

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.

Activities in Support of Democracy

Over the course of the past year, the Office of the Secretary General invested a great deal of effort in the preservation and promotion of representative democracy in the region, specifically in Bolivia, Venezuela, and Haiti.

Following an outbreak of violence in February 2003 in which over 30 lives were tragically lost, and following a request from the Government of Bolivia, the Secretariat sent a mission to Bolivia to investigate those events. Upon completing its on-site visit, the mission produced the "Report of the Organization of American States (OAS) on the events of February 2003 in Bolivia." This report was presented to the government of Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada. In October, President Sánchez de Lozada again faced increasing political pressure. A representative from the Office of the Secretary General was dispatched to Bolivia to help mediate discussions between the opposition and the government. Faced with further outbursts of violence, President Sánchez de Lozada took the decision to resign and allow a new government to be formed under Vice President Carlos Mesa Gisbert, thereby permitting a constitutional and peaceful solution.

Over the course of the past year, the OAS worked in Venezuela to facilitate dialogue and to find a peaceful, constitutional, and electoral resolution to the political polarization that grips the country. In conjunction with the Carter Center, the OAS, through its Special Mission, has facilitated dialogue between the democratically-elected government and the opposition. With the assistance of the OAS, the two sides have made significant progress. In August, the appointment of a new National Electoral Council (CNE) was an important step forward in the effort to guarantee that all Venezuelan citizens freely exercise their right to vote in accordance with Article 72 of the country's constitution. In November, at the invitation of the Venezuelan government and the newly formed CNE, we observed the first phase of the signature collection process for the recall referendum. More than 50 observers traveled to 20 of the 24 states in the country to observe the signature gathering. To the credit of the Venezuelan people and the government, the signature collection was carried out in an overall atmosphere of peace and tranquility.

The OAS also made significant logistical efforts to field a comprehensive mission to observe the verification and validation of the signatures for the recall referendum. As February, 2004 came to a close, the CNE had not yet reached a final decision on the validity of those signatures. By that time, we had some disagreements with the Electoral Council regarding validation of the signatures. The Organization remains committed to helping the Venezuelan people find a peaceful, democratic and constitutional solution to the political impasse that grips their country, in accordance with Permanent Council resolution CP/RES. 833, "Support for the Democratic Institutional Structure in Venezuela and the Facilitation Efforts of the Secretary General."

During the past year, the Office of the Secretary General continued to support the Special Mission to Haiti. In August, I named Ambassador Terence Todman of the US as OAS Special Envoy to Promote Dialogue in Haiti. The appointment was in response to a request to promote

communication between the government and the opposition at the Santiago General Assembly. Ambassador Todman was at the forefront of negotiations to establish a provisional electoral council to ensure free and fair elections. Despite our best efforts, the final outcome of the political crisis in that country was not one that we had either wanted or envisioned.

The Secretariat also entered into an agreement to observe the peace process in Colombia. Over the past year, the government of President Alvaro Uribe Velez has increasingly turned to the OAS for support in his efforts to achieve a lasting peace in his country. The confidence invested in our Organization by the Colombian government was manifest with the January signing of the "Agreement on Monitoring the Peace Process in Colombia." This agreement allows for the OAS to launch a technical mission that will monitor the demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration of illegally organized armed groups into society. The Mission to Support the Peace Process in Colombia (MAPP/OEA) will provide verification and technical support to the process. Sergio Caramagna, who oversaw the OAS's successful demobilization efforts in Nicaragua, heads our mission in Colombia.

Prevention of conflicts

On February 7, 2003, the Ministers of Foreign Relations of Belize and Guatemala, together with the OAS Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary General, signed an agreement to establish a transition process and confidence-building measures between Belize and Guatemala.

That agreement established a new framework, called the "Transition Process", under which the Parties agree to work constructively and in good faith until they reach a final just, equitable, honorable, and permanent solution to their territorial dispute. The framework outlines the responsibilities of the Parties and also assigns duties and responsibilities to the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States, and to the international community through the establishment of a "Group of Friends" to support the peaceful resolution of the Belize-Guatemala territorial differendum. The Group of Friends held its first meeting on October 6, 2003 at OAS Headquarters.

Central to the framework is the establishment of an Office of the General Secretariat in the Adjacency Zone, which opened for business on July 1, 2003. The Office's principal functions are to monitor the parties' compliance with the confidence-building measures, designed to reduce tensions in the Adjacency Zone, and to encourage respect of the human rights of the inhabitants of the area.

Support for the Committee on Hemispheric Security

The General Secretariat provided the needed administrative and technical support to the Committee on Hemispheric Security for fulfilling its mandates from the General Assembly in Santiago and the Summit of the Americas, as well as for holding the Special Conference on Security in Mexico.

As part of its work, the General Secretariat is preparing an inventory of confidence- and security-building measures, and a registry of experts in this area, for distribution to member states on an annual basis.

With the cooperation of the United States government, the General Secretariat pushed ahead with the development of an electronic system whereby member states can submit their reports on application of confidence- and security-building measures, and coordinate these measures with

the pertinent agencies, such as the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism (CICTE) and the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD). This system is to begin operation in 2004.

In response to the mandates from the General Assembly, the OAS General Secretariat adopted a number of measures to address the special security concerns of small island states. In particular, it presented a final report, in March, on the study on the safety of nuclear waste shipment through the Caribbean, prepared in collaboration with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Pursuant to resolution AG/RES. 1800 (XXXII-O/02), the General Secretariat provided administrative and secretariat support to the Consultative Committee for the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and Other Related Materials.

Prevention of violence

The General Secretariat continued to support efforts to prevent violence in the Americas, through the work of the Inter-American Coalition for the Prevention of Violence, established in June 2000. The Coalition members are the OAS, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the World Bank (IBRD), and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

Terrorism (Support to CICTE)

At the third regular session of CICTE, in San Salvador, member states renewed their political commitments and confirmed their intention to combat terrorism, approving the Declaration of San Salvador, the CICTE Work Plan for 2003, and the recommendations for the Special Conference on Hemispheric Security.

The CICTE held its first meeting of National Points of Contact (NPC) on July 14 and 15 in Washington D.C. That meeting laid the basis for communication and exchange of information among counter-terrorism experts of member states. The agenda included discussion of training initiatives under the auspices of the CICTE Secretariat, communications tools available to the NPCs, the status of the CICTE work plan, and the role of the NPC. Twenty-five of the 34 National Points of Contact attended.

The OAS General Assembly adopted two resolutions dealing with terrorism at its thirty-third regular session. The first recognizes that every member state must take measures to ensure a secure data exchange network. The issue of cybersecurity is being considered in the Committee on Hemispheric Security, in coordination with CICTE and REMJA. The second resolution dealt with the protection of human rights and the struggle against terrorism. It calls on member states to adopt the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism, and in that context to take all possible measures against terrorism, while respecting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This last resolution urges backing for the work of CICTE and increased support for CICTE on the part of member states, through implementation of the Convention

On October 7, the OAS organized a special meeting in follow-up to the United Nations assembly of March 6 on counterterrorism strategies. The event was sponsored by CICTE and the UN Committee against Terrorism (CDC). The central theme was the role of regional and

international organizations in capacity building and policy implementation. More than 200 representatives attended, from various regional and subregional organizations, as well as organizations devoted to the specific issues considered.

The fourth regular session of CICTE was held in Montevideo, Uruguay, from January 28 to 30, 2004. Delegations confirmed their commitment to take the necessary measures to prevent, combat, and eradicate terrorism, while ensuring strict and full respect for the rule of law, fundamental liberties, human rights, international humanitarian law, and international rights of refugees. States were once again invited to accede to the United Nations conventions on terrorism and to ratify, as appropriate, the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INFORMATION

The Department of Public Information was reorganized under Executive Order 99-2. The Department's purpose is to conduct an information-gathering and reporting program by way of print journalism, radio, television, photography, the Internet, reference services, public relations, and production. All this is done to bring news of the Organization of American States (OAS) to the public in the member States and thus increase knowledge and understanding of the Organization's purposes, programs, and accomplishments.

Strategic Communications

One of Strategic Communications' main objectives is to increase coverage of the OAS in the United States media. Contacts continued to be strengthened with foreign correspondents posted across the hemisphere, especially as a result of the Secretary General's facilitation mission in Venezuela and the new dissemination activity that the Department of Public Information (DPI) conducted at the session of the General Assembly and at other ministerial and high-level meetings held in 2003. The latter included the Third Meeting of Ministers of Education, held in Mexico City; the XIII Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor, held in Brazil; the High-Level Meeting on Poverty, Equity and Social Inclusion, held in Venezuela; the Special Conference on Security, also held in Mexico City, and the Inter-American Forum on Political Parties, held in Colombia. Having a representative to issue press releases, maintain close contacts with local journalists and do whatever is needed to give them access to information and to sources: all this helps build up coverage.

For budgetary reasons, publication of the print version of *OAS News*, a newsletter targeted at audiences everywhere in the hemisphere, had to be discontinued. A total of 15,000 copies per issue was produced and then distributed to local contacts, the media, academic institutions and civil society by way of the OAS' national offices.

Strategic Communications also produces a number of basic informative documents about the OAS. These documents, which are for general consumption, are updated regularly and published in English and Spanish for distribution at conferences and meetings. They are also in electronic format at the Organization's Internet portal.

Multimedia Products and Services

In 2003, the Multimedia Products and Services area (DPI/Multimedia Unit) continued to expand coverage and improve communications, products and services by using electronic media and digital technology. The Unit organizes, produces and maintains the OAS' Internet portal, provides video services (including broadcasts that are live or pre-taped in video format or carried over the Internet, digitalization of videos, videoconferencing, and production of documentaries on topics of interest to the Organization), photography services and publication of the *Americas Forum*, a monthly e-zine sent to over 45,000 subscribers in the academic world, government, the media, nongovernmental organizations and civil society. The e-zine carries articles about current issues at the OAS, as well as news, reports and interviews.

The OAS' Internet portal received more than 4.8 million hits in 2003, which is an increase of roughly 20% over the previous year. The most visited Internet pages were the news and press releases, juridical and other law-related documents, job opportunities, the search engine, and information on the thirty-third regular session of the General Assembly.

The Unit handled more than 164 Webcasts in 2003, among them the meetings of the Permanent Council –including the special meetings to discuss events in Haiti, Bolivia, and Venezuela; visits to the OAS by presidents and distinguished figures; ceremonies held to sign agreements and for ratifications of conventions; and a number of ministerial and high-level meetings. Videos were taped of a number of events, to be circulated to television stations and networks. The Unit also produced 24 interactive videoconferences, four seminars and three roundtables carried over the Internet.

In the video area, a new video in the series *Americas Alive* was produced, this one on the history of the OAS/UPD electoral observation process. The 30-minute program is circulated in English and Spanish among television stations in the member States and will soon be available in French. Working in cooperation with CIM, the Unit is putting together programs that focus on women's leadership in the Americas. Video documentaries were also produced in DVD format by the Art Museum of the Americas, the Unit for Sustainable Development and Environment (UDSMA), and the missions of the member countries.

The Unit also offers its services to a number of OAS inter-American and specialized bodies. For example, it broadcast several meetings of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and press conferences by the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD).

Radio

The Radio area continues to digitalize its programming and has developed an Internet page at the OAS' portal. In Spanish, the area produces "*Escenario*," which is carried over radio stations in Latin America and reports news on events related to the hemisphere's agenda.

The program *Focus on the Americas* is produced for audiences in the countries of the English-speaking Caribbean. This weekly, 30-minute e-zine is circulated on compact discs and airs on 26 radio stations. It features live, trans-Atlantic linkups, now more common on popular stations in the Caribbean. This is done with the help of guest experts in studios on both sides of the Atlantic. Audience participation by way of incoming phone calls is another frequent feature. OAS Radio's transmissions continue to be distributed via satellite feed.

Americas Magazine

The General Secretariat published six issues of *Americas Magazine*, identical in Spanish, English and French. A total of 55,000 copies of each issue were printed. Out of that, roughly 30,000 were sent to subscribers around the world; another 18,000 were distributed at magazine stands in the United States and Canada. Many copies are also sent to the governments and institutions in the member States, either directly or by way of the national offices of the General Secretariat. Proceeds from subscriptions and sales at magazine and newspaper stands account for about 45% of the magazine's total cost.

