OASES financial system and telephone services were made part of the structure of the Office.

To protect the system from the ever increasing threats to Internet security, a new generation of anti-virus and “Spam” filter applications was introduced. Those systems are making the system more productive by eliminating junk e-mail. The system is now more secure. More rigorous controls were added to prevent hacking into the system, and security policies are being more strictly applied.

The finishing touches are being added to the design of the technology infrastructure and services that will be incorporated into the remodeling of the Simón Bolívar Room. This work has been carried out in coordination with the Department of Communications and Publications, the Office of Conferences and Meetings, and the Office of the Assistant Secretary General.

Updating the server infrastructure has improved e-mail services, thus making access away from headquarters easier. Two pilot products were started: instant messaging to enable online chats through the General Secretariat’s network; and Groove Virtual Office (Groove), which facilitates very secure online communication among geographically disperse groups. The Groove project is being funded by the Government of Canada, in response to a mandate from the Meeting of Ministers of Justice or of Ministers or Attorneys General of the Americas to create an electronic network to promote mutual legal assistance among the OAS member countries.