The Secretariat continued to implement the recommendations made in the "Three-year Plan of Action to Strengthen *Americas* Financial Situation." In early 2004, a special sales promotion will be conducted in Canada with the backing and support of FOCAL (the Canadian Foundation for the Americas). Also, the staff at *Americas* has been actively exploring new academic markets for the magazine, conducting special sales promotions with university libraries in the United States and Canada. With the help of the OAS' national offices, a marketing survey was conducted in

the member States to prepare to negotiate contracts with magazine distributors and increase sales of the magazine at newspaper stands abroad.

The General Secretariat is also conducted a number of campaigns to increase and promote sales of the magazine using a variety of marketing strategies. As part of the subscription sales campaign in the winter of 2003, 55,000 letters were sent to potential subscribers, offering a 2004 *Americas* agenda as a gift. This year's agenda is devoted to democracy, and was produced in cooperation with the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy. *Americas* Magazine is also sold over the Internet at *MagazineCity.net* and *doctormag.com*. All proceeds from subscriptions and sales of the Magazine, no matter what the source, are used to cover the costs of producing and publishing the magazine.

DEPARTMENT OF LEGAL SERVICES

Under Executive Order 96-4, which spells out the Department's functions, the purpose of the Department of Legal Services is to deal with legal matters that arise in connection with the Organization's activities, its relations with other entities, and application of its internal rules and regulations. The Department accomplishes its objectives by providing advisory legal services and representation in litigation and negotiation. It also helps draft legal documents for the General Secretariat, the political bodies and other organs within the Organization. Given its nature, the work is extensive, varied and intensive.

Inquiries

According to the Correspondence Log, the DSL answered, in writing, 593 inquiries from various offices of the General Secretariat, the political bodies and the delegations. Of those, 271 were legal opinions. It also reviewed 178 agreements. The Department's principal clients were the Secretariat for Management, with 116 inquiries, the Inter-American Agency for Cooperation and Development (IACD), with 84 inquiries, and the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy (UPD), with 82 inquiries. The Department answered, in writing, more than ten inquiries from each of the following areas as well: the Office of the Assistant Secretary General and its various areas, at 66; the Unit for Sustainable Development and Environment, at 27; the Retirement and Pension Committee, at 23; the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD), at 19; the Office of the Secretary General's Chief of Staff, at 15; and the Trade Unit, at 12.

Advisory services to the political organs

The DSL provided legal advisory services at the sessions of the General Assembly, the meetings of the Permanent Council, and the Joint Working Group on the Restructuring and Modernization of the OAS, mainly on administrative-, labor-, budget- and procedure-related matters. It advised the Permanent Council and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Affairs (CAAP), particularly with regard to the legal questions associated with the salary increase not provided for in the 2003 program-budget and the amendments to the Staff Rules. It also prepared legal opinions, draft resolutions, and the working papers requested of it.

In the case of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI) and its organs, the DSL provided advisory services on the creation of the Inter-American Committee on Culture and on the accommodation of the Inter-American Travel Congresses to fit into the structure and activities of CIDI. It was legal advisor at the Eighteenth Travel Congress in Guatemala and at the meetings of CIDI, CEPCIDI and the Management Board of the IACD.

For CITELE, the DSL prepared draft resolutions and advised the chair and the various delegations attending the XIII Meeting of Permanent Executive Committee of CITELE (COM/CITELE) in Calafate, Argentina, and the Steering Committee at headquarters. The inquiries touched upon procedural matters, amendments to the regulations governing Associate Membership, and financial and administrative business.

The DSL also cooperated with the Assembly of Delegates of the Inter-American Commission of Women and answered a number of questions that its Executive Secretariat put to it during the course of the year, including advice on an agreement with USAID to support a program against the trafficking in persons.

Under the Cooperation Agreement with the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), the DSL served as legal advisor at the XXIII Regular Meeting of the IICA Executive Committee and the Twelfth Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture, held in Panama. It prepared regulations and model contracts for associate personnel, a set of regulations and a plan to encourage payment of quotas on time. It also answered a number of inquiries on labor-related and financial issues, prepared the documents necessary for the dissolution and liquidation of the AgriFuture Foundation, and reviewed draft contracts with Oracle.

The DSL participated in the meetings that the Directing Council of the Inter-American Children's Institute held in Chile and Washington. There, the Department submitted legal opinions on budgetary matters, parliamentary order, the election of the Director General, and the use of the Institute's own capital. It answered queries from the Director General concerning institutional and labor-related issues and about cooperation agreements.

In the case of the Inter-American Defense Board (IADB) and the Permanent Council's Committee on Hemispheric Security, the DSL presented one legal opinion and a number of draft resolutions on modernization and reform of the IADB. It also provided the latter with advisory services on issues related to human resources and fundraising.

For the Retirement and Pension Committee, the DSL prepared new provisions on Policies and Procedures and advised the Committee and the Secretary-Treasurer on application of the Plan, enforcement of the Regulations, and on tax- and labor-related matters. With the Committee's approval, it also published the codified Regulations for the Plan.

The Department of Legal Services assisted the Rowe Fund Committee, particularly with negotiation of an agreement with a Bolivian private non-profit that will take on the operational functions and serve as trustee to facilitate the award of loans to more Bolivian students. The Department also advised the Secretariat of the Fund on legal and administrative matters.

The Department has an attorney assigned fulltime to CICAD and through that attorney took part in CICAD's programs in legal development and control of arms smuggling and money laundering. These activities, featured in CICAD's report, included preparation of provisions for control of arms brokers in CICAD's Model Regulations on Firearms, which CICAD adopted; advisory assistance in connection with the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms; review and negotiation of cooperation agreements; drafting of amendments to the Model Regulations on Money Laundering to control the financing of terrorism; and training for countries interested in using the system of oral arguments at trial.

Advisory assistance to the General Secretariat

To help arrange for the holding of the Special Summit and other international meetings held in Mexico, the Department of Legal Services represented the Offices of the Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary General in the negotiation of the corresponding agreements and in setting up a trust for administration of the funds to finance those meetings. The Director of the DSL is serving as chairman of the technical committee that oversees the trust fund. Also, to help get the activities of the Administrative Secretariat of the Free Trade Area of the Americas up and running in Mexico, the DSL concluded negotiations on the establishment of a trust fund to run the Administrative Secretariat, prepared the corresponding agreements and the model contracts for personnel associated with the trust fund, and helped coordinate the award of contracts and the recognition of privileges and immunities accorded to staff of the Administrative Secretariat.

The DSL advised the Office of the Assistant Secretary General (OSGA) on the Agreement to Establish a Transition Process and Confidence-Building Measures between Belize and Guatemala. It then conducted a mission to the two countries to begin the legal steps for the land transfer in order to facilitate the resettlement of residents from the adjacency zone. The Department also participated in the review, negotiation and finalization of agreements with donors to the Special Mission in Haiti, and provided advisory assistance in settling that mission's administrative and labor issues.

The Department of Legal Services also counseled the OSGA on labor, tax and real estate matters and on the privileges and immunities in the administration of the offices of the General Secretariat away from headquarters. It launched a process to get recognition of the tax-exempt status of an official vehicle sold in a member State. The DSL helped draft and negotiate a number of agreements, prominent among them a cooperation agreement with the International Red Cross. It also provided legal advisory services to the OSGA in connection with its activities as Secretariat of the Permanent Council. The Department also advised the Secretariat for Meetings and Conferences with the language and review of agreements and contracts associated with meetings like the regular session of the General Assembly and those of the Model General Assembly.

The DSL assisted the IACD Executive Secretariat with the drafting and negotiation of agreements with public- and private-sector donors and participants for specific projects and helped it prepare and refine the model agreements for project execution. It continued to help prepare the legal documents associated with Phase II of the Project on Housing Reconstruction in Communities Hit by Hurricane Mitch in Honduras, and participated in the respective tendering process. The DSL advised the Director General on the legal requirements that had to be met for a cooperation agreement with Taiwan, proposed the pertinent guidelines, and drew up a draft trust contract to facilitate the receipt and management of Taiwan's resources, subject to compliance with those guidelines and the approval of the pertinent political bodies.

The Department also advised the Executive Secretariat of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) on labor-related matters and negotiated out-of-court settlements. It also helped the Executive Secretariat of the IACHR review agreements with donors for some of the Commission's projects.

The DSL continued to assist the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy (UPD) with organization and review of agreements and contracts for the electoral observation missions, such as the agreement concerning procedure for the signature-collection electoral observation mission in Venezuela, those for de-mining and funding thereof, projects for automation of various electoral

processes and systems and projects to modernize the State and citizen participation in electoral processes. The Department also provided advisory services in the negotiation and preparation of agreements with donors. It prepared a legal opinion on the possibility of sending an electoral observation mission to an OAS observer country.

The Department of Legal Services collaborated with the Unit for Sustainable Development and Environment on the preparation and review of agreements to execute projects in various countries, including preparation of the agreements with the countries participating in the World Bank-financed “Guaraní Aquifer System” project, and the project on the “Water Resources of the La Plata Basin.” The DSL provided advisory services to the Inter-Sectoral Unit for Tourism to assist with preparation and review of agreements for projects in a number of countries and for the establishment of a fund to attract external financing for the development of small hotels in the Caribbean.

The DSL advised the Secretariat for Management on the negotiation and wording of various legal documents. These included the contracts to lease office space in the GSB, the construction contracts for the renovation work in the Main Building, and other major service contracts. It drafted and reviewed a number of Administrative Memoranda, such as the one concerning Budgetary and Financial Rules; Guidelines for the Tuition Reimbursement Benefit for Training and Career Development; the use of tax exemption cards for GS/OAS purchases; and on the vehicles in the member States registered under the name of the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States. It also continued to provide advice on budgetary matters and on the disposition of any excess in the Reserve Subfund, and administrative matters having to do with the interpretation of rules for application to concrete cases, such as requests for a hearing and reconsideration, repatriation benefits, use of the education subsidy, home leave, and personnel policies.

It continued to work with the Office of the Inspector General by reviewing the terms of the contracts for audits conducted in the various member States, answering inquiries and participating in audits of projects and cases, providing their legal foundation. Such was the case with the audit and investigation done of the General Secretariat’s office in one member State, which corrected the existing legal problems using the Organization’s rules and regulations.

The Department of Legal Services continued to provide corporate and tax-related legal advice to nonprofit entities associated with the Organization, such as the Foundation for the Americas, the Inter-American Studies Foundation of the OAS Model General Assembly, the Women of the Americas Foundation and the Young Americas Business Trust. It continued to help the Art Museum of the Americas with the drafting and review of legal documents related to art exhibits, including issues related to cost, shipping and insurance of art work.

Staff of the DSL continued to serve with various committees and working groups of the General Secretariat, either as members and/or legal advisors. These included the Insurance Committee, the Selection and Promotion Committee, the Publications Committee and the Sales Committee.

Litigation

The DSL defended the General Secretariat in cases brought before the Administrative Tribunal. It responded to a complaint filed by a former staff member whose fixed-term contract was not renewed and who also was asking the Tribunal to order the General Secretariat to pay damages and injuries resulting from an alleged misapplication of the performance-evaluation procedure. The Tribunal dismissed the petition and did not order the General Secretariat to pay any costs.

It also argued that another complaint was inadmissible on the grounds that it was not submitted on time. Nevertheless, the Tribunal heard the complaint and suggested that the parties arrive at a negotiated settlement before the Tribunal took up the case again. The attorneys for the parties did achieve that negotiated settlement.

The Department of Legal Services has just asked the Administrative Tribunal to dismiss a complaint filed by someone who is asking to be recognized as a staff member based on that person's 23 years of service with the General Secretariat in Argentina.

Over the course of the year, the DSL advised various areas of the General Secretariat on decisions to avert litigation and helped the hearing officers and the Reconsideration Committee to find solutions to labor disputes with the best interests of the General Secretariat in mind.

OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

The activities of the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) are responsive to the provisions of the General Standards to Govern the Operations of the General Secretariat -Chapter XV, Preparation of the Program-Budget- and Executive Order No. 95-05. Those provisions establish the internal audit function that helps the Secretary General and the governing bodies monitor to ensure that the various levels of administration are fully discharging their responsibilities with regard to the programs and resources of the General Secretariat. The purpose is to ensure a systematic review of the General Secretariat's operating procedures and financial transactions at headquarters and at its offices in the member states. The Inspector General's Office also checks to ensure that the established policies, rules and practices are being observed and carried out correctly, efficiently and economically.

Audits

During the period between March 1, 2003 and February 29, 2004, the Office of the Inspector General conducted 9 audits to check operations and to monitor for compliance, and for a systematic review of the internal accounting and management systems. It also conducted one inspection and one investigation. In carrying out its functions, the Office endeavored to cover as much activity at headquarters as possible. The focus was on the higher-risk operations and on those with the most potential for greater efficiency, economies and effectiveness. The Office of the Inspector General operated independently, with unrestricted access to all functions, activities, operations, records, properties and staff of the General Secretariat, both at headquarters and in the field.

During this period, the practical activities involved in the audits at headquarters were performed to evaluate the internal and administrative controls and to check that OAS directives and procedures were being observed. The OIG reviewed the long-distance phone call activity at headquarters, the operations of the Department of Financial Services, of the Columbus Memorial Library, of the Inter-American Commission of Women, the Messenger Unit, travel costs at headquarters, the Department of Procurement Management Services, performance contracts, and the offices of the OAS General Secretariat in the Dominican Republic, Paraguay and El Salvador to determine whether they were performing their activities according to OAS regulations and procedure.

The Secretary General approved all the audit reports and recommendations.

The Office of the Inspector General also checked 11 projects executed in various member States to make certain that the agreements were being observed and to determine whether the stated objectives were accomplished. The projects audited were as follows: (1) Incorporation of the Gender Perspective; (2) A Study of the Trafficking of Women and Children for Sexual Exploitation in the Americas; (3) Follow-up of the Convention of Belém do Pará; (4) Organizational development of the National Drug Commission; (5) Workshop on the Promotion and Defense of the Rights of Children and Adolescents in the Inter-American System for the Protection of Human Rights; (6) Project for Modernizing the Civil Registry (MORECIV); (7) Modernization of Electoral Institutions; (8) Model Regulations for the Control of the International Movement of Firearms, Their Parts and Components, and Ammunition; (9) "Document Catalog Retrospective Conversion Services"; (10) International Seminar on Small Business Incubators, and (11) Political Training School Program.

Other activities

The Office of the Inspector General continued to monitor to ensure that the recommendations made in the Office's earlier reports were being implemented. The Office continued to provide advice and assistance through its analyses, evaluations, investigations and recommendations about the activities reviewed, and served as an observer on a number of General Secretariat committees.

The Inspector General files quarterly reports and an annual report on its activities, with both the Secretary General and the Permanent Council.

PROTOCOL OFFICE

The Protocol Office plans and coordinates the official ceremonies of the political bodies of the Organization of American States (OAS), the Permanent Council, the Secretary General, the Assistant Secretary General, and the Executive Secretariats. It serves as liaison between the permanent missions to the OAS and the United States Department of State in matters concerning the missions' privileges and immunities. It also organizes and coordinates the use of the OAS' Main Building for protocol-related and social functions.

Protocol and Ceremony

The Protocol Office organized protocol meetings for the President of Italy, the President of Uruguay, the President of Nicaragua, the President of Bolivia and the President of Paraguay, and a special meeting of the Permanent Council for a visit by the Delegation from the European Union. It also organized the ceremonies in celebration of Pan American Day, the anniversary of the birth of Simón Bolívar, and the ceremony to commemorate the Discovery of America-Encounter of Two Worlds. The office coordinated ceremonies at which 8 permanent representatives presented their credentials and the courtesy visits made by a number of Permanent Observers. Receptions were organized to bid farewell to the ambassadors of Nicaragua, Ecuador, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, the United States and Guatemala.

The Protocol Office also provided protocol-related assistance for all the openings of the exhibits of the Art Museum of the Americas. It also organized all the ceremonies held for signature, deposit or ratification of protocols and other agreements between the Organization and the member States. At the regular session of the General Assembly held in Santiago, Chile, the Office organized a large reception that the Secretary General hosted for some 500 guests.

The "OAS Directory of Missions, Heads of State/Government and Senior Government Officials, OAS Organs and Affiliated Entities" was updated and published in print and at the OAS Internet-Intranet portal. Congratulatory letters were prepared and sent to the Permanent Representatives and Observers on the occasion of their countries' independence day.

Management of the Main Building

The Protocol Office manages the use of the Main Building. In the course of the year, more than 300 receptions, luncheons, dinners and conferences were held there. The proceeds from leasing the building in 2003 will be some US\$190,000. The Protocol Office was also instrumental in coordinating 17 "Country Weeks," which are weeks assigned to member States and observers to host and stage cultural or academic events. The Office also helped organize 4 art exhibits and 9 recitals unrelated to the Country Week programs. It worked closely on organization of the Americas Food Festival, organized by the Organization of Women of the Americas (OMA) whose members include the spouses of the ambassadors accredited to the OAS. The Office provided them with support and advisory assistance throughout the year.

Support to the Permanent Missions, the General Secretariat, and liaison with the Department of State

The Protocol Office reviewed and processed some 3,950 requests from the Permanent Missions and their staff before they were filed with the Department of State. These included accreditations, requests for issuance of visas, changes to them, or visa extensions and renewals; applications for work permits, importation and purchase of duty-free goods; filing for and renewal of tax exemption cards and driver's licenses, and forms having to do with vehicle registration, verification of insurance, or sale or exportation of vehicles. The Office also arranged visas for high-ranking OAS officials and letters for driver's licenses for OAS staff.

OFFICE OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS

The Office of External Relations (ORE) was established by Executive Order 97-4, of July 23, 1997. Its purpose is to advise the various offices of the General Secretariat and the governing bodies on all activities associated with external relations, while promoting and maintaining communication with the headquarters country of the Organization, nongovernmental organizations, academic institutions, the private sector, nonprofit organizations, and the like.

Permanent Observers

The Office of External Relations is in charge of day-to-day management of the activities involving the permanent observer countries, which are taking an ever greater interest in the Organization's activities and participating therein. By holding informative meetings, exchanging documents and information, visits by high-ranking government officials from those States and special events, the Office of External Relations helps to promote these countries' active involvement and cooperation in the General Secretariat's activities.

There are currently 59 Permanent Observers to the Organization. Three more States received permanent-observer status in the OAS: Slovenia, Nigeria and Luxemburg. In 2003, the Organization was the recipient of sizeable contributions from these countries, in cash and in kind. The Office of External Relations negotiated a significant portion of those contributions, either directly or by acting as an intermediary. The ORE also organized a number of donation-related ceremonies in order to publicly acknowledge the observer countries' support for the Organization's activities and arranged for publication of the respective press releases.

Of the official visits made by high-ranking government officials of the permanent-observer countries, particular mention should be made of the visit by the President of Italy, the Honorable Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, who addressed a protocolary meeting of the Permanent Council. There, the Italian chief of State said that he was optimistic about the dialogue that the European Union and the OAS had embarked upon. President Ciampi, the first Italian head of State to visit the Organization, took the opportunity to report that Italy would again establish a Permanent Mission to the OAS. During this same period, talks were held between the OAS and the European Union. The latter was represented by a delegation headed by the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Italy, Mr. Mario Baccini, and its Director General for the Americas, Ambassador Ludovico Ortona. Ireland, which will be the next country to serve in the presidency of the European Union, was represented by Patrick Walshe, Assistant Secretary General of Ireland's Department of Foreign Affairs.

Also, a high-level meeting was organized between the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Mr. Walter Schwimmer, and the Secretary General and Assistant Secretary General of the OAS, to discuss issues of common interest, such as human rights, the war on drugs, corruption, terrorism and the strengthening of democracy.

The ORE also maintains and regularly adds to its Internet page on Permanent Observers, which features information and documents relating to Permanent-Observer status, detailed information about each permanent observer, and general data on contributions from permanent observers and their participation in the Organization's activities. During the period this report covers, the ORE translated this page into Spanish. Previously, it was only available in English.

Working closely with the technical areas, the ORE prepared and distributed a file containing details on a number of technical cooperation projects administered by the General Secretariat and for which funding from the observer countries is being sought.

Other activities

One important project that the ORE undertook was the creation of a “Speakers Program” which is an exhaustive database of experts in a variety of disciplines, from within the Organization, the permanent missions, and outside institutions, to serve as panelists or speakers at Organization-sponsored events. This database is being made available as a reference document, because it contains complete information on the contacts, such as name, profile, area of specialization, contacts, place of work, background, professional experience and references as a lecturer or speaker.

The Speakers Bureau, the Center for Latin American Studies of George Washington University and the Council on World Affairs teamed up to organize a lecture series. The topics discussed at these events were the Special Conference on Security, held in Mexico, the Special Summit of the Americas, and the results of the Ministerial Meeting held in Miami about the FTAA process. These lectures are intended to enrich the hemispheric dialogue on issues that are priorities for the member States and attracted 600 people from the local community, among them diplomats, scholars, experts from think tanks, government representatives and representatives of NGOs and the private sector.

Special events were also organized through the Speakers Bureau, such as the television program on “Children and the Environment,” done under the joint auspices of PAHO; the round table on “Child Labor, Poverty and Education,” featuring a recognized expert on the subject, Kailash Satyarthi, President of the Global March against Child Labour; a videoconference with California Lutheran University, to report on the Organization’s main activities; and a videoconference on “Trafficking in Persons in the Hemisphere,” organized in conjunction with the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM).

The Office also organized its annual seminar for young leaders, called “Project Americas,” in conjunction with the Baker Institute for Public Policy at Rice University in Houston, Texas. The main theme of the seminar was “Democracy in the Hemisphere: Challenges and Opportunities.” This seminar brought together a group of 16 leaders from various countries of the hemisphere. Ambassador Luigi R. Einaudi, Assistant Secretary General of the OAS, was present as the Organization’s representative and principal speaker.

Approximately 3,800 visits and 164 tours and information sessions about the OAS were conducted for high schools, universities and other institutions. The visitors included government officials, specialists from think tanks, officers in the armed forces, students and academics, and others.

The ORE continued to expand its database, which by now has over 3,000 local contacts interested in participating in the Office's activities. The Children's Corner, the OAS Internet page designed as a cyber-center for information and training useful to children, students, teachers and the general public, also continues to be updated regularly.

SECRETARIAT FOR THE SUMMIT PROCESS

On May 31, 2002, the Secretary General signed Executive Order No. 02-03, creating the Secretariat for the Summit Process to replace the Office of Summit Follow-up. The latter had been established by Executive Order 98-3, of July 16, 1998, to coordinate the activities and do follow-up on the mandates assigned in the Plan of Action of Santiago, from the Second Summit of the Americas. The Secretariat for the Summit Process is the office within the General Secretariat that advises the Secretary General, the Assistant Secretary General and the political organs of the Organization on matters related to summit follow-up.

Secretariat for the Summit Process

Since the Third Summit of the Americas, and in compliance with resolutions AG/RES. 1824 (XXXI-O/01), AG/RES. 1847 (XXXII-O/02) and AG/RES. 1965 (XXXIII-O/03), this Office has been serving as Secretariat for the Summit Process. As such, it provides technical and logistical support to the meetings of the Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG) and its Executive Council and Steering Committee; drafts, maintains, updates and publishes all documents of those meetings at the governments' section of the Summit of the Americas Information Network; serves as the institutional memory of the Summit process; constantly updates information on the activities conducted to follow-up on the mandates approved by the chiefs of State and heads of government of the Americas, and provides all information that the countries require about the Summit process. This past year, the Secretariat has also conducted a number of activities to bring the Summits of the Americas and their mandates to the attention of the various sectors of society in our Hemisphere.

Support provided to the proceedings of the Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG)

The Secretariat for the Summit Process provided support to the SIRG meetings held in Washington, D.C. in April 2003 and in Santiago, Chile, in June 2003, and the five meetings held to prepare for the Special Summit of the Americas. For the April 2, 2003 SIRG meeting, the Secretariat provided logistical and technical support and compiled the Summit Implementation and Monitoring Chart, which also features the national reports presented by the countries on implementation of the mandates from the Summits. Later, during the regular session of the General Assembly held in Santiago, Chile, the SIRG held a ministerial meeting where the chairmanship of the Summit process was handed over to Argentina, which will host the IV Summit of the Americas. At this same meeting, a decision was made to hold a Special Summit of the Americas prior to the IV Summit.

In the preparations leading up to the Special Summit, Mexico took over the chairmanship of the SIRG and directed the *travaux préparatoires*, with the support of this Secretariat. The SIRG held five preparatory meetings: at OAS headquarters in Washington, D.C. in July and September of 2003; in Mexico City in October of that year, then in Washington again, from December 8 through 12, and finally in Monterrey, Mexico, January 8 through 10, 2004. At these meetings, the Secretariat for the Summit Process helped with negotiation of the Declaration of Nuevo León by providing technical advisory services and logistical support, forwarding the pertinent documents to the national coordinators, translating the documents and publishing them at the Internet site for the governments to access.

At the Special Summit of the Americas, the Secretariat for the Summit Process introduced a report titled “*Advancing in the Americas: Progress and Challenges*” about implementation of the mandates from the Quebec Summit.

The Secretariat for the Summit Process maintains and manages the Internet page of the Summit of the Americas Information Network, which the general public can access but which also contains a section reserved exclusively for the use of the national coordinators of the Summit process. This page features the basic documents pertaining to the Summit process: speeches, national reports, declarations and summaries of the SIRG meetings, reports from the relevant ministerial meetings, and information about other activities carried out and related to implementation of the mandates from the Summits for the Americas and about civil society’s participation in this process.

Follow up of meetings of ministers and high-ranking officials, related to the Summit Process

As part of the follow up of the ministerial meetings related to the Summit process, at every SIRG meeting this Secretariat presents a report on the most recently held ministerials. In doing so, the Secretariat for the Summit Process coordinates with the technical areas of the OAS in charge of the topic in question, and attends and supports these ministerials. The Secretariat for the Summit Process is in charge of coordinating civil society’s participation in these meetings. During the period covered in this report, the Secretariat has provided its support to the following meetings:

- V Meeting of Ministers of Transportation, Ixtapa, Mexico, 8–9 May 2003
- III Meeting of Ministers of Education in the framework of the CIDI, Mexico, 12-13 August 2003
- Meeting of Ministers of Health, Washington, D.C., 22-26 September 2003
- XIII Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor, Salvador, Bahia, Brazil, 24-26 September 2003
- High-level Meeting on Poverty, Equity and Social Inclusion, Isla Margarita, Venezuela, 8-10 October 2003
- II Meeting of Ministers and High-level Authorities Responsible for Policies on Decentralization, Local Government and Citizen Participation, Mexico City, 17 October 2003
- Conference on Corporate Social Responsibility, Panama, 26-28 October 2003
- Special Conference on Security, Mexico City, 27-28 October 2003
- Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Rural Life, Panama, 11-12 November 2003
- VIII Meeting of Ministers of Trade, Miami, Florida, 21 November 2003.

Joint Summit Working Group for the Summits

A Joint Summit Working Group of international organizations was established by a memorandum of understanding signed in July 2001. It is a partnership among 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 of Economic Integration (CABEI), the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), and the World Bank. The OAS Secretariat for the Summit Process provides secretariat services to that Working Group and is in charge of coordinating its activities.

This Group has met periodically to share information about the activities to follow up on and implement the mandates from the Third Summit of the Americas. The OAS Secretariat for the Summit Process convokes the meetings, presents an agenda, drafts the minutes of the meeting, compiles joint reports and conducts a follow-up on the decisions adopted. This group of institutions participated in the SIRG meetings held in 2002. At SIRG's April 2003 meeting, the Secretariat presented a report on activities conducted in furtherance of the Summit mandates. At the OAS General Assembly, a Hemispheric Report was presented to the ministers of foreign affairs and the heads of each institution, containing all the activities conducted by the members of that Working Group in furtherance of the Summit mandates.

At the invitation of the President of the IDB and the Secretary General of the OAS, the heads of all the organizations partnered in this Working Group met for a second time on December 10, 2003. The purpose of the meeting was to improve coordination and cooperation on the implementation of the mandates from the Third Summit of the Americas. Also participating in this meeting were the national coordinators for the Summits.

The heads of this Group's member organizations attended and participated in the Special Summit of the Americas, held in Monterrey, Mexico, January 12 and 13, 2004.

Disseminating the Summit Process

The Secretariat for the Summit Process organized the following events as a way of publicizing information about the implementation of the mandates from the Summits of the Americas:

- Regional Seminar with Civil Society, at the Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLACSO) [Latin American School of Social Sciences, Santiago de Chile, June 2003
- A meeting of the ESQUEL Group Foundation to inform the NGOs in the Washington area about the Special Summit of the Americas, Washington D.C., September 26, 2003
- An informative session about the Summit of the Americas, targeted at the Permanent Observer Missions to the OAS, Washington D.C., September 30, 2003
- An essay contest on the Special Summit of the Americas, for undergraduate and graduate students
- An informative session about the Summits, targeted at the Washington area NGOs, Inter-American Dialogue, Washington D.C., October 7, 2003
- A meeting at the OAS with groups from the private sector, to talk about the Summits of the Americas, Washington D.C., October 17, 2003
- An informative meeting about the Summits for the Washington Political Community, Center for Security and International Studies (CSIS), Washington, D.C., November 3, 2003
- An event with civil society, organized in partnership with the North-South Center during the Americas Business Forum and the Trade Ministerial, Miami, FL, November 17, 2003
- Breakfast with the private sector and the Council of the Americas, Miami, FL, November 21, 2003
- Regional Forum "Civil Society in the Process of Hemispheric Integration within the Framework of the Special Summit of the Americas," Mexico City, November 24-25, 2003
- Regional Seminar with the Press, Washington, D.C., December 12, 2003
- Forum with civil society, Monterrey, Mexico, January 11, 2004
- Forum with the private sector, Monterrey, Mexico, January 11, 2004

- Presentation of the prizes in the Essay Contest, Monterrey, Mexico, January 11, 2004
- Presentation of the report “Advancing in the Americas: Progress and Challenges,” Monterrey, Mexico, January 11, 2004.

Mobilization of resources

The Secretariat for the Summit Process made a special effort to marshal resources in 2003, and received contributions from member countries (Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, El Salvador, Mexico, Suriname and the United States) and from the organization “Partners of the Americas.” The additional resources enabled it to publicize the Summit Process with the media, civil society, the private sector and the youth of the Americas and to prepare the extensive report on the Summits’ progress, which reviewed the advances made on the 18 issues in the Quebec Plan of Action. That report was the basic document that the Presidents and Chiefs of State used for their talks at the Special Summit of the Americas held in Monterrey, Mexico.

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

The Secretariat for the Summit Process provided this Committee with technical support and coordinates civil society’s participation in its meetings. It also keeps the register of nongovernmental organizations accredited with the Organization.

The Secretariat for the Summit Process provided technical support at the seven (7) meetings this Committee held. It prepared reports and the draft work program, examined applications from nongovernmental organizations to register with the Organization, and performed other functions. Particular mention should be made of this Committee’s special meeting on March 28, 2003, attended by more than 30 representatives of civil society. There, they explained their views about these institutions’ participation in OAS activities. A number of organizations cited resolution CP/RES. 840, approved by the OAS Permanent Council and titled “*Strategies for Increasing and Strengthening Participation by Civil Society Organizations in OAS Activities,*” which they regarded as a step forward in the cooperation and collaboration with nongovernmental organizations. At the afternoon session of that day’s meeting, the Committee heard civil society’s views on implementation of the Summit mandates on issues like hemispheric security, education, and good governance. These issues were selected because of the upcoming Special Conference on Security, the XXXIII regular session of the OAS General Assembly –whose theme would be ‘Good Governance for the Americas,’ and the III Ministerial Meeting of Education. The organization *Corporación PARTICIPA* presented an oral report on how the civil society strategy being conducted by *PARTICIPA*, *FOCAL*, the *Coordinadora Regional de Investigaciones Económicas y Sociales (CRIES)*, the Political Science Department at the *Universidad de los Andes (UNIANDES)* and *FLACSO Chile* to monitor implementation of the Quebec Plan of Action was progressing.

The Secretariat for the Summit Process also coordinated the record of 78 civil society organizations in OAS activities, bearing in mind the “Guidelines for Participation of Civil Society Organizations in OAS Activities.”

Civil Society

During the regular session of the General Assembly held in Santiago, Chile, the Secretariat for the Summit Process organized a working session involving representatives of over 100 nongovernmental organizations, the Secretary General and the ministers of foreign affairs of a

number of member States. The purpose was to discuss civil society's role in the Summit mandates' implementation. The discussion touched upon issues related to the strengthening of democracy, the protection of human rights, and compliance with other mandates established at the Summits of the Americas.

To strengthen relations with civil society and its participation in the Summit process, the Secretariat for the Summit Process has kept the Web page devoted to this subject up to date. It has also updated the database of nongovernmental organizations registered with the OAS and those that participated in the Summit of the Americas. The Secretariat has an e-mail address to improve contact with civil society organizations and send and receive documents on the subject.

Civil society at the ministerial meetings

The Secretariat for the Summit Process was instrumental in enabling representatives of civil society to participate in the ministerials and specialized meetings held within the framework of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI), including the III Meeting of Ministers of Education, and those held within the broader OAS framework, such as those on Decentralization, Hemispheric Security, and the VIII Meeting of Ministers of Trade.

Civil society's participation in the Summit process

From early on, civil society was involved in the activities leading up to the Summits through its participation in regional forums held in Washington, D.C. in March 2003; in Santiago, Chile in June 2003; in Mexico City in November 2003; again in Washington, D.C. in December 2003, and finally in Monterrey, Mexico in January 2004.

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

The Secretariat for the Summit Process provides technical and logistical support to the Permanent Council's Working Group to Prepare the Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. It helped prepare the Group's work program and has presented proposals to a number of cooperation agencies in an effort to persuade them to finance the participation of indigenous representatives in the negotiation of the draft Declaration, and to enable the General Secretariat, the States and the indigenous peoples to communicate better and share their experiences.

The Secretariat for the Summit Process attended the meetings of the Working Group, which is examining and discussing the consolidated text of the Draft Declaration prepared by its Chairman on the basis of the original proposal prepared by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR). That proposal took into account the contributions, observations and suggestions presented by the indigenous peoples since the process of drafting the Declaration began.

In furtherance of AG/RES. 1919 (XXXIII-O/03), adopted by the General Assembly at the session it held in Santiago, Chile in June 2003, the Secretariat provided its support to the Initial and Second Meetings for Negotiations with Indigenous Representatives to Build Consensus on the American Declaration. Both working meetings were held at OAS headquarters, the first from November 10 through 12, 2003, and the second from January 23 through 26, 2004. The indigenous peoples of the hemisphere were well represented at those meetings, which served as opportunities to hear opinions and analyze the texts of the articles in Section One (Scope of Application), Section Two (Human Rights), Section Three (Cultural Rights), and Section Four

(Organizational and Political Rights) of the Draft American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

These working meetings have also been an opportunity to review the progress in international and domestic law on the subject and the principles and practices about traditional forms of ownership, land, territories and natural resources.

The Secretariat for the Summit Process continued to administer the Specific Fund to Support the Preparation of the American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which received contributions from Brazil, Canada, Nicaragua, the United States and Finland, and the Database of the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas, which has close to 500 entries.

Other activities

The Secretariat for the Summit Process manages the official Web site of the Western Hemisphere Transportation Initiative (WHTI), which enables the Ministers of Transportation to communicate with each other and publish their follow-up reports on this topic.

OFFICE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The Office of Science and Technology (OST) was created by Executive Order No. 97-1, of January 29, 1997. This is the advisory office on all matters pertaining to science and technology. Its duties and functions are: to strengthen the technical capability and programs that have some scientific and/or technological component; to assist the member states in matters within its competence; to cooperate with and support the activities of the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development; to foster the exchange and circulation of specialized information, and to coordinate the Inter-American Prizes awarded within its area of specialization.

The Office of Science and Technology (OST) coordinated and facilitated activities that were instrumental in discharging the mandates from the OAS General Assembly, the Summits of the Americas and other representative bodies of the Hemisphere, in matters related to science, technology and innovation, and their interaction with other areas like trade, education, social development, sustainable development and environment, information technologies, entrepreneurial development and strengthening of small- and medium-sized enterprise (SME), in efforts to reduce poverty in the hemisphere. Accordingly, the OST continued and even expanded its role as an instrument for synchronizing and coordinating policies in science, technology and innovation. As Technical Secretariat of the Inter-American Committee on Science and Technology (COMCYT) and of the process of preparing for the First Hemispheric Meeting of Ministers and High-Ranking Officials in Science and Technology in the Framework of CIDI, the OST coordinated the Special Meeting of the COMCYT held in Lima, Peru in May 2003. Among the agreements adopted at that meeting was a decision to hold the Ministerial Meeting in November 2004, to develop the proposed Science and Technology agenda for the next Summit of the Americas; the Fourth Regular Meeting of COMCYT in March 2004, to discuss the hemisphere's policies in science and technology, in priority areas as determined by the countries, including science, technology and innovation to make the productive sector more competitive; science and technology for social development; scientific and technological development in the Americas, and the popularization of science and technology.

The OST is also conducting the Hemispheric Cooperation Program, which has two components: the Project in Hemispheric Cooperation in the Development of Science and Technology Policy, and the project in Science, Technology and Innovation to Increase Competitiveness.

The Hemispheric Cooperation Project is geared toward developing hemispheric policies in science and technology in each priority area. To that end, a series of workshops was organized, with experts and national decision-makers. The first workshop, on improving the competitiveness of the productive sector, was held in Argentina, November 17-19, 2003. The second was on scientific and technological development in the Americas and was held in Ecuador, December 10-12, 2003. Participants were introduced to leading-edge technologies in the areas of advanced networks and information infrastructure, materials and nanotechnology, clean technologies and the environment, and biotechnology. Workshops are planned for early 2004 in Kingston, Jamaica, and Brazil: the Kingston workshop will be on social development, and the Brazilian workshop will deal with the popularization of science and technology. To combine the recommendations and policies coming out of these four workshops, a meeting will be held in Panama during the first half of 2004 to prepare the final document, which COMCYT will present to the First Meeting of Ministers.

On the subject of science and technology policy, the OST has kept up contacts with academies of sciences in the Americas. A meeting was held in Washington on August 14 and 15, 2003, to discuss the possibility of a collaborative effort among academies of science in the Americas to build scientific capacity and excellence for the hemisphere's sustainable development.

The OST headed the Panel on Science and Technology for Social Development at the IACD Conference on the Elements of a New Consensus to Confront Poverty in the Americas, organized by the OAS' Inter-American Agency for Cooperation and Development (IACD/OAS), PAHO and the IDB and held in Washington D.C., November 19, 2003. The Panel concluded that social and economic development and poverty reduction cannot be achieved without science and technology; that in making decisions, governments and donors must employ strategies that take account of the transversal impact of science and technology and make science and technology basic tools for development.

In the area of Technological Services, the OST continued to support efforts to consolidate the Inter-American Metrology System (SIM) and the Inter-American Accreditation Cooperation (IAAC), especially with the formation of the FTAA on the horizon. Technical advisory assistance was provided to both organizations as they conducted their activities and coordination meetings. Germany's *Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt* (PTB) provided financial and technical support in these areas. All the member states have participated, cooperated and shared experiences, mainly in the area of metrology. Efforts in these areas are basically geared toward improving the productive sector composed mainly of small- and medium-size enterprises.

Through the Specialized Biotechnology and Food Technology Network (SIMBIOSIS) for Latin America and the Caribbean, the OST worked to improve management of biodiversity and to help launch the Biosafety Protocol approved in Canada in 2000. The OST provided support to the Biosafety Protocol Symposium held in Venezuela, in November 2003, geared toward training personnel in the Protocol's implementation in all countries of the hemisphere, for the sake of standardized treatment that meets FTAA requirements. The development of biotechnology indicators is also being promoted. Support was recently provided for a workshop held in Colombia on this subject, in partnership with Colombia's Science and Technology Observatory, to establish a model and form for the member states to use in compiling data.

In the area of information technologies and telecommunications, over the years the OST has built up considerable experience in interconnecting, creating and expanding networks, through the Hemisphere Wide Inter-University Scientific and Technological Information System (RedHUCyT). That experience is now being drawn upon to move Latin America and the Caribbean to more advanced levels of connectivity, facilitating access to the new generation of advanced Internet applications and technologies in the region.

The OST provided its support in developing and consolidating specialized science and technology information systems, including the SIM (Inter-American Metrology System), the RICYT (the Ibero-American/Inter-American Network of Science and Technology Indicators), SIMBIOSIS, INFOCYT (Latin American and Caribbean Scientific and Technological Information Network) and RELAQ (Latin American Chemistry Network). It maintains mirror pages of these systems on the Internet. The OST has also started to work with other projects like ScienTi -a database of more than 300,000 curricula vitae of scientists in the region- and CLARA, *Cooperación Latino Americana de Redes Avanzadas* -an undertaking that the European Community is supporting. OAS headquarters was the site of a meeting with representatives of CLARA, the IDB and the Internet2 Consortium, to map out strategies for joint collaboration.

On the subject of Science and Technology Indicators, the OST continued to support the activities of the RICYT Network, providing permanent technical advisory services, in conjunction with the Ibero-American Program of Science and Technology for Development, in order to devise new regional indicators and strengthen the network.

In 2003, the OST took on the topic of gender in science and technology. It is planning to launch a project to develop relevant policies and recommendations for the ministers of science and technology in this hemisphere, all in coordination with the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) and other international organizations. Experts in the area are preparing case studies on Latin America and some of the advanced countries, which will be the discussion papers used at a workshop planned on this subject for 2004, contingent upon the financial support requested of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) in 2003.

The OST has recently ventured into the area of digital government. With support from the United States' National Science Foundation and the OAS' CICAD, the OST is trying to develop a system enabling countries to share information, in real time, on specific subjects. At present, work is underway to develop a technological model for automation of the immigration process and border control between two countries.

The OST has remained in constant contact with the IACD's Division of Human Development, mainly on evaluating topics for fellowships and coordination of Ibero-American workshops, in conjunction with the CYTED Program.

In all these areas, the OST monitored developments closely through its contacts with the national science and technology organizations and the various institutions and agencies involved and through the technical visits it made to various countries during the period, including Argentina, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru and Uruguay.

TRADE UNIT

The Trade Unit was created by Executive Order No. 95-4, of April 3, 1995. Its basic purpose is to assist the member states in trade-related matters, which includes the functions assigned to the Organization of American States (OAS) at the Third Summit of the Americas in connection with the establishment of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). Its functions are: to provide technical support to the Special Committee on Trade (CEC); to study the various aspects of trade relations in the Hemisphere; to ensure effective coordination with regional and sub-regional integration organizations, and to strengthen the trade information systems.

In its resolution AG/RES. 1973 (XXXIII-O/03), "Trade and Integration in the Americas," adopted at its thirty-third regular session, the General Assembly reaffirmed the OAS' commitment to supporting the process of free trade and economic integration in the Hemisphere.

Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA)

During the period covered in this report, the Trade Unit assisted the member states at three different levels of the FTAA process: the meetings of the FTAA negotiating groups; the Eighth Trade Ministerial, held in Miami, Florida, on November 20; and the four vice ministerial meetings –the first in Puebla, Mexico in April; the second in San Salvador, El Salvador, in July; the third in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, in September, and the fourth in Miami, Florida, in November. These activities were coordinated with the other two institutions on the Tripartite Committee (TC), namely the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

The support that the Unit provided to the negotiating groups centered around their mandate and included data collection, studies, analysis and technical assistance the groups requested.

In the Miami Ministerial Declaration, the Ministers made several specific requests of the Tripartite Committee (TC), namely: 1) that the TC and the Consultative Group on Smaller Economies (CGSE) continue to support the Trade Negotiations Committee (TNC) to keep the TNC report on the results of the progress achieved in relation to the treatment of differences in the levels of development and the size of economies in each Negotiating Group up-to-date; 2) that the CGSE, with the support of the TC, "present recommendations to the TNC at its eighteenth meeting 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 help of the TC, finalize the trade capacity building (TCB) strategies and organize sub-regional meetings with donors to continue talks on TCB strategies.

During this period, the Unit continued to provide support to seven of the ten negotiating groups: Investment; Services; Intellectual Property Rights; Subsidies, Antidumping and Countervailing Duties; Competition Policy, and Dispute Settlement. The Unit also offered technical assistance to the Market Access Negotiating Group, on the subject of Standards and Technical Barriers to Trade. The Unit also provided its assistance to the Technical Committee on Institutional Issues, the Consultative Group on Smaller Economies, the Committee of Government Representatives on the Participation of Civil Society, and the TNC's Subcommittee on Budget and Administration.

The Tripartite Committee also continued to comply with concrete requests made by the Ministers in the Toronto, Buenos Aires and Quito Ministerial Declarations.

Foreign Trade Information System

The purpose of the Foreign Trade Information System (SICE) is to provide up-to-date and complete information on trade in the hemisphere, in the OAS' four official languages. Ever since SICE's data was made available at the Web page (www.sice.oas.org), the number of users has increased steadily and numbered around 1,802,648 in 2003.

SICE has documents on the following topics: the FTAA process; trade agreements and bilateral investment agreements between OAS member countries; intellectual property; commercial arbitration; trade-related institutions; general information about the countries; businesses and chambers of commerce; and figures on, *inter alia*, trade flows, tariffs and prices.

SICE and the FTAA's Administrative Secretariat run the FTAA's Documents Distribution Service, first launched on May 1, 1999. The service allows restricted access to documents generated during the FTAA negotiations. By the close of 2003, over 28,000 documents could be accessed at the site.

The FTAA's Official Website

As part of the TC, SICE runs the FTAA's official Website, which contains all the public documents of the FTAA process, databases, publications, and relevant information about the progress of the negotiations.

As a result of one of the mandates from the ministerial meeting held in Toronto in November 1999, the Trade Unit-SICE, as a member of the Tripartite Committee, is responsible for keeping current the calendar of deadlines established by the Negotiating Groups for inputs from delegations.

Inter-institutional cooperation

As a partner on the TC, the Unit continues to work closely with the IDB and ECLAC to provide support to the various fora of the FTAA process. It has also worked on specific projects with other international institutions like the World Trade Organization (WTO), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the World Bank, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and subregional bodies like the Latin American Integration Association (ALADI), the Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI), the Andean Community, CARICOM's Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery (CRNM), MERCOSUR, and the Secretariat for Central American Economic Integration (SIECA).

Gender Equity and Equality

In its effort to mainstream the topic of gender equity and equality into the trade agenda, the Unit gave a presentation on the FTAA at the First Meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Inter-Institutional Forum on Gender Equality of the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) on February 19, 2003. On December 9 and 10, it gave a presentation at CIM's III Follow-up Meeting to the Inter-American Program (SEPIA), which was on Gender and Education. There, the Unit presented a document in English titled: *Trade Liberalization, Gender and Development: What are the issues and how can we think about them?*

Technical cooperation

Trade-related capacity building is a basic component in the activities that the OAS Trade Unit performs. In compliance with the mandates received from the Heads of State and Government of the countries of this hemisphere at the Summits of the Americas, the OAS provides technical support to the FTAA negotiations and technical assistance to the member states, particularly the smaller economies in order to facilitate their participation in the hemispheric integration process.

Following the approval of the FTAA Hemispheric Cooperation Program (HCP) at the Ministerial Meeting in Quito in November 2002, and pursuant to the General Assembly mandates in support of the HCP, the Unit has broadened its menu of trade-related capacity building activities in the Americas. This menu now features the following support areas:

Support with preparation of national or sub-regional trade-related capacity building strategies

The Unit worked with 11¹ countries on preparation of their national or sub-regional trade-related capacity building strategies. These strategies define, prioritize and articulate the trade-related cooperation needs in three main areas: preparation for negotiations, implementation of trade commitments, and adaptation to integration, which includes maximizing the benefits of that integration, including productive capacity and competitiveness in the region.

Training of government officials and trade-policy dialogues with civil society

In 2003, the Unit conducted the following training activities:

- *Advanced training program for government officials on multilateral and regional trade approaches for the Americas.* The OAS organized and financed this course in 2003 in partnership with the WTO. It was held at the University of the West Indies in Barbados and Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. The course had two sessions: one at Georgetown University for Spanish-speaking participants, and the other for English speakers at the University of the West Indies. The WTO has recommended this course as a model for the short-term trade policy courses on the Doha Development Agenda.
- *Workshops, lectures and dialogues on trade policy, for high-ranking executives, managers and other leaders.* This type of training, primarily targeted at the business sector, was conducted in Central America in conjunction with the ministries responsible for trade policy and business associations. It has been designed with a view to supporting trade-related capacity building and promoting dialogue within public and private sectors and civil society, all within the framework of the HCP.
- *Workshops, lectures and dialogues on specific trade issues.* These were targeted at government officials in such areas as government procurement, investments, competition policies, intellectual property, contingent protection, services, dispute settlement, and technical barriers to trade, which are areas of the Trade Unit's expertise. During the period covered by this report, these events were held in the Bahamas, Belize, Bolivia, Ecuador, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Peru and Trinidad.

¹¹ As determined by the division of labor among the institutions on the Tripartite Committee, the OAS assisted the following countries with preparation of their strategies: the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, El Salvador, Uruguay, and the countries of the Eastern Caribbean (Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Saint Lucia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines). The support provided to the countries of the Eastern Caribbean was made possible thanks to financing provided by the Canadian International Development Agency.

- *Alliances with academic institutions, to develop trade policy training programs.* With this new type of support, the Trade Unit is endeavoring to form a critical mass of “instructors” in trade-related issues and disciplines and to establish alliances with academic institutions, think-tanks, and business associations. The idea is to build up the local capacities and thereby make trade-related training programs sustainable at the national and regional levels. While the program was launched in Central America with 12 trainers from the region, the Trade Unit expects to expand the program into the Caribbean, the Andean Community, Panama and the Dominican Republic, and will arrange additional resources to that end.

Encouraging contacts among members of academic communities

The Trade Unit continued to encourage members of the academic communities in the hemisphere who are interested in trade and integration issues to share information. It did this through the Research Network on Trade in the Americas (NetAmericas). The Trade Unit and the CABELI teamed up to host a conference in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, on “Integrating into the World and Regional Economies: the Challenges for Central America.”

NetAmericas is designed to encourage sharing of information and research findings on issues related to hemispheric integration. It is open to individuals with a record of scholarly research and academic publications relating to trade policy and economic integration in the Americas. The principal beneficiaries are academics and the smaller economies, which in NetAmericas now have a tool enabling them to access relevant research on trade and integration in the hemisphere.

Program supporting initiatives aimed at modernizing government procurement systems. The Unit is working with the Secretariat of the Andean Community 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 on-line publication of information on government procurement transactions. A similar initiative proposed jointly by the IDB and the OAS is being discussed with the Central American countries. The Unit has an additional contribution from the United States Mission to the OAS to provide technical cooperation for these undertakings and is working with the Institute for Connectivity in the Americas (ICA).

Program to support the participation of small-, micro- and medium-size enterprise (SMME) in government procurements and access to e-markets and on-line technical services. In training, research and dissemination of information, the Unit has recent surveys on support for SMMEs’ participation in government procurement and e-commerce, surveys done by the Unit under projects supported by FEMCIDI and the United States Mission to the OAS. Those surveys will be made available on line. The Unit has also established cooperative relations with the Ministry of Planning, Budget and Management of Brazil, SEBRAE, and the United States’ General Services Administration (GSA), given the amount of experience these entities have in organizing programs to teach SMMEs how to participate in government procurement.

Publications

In November 2003, the “Trade Unit Studies” Series published a work by José M. Salazar-Xirinachs, titled *The FTAA and Development Strategies in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Other studies were published in February 2004, one by Maryse Robert titled *Do Trade Agreements Trade Away the Right to Regulate? A Look at Existing Provisions on Goods, Services and Investment*; another by Luis Niscovolos and Sherry Stephenson, titled *Services Regulation*

and Trade Agreements: Dispelling Misunderstandings; and a third by Paul Fisher, titled *Policy approaches on trade and the environment in economic instruments in the Western Hemisphere*.

Enhancing transparency and dissemination of trade-related information using information technologies

The OAS is conducting a number of activities to enhance transparency through the use of information technologies:

Trade Education Database. Built with support from USAID, this database contains information about training courses in trade policies. (<http://trt.ftaa-alca.org/searchted.asp>)

Trade-related Technical Assistance Needs Database. Prepared as part of the support that the OAS provides to the FTAA Consultative Group on Smaller Economies, this database affords access to information on technical assistance resources and provides donors with more information about the trade-related assistance that the participating countries require. (http://trt.ftaa-alca.org/ta/spanish/SearchTACountry_s.asp)

The Intranet of the advanced training program for government officials on multilateral and regional trade approaches for the Americas: the function of this portal, which the Unit and SICE administer jointly, is to provide participants with the research materials that they will use in the course.

The Special Committee on Trade and its Advisory Group

The Special Committee on Trade (SCT) and its Advisory Group did not meet in 2003. Consequently, the Trade Unit did not have occasion to provide these bodies with support. At its thirtieth regular session, in Windsor, Ontario, the General Assembly resolved “To accept the recommendation of the Chairman of the SCT, based on his consultations with the member states of the SCT, to maintain the *status quo*, that is, to maintain the existence of the SCT without convening the Committee.”

UNIT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

The Unit for Social Development and Education was created by Executive Order No. 96-5, of June 1996. It is responsible for providing technical and operational support to the member states and to the OAS' deliberative bodies in the following areas: strengthening educational systems; promoting job opportunities and job training, and formulating public policies and strategies aimed at combating poverty and discrimination. To achieve this objective, the Unit conducts and coordinates studies, research, and exchanges of information and experiences. It also promotes training, supports initiatives to build partnership among countries, among international cooperation and development agencies, and among governmental and nongovernmental institutions on formulation of policies in social development, education, culture, employment.

In the course of 2003, the Unit continued to support the OAS' political fora, provide advisory assistance and strengthen inter-American cooperation in the areas of education, employment, social development and culture. The Unit's priorities have been follow-up of the mandates from the Summit of the Americas, the General Assembly and the CIDI. To comply with those mandates, the Unit has worked in close partnership with agencies of the inter-American system, international cooperation and development agencies, government agencies and civil society organizations.

Social Development and poverty reduction

Social Network of Latin America and the Caribbean

In 2003, the Unit for Social Development and Education continued to serve as Technical Secretariat of the Social Network of Latin America and the Caribbean. In that capacity, it managed the Network's voluntary fund and collaborated in the staging of the Annual Conference, seminars and internships provided for in the Network's 2003 work program. The Tenth Annual Conference of the Social Network was held in Santiago, Chile, October 1 through 3, 2003. The event was organized by the Social Network, the Solidarity and Social Investment Fund and the OAS. The meeting approved the 2004 Work Program and the Declaration of Santiago. During the period covered by this report, two seminars were organized: "Poverty Eradication: Responding to Basic Needs or Community Development?", Ocho Rios, Jamaica; and the "Third Course on Designing, Monitoring and Evaluating Social Projects", Santiago, Chile (ECLAC).

Under an agreement signed with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the OAS General Secretariat serves as executing agency of the Intra-Regional Internship Program among the Social Network's member institutions. As part of this program, it teamed up with the INDES and the IDB to organize the "Seminar on Best Practices in Policy Coordination and Social Management for Executives of the Social Investment Funds, Members of the Social Network," held in Washington, D.C., June 2 through 6.

High-level Meeting on Poverty, Equity and Social Inclusion

Pursuant to resolution AG/RES. 1854 (XXXII-O/02), “Poverty, Equity and Social Inclusion,” the OAS provided CEPCIDI with support during preparations for the High-Level Meeting on Poverty, Equity and Social Inclusion, held on the Isla de Margarita, Venezuela, October 8 through 10. The Unit on Social Development and Education served as Technical Secretariat of the Meeting.

Promotion of Democracy: The Role of Civil Education

Following the directives from the Third Summit of the Americas, in keeping with the Inter-American Democratic Charter, and in furtherance of the mandate contained in resolution AG/RES. 1869 (XXXII-O/02), “Promotion of Democratic Culture,” the Unit for Social Development and Education did a study on mainstreaming democratic values and principles into the member states’ education programs. That study was examined during the Second Meeting of the Project’s Advisory Committee, held on April 29 and 30, 2003. Adjustments were made to include suggestions and input. The final version of this paper was published in a definitive report, in Spanish and English.

Education

In response to the mandate received from the Third Summit of the Americas and in its capacity as Technical Secretariat of the Third Meeting of Ministers of Education in the framework of CIDI, the Unit organized a number of meetings and took active part in others, all in order to prepare the content and better identify the educational challenges and best practices for horizontal cooperation.

Third Meeting of Ministers of Education in the framework of CIDI

The Third Meeting of Ministers of Education in the framework of CIDI was held in Mexico City, August 11 through 13, 2003. The Declaration of Mexico recounts the initiatives to be undertaken in the area of new technologies, to promote scientific research and its application to education; promote gender equity through education; preserve the hemisphere’s cultural diversity; explore financing strategies and the need to forge a real hemispheric alliance for education.

First Meeting of the Inter-American Committee on Education (CIE)

The First Meeting of the Inter-American Committee on Education was held in Mexico City, Mexico, August 13, 2003. There, the resolutions approved at the Third Meeting of Ministers of Education were reviewed, instruments were introduced within the inter-American system that can support the CIE’s activities, and a decision was made to hold the first special meeting shortly to determine how the resources provided for in resolution CIDI/RME/RES. 9 (III-O/03) will be earmarked. That meeting was held on December 4 and 5.

Meeting of the CIE’s Officers

As Chair of the CIE, Mexico convoked a meeting of the Committee’s officers, which took place in Washington on December 4 and 5, 2003. The purpose of the meeting was to begin discussing the programming of activities in response to the mandates that the CIE received from the Meeting of Ministers. Participating were delegations from Mexico, El Salvador, Trinidad and Tobago,

Canada, Honduras, Brazil, Ecuador, Saint Lucia and the United States. Decisions were made to work on-line and to meet in April 2004 to determine the timetable and budget for each activity.

Preparatory Meeting for the Third Meeting of Ministers of Education in the framework of CIDI

The Preparatory Meeting was held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, April 9 through 11, 2003. In attendance were delegations from 24 member states and representatives of international organizations. They were there to examine the progress made with and challenges encountered in the activities carried out in response to the commitments undertaken at the Summit of the Americas. The proposed calendar and declaration were discussed. After examining the Rules of Procedure of the Inter-American Committee on Education, approved through resolution CEPCIDI/RES. 81 (LXXXVI-O/02) in November 2002, the delegations proposed to amend those Rules of Procedure in order to create an Executive Committee. The delegations present decided to put together hemispheric projects centering around three main themes: teacher education; quality with equity, and secondary education.

Meeting of the Coordinators of Hemispheric Projects

In the march up to the Third Meeting of Ministers of Education, the member states decided to focus on three hemispheric projects that capture and synthesize the five educational priorities established at Punta del Este by responding to the challenges of quality with equity, teacher training and secondary education. These hemispheric projects draw from the lessons learned from the seminars on Consolidated Programs and use the same method of horizontal cooperation, while using the best educational programs in each country. The hemispheric projects are for all the member states and each is coordinated by one country and co-coordinated by five countries representing the sub-regions. To accent the hemispheric quality of these projects, the Unit for Social Development and Education convened the hemispheric and sub-regional coordinators to a meeting held in Washington, D.C., November 18 and 19, 2003. The main purpose was to put together the proposals for the projects that will be implemented starting in 2004, using funds from the Multilateral Special Fund of the CIDI (FEMCIDI).

- As Technical Secretariat of the Third Meeting of Ministers of Education, the Unit was instructed to combine the contributions from international organizations with the effort being made by the countries in putting together the three hemispheric projects. In the process of exploring ways to enrich and apply each project presented by the countries, the Inter-Agency Meeting on Education was held on July 18 and 19, 2003, at the facilities of the Institute of Advanced Studies for the Americas (INEAM) in Miami, Florida. The purpose of the meeting was to get all the viewpoints and contributions made by the international agencies active in the area of education. The representatives of the agencies evaluated what their agencies would be able to contribute -technically, financially or in kind- to the work that will be conducted among the countries of the hemisphere in the 2004-2008 quadrennium. Representatives of UNESCO's Regional Office of Education for the Latin American and Caribbean countries (UNESCO/OREALC), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), UNICEF, the Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture, the Andrés Bello Agreement and the World Bank took part.
- *Launch of the on-line Forum.* At the member states' request and acting in its capacity as Technical Secretariat of the Meeting of Ministers of Education, the Unit for Social Development and Education launched an Education On-Line Forum to discuss and

follow up on the commitments undertaken at the Preparatory Meeting of the Third Meeting of Ministers of Education and to put together the three hemispheric projects.

- *Education-related videoconferences.* In cooperation with Mexico's Secretariat for Public Education (SEP) and the World Bank Institute, three videoconferences were conducted to further develop the design of the hemispheric projects in equity and quality, teacher education, and secondary education. Participating were the ministers of education of the countries coordinating these projects. They shared the findings of their analyses and suggested what the challenges specific to each sub-region of the hemisphere might be.
- *Civil Society Meeting.* With the support of the Secretariat for the Summit Process and the Unit for Social Development and Education of the OAS, the Government of Colombia convoked a meeting on "Civil Society Participation in Education," held in Bogota on July 28 and 29, 2003. The purpose of the meeting was to capture civil society's vision of the work being carried out through the OAS, with particular reference to the themes of the three hemispheric projects.

Cooperation Agreement between the OAS and Mexico's Secretariat for Public Education (SEP)

In the spirit of cooperation, Mexico, by way of the SEP, offered all the member states free access to the Mexican Educational Satellite System "EDUSAT." With the use of this signal and the educational programming developed by the SEP, joint programs can be conducted that will raise the quality of basic education across the hemisphere. The SEP launched the Educational Channel of the Americas on the occasion of the Third Meeting of Ministers of Education.

Horizontal cooperation strategy/ Permanent Portfolio of Consolidated Programs

The Unit for Social Development and Education continued the work it is conducting in response to the education ministers' commitment to strengthen horizontal cooperation among countries through seminars at which educational experiences are shared. These seminars have been held since 2002. Thanks to the combined effort of the countries offering the courses, those interested in the courses, the Unit for Social Development and Education and the IACD, the following seminars were conducted:

- *Education Management in Mexico and Argentina.* Held from February 17 through 27, 2003, officials from Argentina, Chile, Colombia, El Salvador, Mexico, Peru and Uruguay participated in this program. (For more information, please visit this workshop's website at: <http://www.oas.org/udse/gestion/>)
- *Adult Distant Education.* Held in Mexico City from February 24 through March 7, 2003, the participants in this seminar were from Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay. For more information, please visit the seminar's Website at: <http://www.oas.org/udse/sea/>
- *Seminar – Workshop for the Caribbean.* Held from July 14 through 18, 2003, in Miami, the purpose of this workshop was to support cooperation in the Caribbean region, reflecting upon the six education programs that were submitted for critical transfer during 2002 and 2003, and given the particular characteristics of this region. There was also discussion of the Hemispheric Projects in Education. Participating in the seminar-workshop were high-ranking officials from the ministries of education of: Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Belize, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago. Also present were officials from CARICOM and the OECS. For more information, please see the Website for this seminar at: <http://www.oas.org/udse/caribworkshop>

In this first phase of critical transfer of consolidated programs, some 28 member states participated in one or more seminars conducted in the last two years, eloquent testimony to the countries' commitment to supporting this process.

Promotion of Civic and Democratic Values

In compliance with resolution AG/RES. 1957 (XXXIII-O/03), "Promotion and Strengthening of Democracy. Follow-up to the Inter-American Democratic Charter," the Unit for Social Development and Education and the Unit for Promotion of Democracy are working in partnership, helping the OAS Permanent Council to comply with the mandate from the General Assembly, which is that it convoke a Special Meeting on the subject "Promotion of Democratic Culture through Education." This meeting is planned for the first quarter of 2004.

The Technical Secretariat is also conducting a hemisphere-wide survey to identify the consolidated programs in education for democracy and civic values in the various member states through the horizontal cooperation strategy developed with the Permanent Portfolio of Consolidated Programs.

Following the directives from the Third Summit of the Americas, research was conducted in conjunction with the University of Maryland and with the support of the United States Department of State, on strengthening democracy in the Americas by cultivating civic and democratic values.

The challenges of funding education

At the request of the Ministers of Education, with help from the World Bank the Unit organized a videoconference on the proposal of a debt-for-education swap being discussed in various international fora by the ministers of this hemisphere. The videoconference was on November 21, 2003. Participating were the Minister of Education of Argentina, the Vice Ministers of Education of Peru and Colombia, and the Open Society Institute.

The Unit for Social Development and Education also participated in a meeting convoked by the IACD, PAHO and the IDB to discuss how to generate proposals and talking points in the hemisphere on the challenges that education faces. The panel, which was moderated by the Unit, consisted of professors and researchers Steven Klees, Noel McGinn, Willian Cummings and Jim Williams.

The Unit continued to receive World Bank support for implementation of the knowledge and consultancy network (CONARED) strategy, through which the cooperation commitments materialize and which provides technical and policy-related tools to further the dialogue among the hemisphere's ministries of education.

OAS/Harvard University-Rockefeller Center Cooperation Program

Under an agreement concluded with Harvard University's Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies, during the summer three students assisted the Unit with education-related work. Salient among their activities are preparation of hemispheric and sub-regional diagnostic studies on equity and quality in education, teacher training and secondary education. The diagnostic document prepared was presented at the Third Meeting of Ministers of Education.

Employment and labor development

Thirteenth Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor (IACML)

As Technical Secretariat of the IACML, the Unit for Social Development and Education supported the preparations for and organization and holding of the Thirteenth Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor, held in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil, September 24, 25 and 26, 2003. In that capacity, the Unit did the following:

- Organization and coordination of the Preparatory Technical Meeting of the XIII Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor, held in Brasilia, Brazil, July 23 and 24, 2003. The delegations at this meeting approved the preliminary versions of the Salvador Declaration and Plan of Action and examined a proposal on the use of excess resources in the OAS Subfund for Labor.
- Architecture, updating and administration of a virtual forum (www.oas.org/udse/CIMT) to help further develop the preliminary versions of the Salvador Declaration and Plan of Action and to make it possible for the member states and the advisory bodies of the Conference to participate more fully by way of the Internet. This Virtual Forum was launched in June 2003.
- Organization and coordination of the Thirteenth Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor. The Conference was attended by 26 national delegations, 22 of which were headed by their respective Ministers of Labor. Also attending were 30 representatives of the hemisphere's main organized labor organizations, and 14 representatives of business associations. Also participating in this Conference was the International Labor Organization (ILO), whose Director-General was present, the IDB, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), and other international organizations.
- Preparation of the Final Report of the Thirteenth Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor. This report contains all relevant documents and summarizes the meeting's proceedings. It is available in the Organization's four official languages and in CD-Rom format.

Promotion of horizontal cooperation

As part of the Horizontal Cooperation Strategy for which it is responsible, the Unit compiled the Portfolio of Consolidated Programs in the Labor Area on CD-Rom and distributed it during the Thirteenth Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor. This Portfolio contains the best known and most relevant programs being conducted in the Hemisphere in the following areas: 1) modernization of labor administration; 2) job training and certification of job skills; 3) occupational health and safety; and 4) gender equity. On the issue of occupational health and safety, the Unit worked in conjunction with the Inter-American Agency for Cooperation and Development (IACD) and the OPD. The Portfolio is an information tool about programs that could be shared by means of horizontal cooperation; as such, it is updated regularly.

Support to job training and certification of labor skills

Recognizing how vital certification of job skills is to improving the labor force's employability, the Unit is committed to supporting stronger training and competencies-certification systems. Accordingly, the Unit took part in the Sub-regional Workshop on "*Challenges of Professional Training in the Andean Sub-Region*," organized by the Andean Community and held in Lima, Peru in April 2003. With support from the IACD and Mexico's Labor Competency

Standardization and Certification Council (CONOCER), the Unit is planning to conduct a virtual course on certification of labor competencies, which it expects to launch sometime in 2004 through the Education Portal of the Americas.

Inter-agency coordination

On December 8 and 9, 2003, the Unit for Social Development and Education held a Planning Meeting for the XIII IACML. The ILO, the IDB, PAHO and ECLAC's Washington office took part in that meeting, as did the ministries of labor of Brazil, Mexico, Canada, the United States and El Salvador as members of the Troika and coordinators of the Conference's Working Groups. The meeting approved the schedule of activities and a document spelling out the sources of financing and responsibilities of the various actors involved in carrying out these activities, which will make it possible to complete the Salvador Plan of Action.

Culture

First Meeting of the Inter-American Committee on Culture (CIC)

The CIC held its first meeting in Mexico City on September 4 and 5, 2003, under the auspices of Mexico's National Council for Culture and the Arts (CONACULTA). As this Committee's Technical Secretariat, the Unit for Social Development and Education conducted the following activities:

Support with preparation and approval of the CIC's Rules of Procedure, by means of extensive consultations with the member states. The process began in July 2002 and culminated with CIDI's approval of the Rules of Procedure in April 2003.

Design and administration of the CIC's Website (www.oas.org/udse/cic) to lend continuity to the Committee's activities, enable an exchange of ideas, know-how and practices, and provide a permanent channel of communication among its members. The content of the Website was dictated by the CIC's mandates and priority activities.

Organization and coordination of the First Meeting of the CIC, in partnership with CONACULTA. This meeting was entirely devoted to developing the CIC's Work Plan, which contains the principal activities that the Committee will have to conduct in order to discharge the mandates of the Cartagena de Indias Plan of Action.

Inter-American Cultural Policy Observatory

The Unit for Social Development and Education coordinated the feasibility study of the Inter-American Cultural Policy Observatory (OIPC), prepared by Dr. Raj Isar, former Director of Cultural Policies at UNESCO. Dr. Isar was assisted by an advisory committee of distinguished experts who reviewed, commented on and added to the study, drawing upon a variety of sub-regional perspectives. The study was introduced at the CIC's first meeting and suggests three possible options for the Observatory's structure. The Ministers of Culture and other cultural authorities will make their decision at the CIC's next meeting.

Horizontal cooperation strategy

The Unit for Social Development and Education continues to update the Permanent Portfolio of Consolidated Programs in Culture, which contains the programs that the cultural ministries and

authorities want to share with their counterparts. This Portfolio is a cornerstone of the horizontal cooperation strategy that the Unit steers. In 2003, it held an initial workshop where participants were able to share their knowledge and know-how and that focused on Canada's experience with the "Young Canada Works" Program run by the Department of Canadian Heritage. This first workshop was in Ottawa, October 27 through 31, 2003. Participating were representatives of the cultural authorities of: Antigua and Barbuda, Chile, Colombia, Dominica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. As part of the workshop, participants put together project profiles, based on the critical transfer of the Canadian experience. Those project profiles will continue to be fleshed out and improved with technical support from the OAS and the Department of Canadian Heritage.

Fostering civil society's participation, cooperation agreements with other multilateral international organizations

The Unit for Social Development and Education signed agreements with the Department of Canadian Heritage and the Andrés Bello agreement to finance activities associated with the feasibility study on the Inter-American Cultural Policy Observatory and the holding of the CIC's First Meeting. It also established a virtual forum at the CIC Website, where government representatives can log in their observations and comments on the CIC and its Work Plan. Eventually, civil society will be invited to do likewise.

UNIT FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT

The Unit for Sustainable Development and Environment was created by Executive Order No. 96-6, of June 28, 1996. It is the General Secretariat's principal unit for matters directly related to sustainable development and environment. Its purpose is to support the activities of the Organization, its organs and entities in formulating policies on sustainable development and environment in the region. It devises, evaluates, and executes the technical cooperation projects in its areas of competence and provides advisory services and technical support on matters related to sustainable development, including the programs designed to develop environmental legislation, the transfer of environmentally sound technologies, and environmental education. The Unit is also active in areas highlighted by the hemispheric summits and has a particularly vital role to play in monitoring the Santa Cruz Plan of Action, adopted by the Summit of the Americas on Sustainable Development (Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, December 1996).

The Unit's activities in 2003 were driven by the mandates from the Summits; the resolutions approved by the Organization's General Assembly; the mandates emanating from the Inter-American Program for Sustainable Development, approved by the General Assembly at its twenty-seventh regular session, held in Lima, Peru, June 1997; the Strategic Plan for Partnership for Development 2002-2005, and the resolutions approved at the Third Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Committee on Sustainable Development, February 11 and 12, 2002.

At the present time, the portfolio of projects that the USDE currently has underway totals approximately US\$65 million. More than 95% of that amount is financed with funding from sources outside the OAS. The Unit's Web page features the principal activities currently in progress and their links, and its success stories, and can be visited at the following Web address: <http://www.oas.org/usde>.

Activities associated with the Bolivia Summit

The activities to coordinate and follow up the Santa Cruz Plan of Action continued. The Unit assisted the Working Group on Sustainable Development established by CEPCIDI, under the recommendation of the Inter-American Committee on Sustainable Development (CIDS), at its Third Regular Meeting.

In furtherance of the mandates related to the Santa Cruz Plan of Action and contained in the Inter-American Program for Sustainable Development, the USDE conducted the following activities:

The Inter-American Biodiversity Information Network (IABIN) was created in 1996 as an initiative of the Summit of the Americas. This initiative is designed to provide the infrastructure for the information network (such as standards and protocols) as well as the scientific content that the countries of this hemisphere need to improve decision-making, especially where human development and preservation of the biodiversity are at odds. In support of conservation of biodiversity, IABIN was consolidated as an internet-based forum for technical and scientific cooperation. In each of the 34 countries in the Summit process, IABIN Focal Points promote coordination in the collection, sharing, and use of biodiversity information. They are contributing to the steady progress made by the Latin American and Caribbean Governments in increasing the extent of protected areas from less than 200 million hectares in 1975 to over 400 million hectares today. Activities of phase PDF-B are programmed to conclude in March 2004 with the

presentation to the Global Environment Facility of a financing proposal for US\$4 million, out of a total project cost of US\$20 million, to carry out the next phase of IABIN. The IABIN web page is completely operational in Spanish and English, including its bio-information matrix.

The Unit continued to promote with the member states the implementation phase of the Inter-American Strategy for the Promotion of Public Participation in Decision-Making on Sustainable Development (ISP), acting on resolution CIDI/CIDS/RES. 6 (III-O/02), approved by the Inter-American Committee on Sustainable Development (CIDS III). It also continued to back efforts to put that strategy into practice, promoting close collaboration between the public and private sectors on issues of sustainable development and environment.

In the area of environmental law, regulations and policy, cooperative partnerships have been developed at a hemispheric and regional level to strengthen economic, social and environmental regimes to assure that they are mutually supportive and contribute to sustainable development. In this area, special attention has been given to environmental sustainability of trade liberalization, economic instruments, cleaner production and energy efficiency. The Inter-American Forum on Environmental Law (FIDA) has been instrumental in moving forward these initiatives. FIDA was the brainchild of the Summit of the Americas on Sustainable Development. FIDA is working with governmental and nongovernmental partners in the Americas to conduct national evaluations of the environmental impact of the proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas Agreement (FTAA) and to discuss alternative policies with OAS member states. Studies on Argentina and Brazil were completed and reviewed by groups of experts in March and May 2003, respectively. Early in 2004, work will begin on the reports on Paraguay, Uruguay and two or more Central American countries.

Activities related to the Summit of the Americas

Property Registration

In compliance with mandates from the Second and Third Summits of the Americas, a cooperation agreement has continued with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to further the advances made with implementation of the program to improve property registration records. That program is being carried out through the Virtual Office of the Inter-Summit Property Systems Initiative (IPSI), a mechanism that USAID and the OAS created for that purpose, with funding provided by USAID. During the Summits, member states expressed their commitment to rationalizing and standardizing their respective national property registration systems. IPSI is providing support by displaying information in its portal to the numerous ongoing efforts throughout the hemisphere to reform aspects of property information systems. The IPSI website is currently undergoing transformation, which includes decentralization of content generation and management. Involvement of multilateral institutions is also being emphasized to avoid parallel efforts that may fragment resources and leave the user community confused about where to go for property and land information. As a result, discussions have taken place with the World Bank (WB) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) on how IPSI may collaborate and share information with these institutions to strengthen efforts to foster the process of rationalizing property registration systems.

Renewable Energy

The Unit continued to serve as technical secretariat of the Renewable Energy in the Americas (REIA) Program. In 2003, REIA undertook a series of new initiatives and broadened the scope of some of the activities already underway. REIA led promotion of sustainable energy alternatives

throughout the region and helped catalyze the adoption of the Renewable Energy Incentives Law in Guatemala, and the preparation of Sustainable Energy Plans in Saint Lucia, Dominica and Grenada. As part of the Global Village Energy Partnership/Latin America and the Caribbean (GVEP-LAC), it promoted the preparation of the Hemispheric Conference on Rural Energy, in Bolivia, in June 2003, that included support in seeking additional funding for the organization, identification of participating countries, and the creation of the dialogue with those countries identified to develop national strategies on rural energy.

Disaster Management

In compliance with Summit mandates, the Unit continued the development of projects designed to contribute to the reduction of vulnerability to natural hazards. It participated in the Inter-Agency Technical Committee meetings (ITC) of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to share experiences in matters related to natural disasters. Regional consultations were held in the area of transportation among specialists from Canada, Mexico, and the United States on cooperative measures that could be adopted to respond to disasters in the area of transportation. Execution of training and investigation projects were continued to develop trade corridors, with the collaboration of centers in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Peru, United States and Uruguay. Continued support was provided to the Inter-American Committee on Natural Hazards Reduction (ICNHR), as well as the Permanent Council's Special Committee on Hemispheric Security.

Specific projects include:

- Caribbean Hazard Mitigation Capacity Building Program (CHAMP). The Unit, the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA) and the Disaster Mitigation Facility of the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB/DMFC) developed a draft Model National Hazard Mitigation Policy for use in the Caribbean. A Regional Workshop/Policy Dialogue was convened to review and elaborate the draft Model. This workshop brought together a wide cross section of stakeholders, including government agencies and national disaster organizations from Belize, the British Virgin Islands, Grenada, Jamaica, St. Lucia and St. Kitts & Nevis, as well as representatives from regional institutions and international development agencies. The resulting policy will be used as a basis for establishing national hazard mitigation policies throughout the Caribbean.
- School Vulnerability Reduction Program and Hemispheric Plan for Disaster Reduction in the Education Sector (EDUPLAN hemisférico). A manual for locating schools in the least vulnerable areas has been prepared for dissemination. There are currently nine technical secretariats in six countries that work to implement EDUPLAN hemisférico. Options are being explored for the programming and presentation of the Third Hemispheric Conference on Education Sector Disaster Reduction.
- Small Valley Flood Alert and Vulnerability Reduction in Central America Program. Phase VI was implemented to assist more than 30 existing community-based SVP groups in six countries by supporting the formation of a regional platform to support integrated small valley floodplain management in Central America. Preparations have included workshops for consultation with the SVP groups in the region, and an exchange of ideas with national, regional, and international NGOs and related multilateral and bilateral agencies to refine an initial scope of work and preconditions for an NGO consortium to coordinate the regional SVP platform. The output of this phase will be a regional dialogue leading to technical documents.

- OECS Saint Lucia Safer Housing Strengthening and Insurance Program.
- Preparation of Fourth Vulnerability Assessment Techniques and Application Workshop (VAT). The Third VAT was successfully presented, initiating an ongoing process at the CBD for its borrowing states, updating and broadening of the web site resource. The Fourth VAT Workshop has been convoked , and will be hosted by Louisiana State University.

The Unit is working with the General Secretariat, which chairs the Inter-American Committee on Natural Disaster Reduction (IACNDR), on preparing the draft of the Inter-American Strategic Plan for Disaster Reduction, Risk Management and Emergency Preparedness, for the member states to consider implementing.

Transportation Trade Corridors

The Inter-American Program for Training and Research for Trade Corridor Development (PROCORREDOR) consortium, with 14 collaborating centers, continues to support regional training and field research projects on complementary subjects aimed at advising governments, consulting with the private sector, and preparing the next generation of trade corridor development specialists. PROCORREDOR-collaborating centers from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Peru, United States, and Uruguay are drawing on limited resources of their own to carry out national and bilateral activities, and are supporting the programming and presentation of the Third Hemispheric Conference on Vulnerability Reduction of Trade Corridors to Socio-Natural Disasters (TCC III) in Honduras in 2004.

The Transportation Trade Corridor Management project has been under execution by the Unit. Through a cooperative agreement with Germany's GTZ, the Unit had the services of a seconded specialist to work on integrating vulnerability reduction of road systems to natural hazards into ongoing technical work in the area of road maintenance and national dedicated road maintenance funds, including training, technical assistance and technology transfer. In addition the Unit and the Latin America Society of Road Transportation Environmental Units (SLUAT) has adopted the Hemispheric Plan for Environmental Management of Road Corridors, joined by IBRD, IBD and CAF. This technical guide is being updated under the auspices of SLUAT with OAS technical assistance, and progress was reported at the SLUAT meeting in 2003.

Water Management

The Unit continued its efforts to strengthen technical cooperation among the member states for integrated and sustainable management of water resources in transboundary basins and coastal areas. It continued execution of special projects that help shape national and regional policies on integrated management of water resources and coastal areas in various countries of the Americas. To this end, it implemented projects and activities in the basins of the Plata, Amazon, Bermejo, Grande de Tarija, Tolomosa, Sao Francisco, San Juan, and Pantanal and Upper Paraguay Rivers.

Strategic Action Program for the Bermejo River Binational Basin (SAP). The Unit continued the project implementation activities in the first half of 2003. In the Iruya zone, 97% of the construction work for erosion and flood control has been completed. The construction work is coupled with nonstructural activities with indigenous groups and environmental education programs. Other activities underway come under the components for institution building, erosion control structures in the Tolomosa sub-basin, environmental zoning, integrated management of natural resources (Santa Ana sub-basin) and development and implementation of an information and monitoring system for the Bermejo River Basin. The project is being conducted in cooperation with the governments of Argentina and Bolivia, through the Binational Commission for Development of the Upper Bermejo River and Grande de Tarija River Basin, with financial support from the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The project's activities are expected to be completed by October 2005.

Formulation of a Strategic Action Program for the Integrated Management of Water Resources and Sustainable Development of the San Juan River Basin and its Coastal Zone (SJRBC). The pilot projects and basic studies continued. A Binational Workshop on Public Participation was held in Granada, Nicaragua. A meeting of the Program's Steering Committee was held in Managua, Nicaragua. Creation of the project's institutional mapping tool was completed. A workshop was staged in San Jose, Costa Rica, to teach project staff and their national counterparts how to use the tool. Efforts were made to establish a binational management office for the project and to prepare a draft of the Strategic Action Program (SAP). To help mainstream the gender factor into the SAP, a gender analysis was done in the Basin. Finally, PROCUENCA-SAN JUAN participated in the Third World Water Forum in Kyoto, Japan. The project was introduced in Kyoto.

Integrated Management of Land-based Activities in the São Francisco River Basin Project. This project entered its final phase of execution. All the final reports of the sub-projects were presented to Technical Coordination and disseminated among the members of the São Francisco River Basin Committee (CBH-SF) at its meeting in São Roque. Also, the three subprojects that directly concern support enabling the Committee to function were presented, and the final version of the Diagnostic Analysis of the Basin (DAB) was distributed. The project participated in staging over 200 public events. The São Francisco DAB is already finished and is undergoing final review. The process of putting together the Strategic Action Program began when a consultant was hired to establish the TOR. At the Steering Committee's meeting in Brasilia, the outputs of the sub-projects and the programming up through the project's end were approved.

Implementation of Integrated Watershed Management Practices for the Pantanal and Upper Paraguay River Basin. In carrying out this project, contracts were awarded for the demonstrative projects' final outputs. The final phase of preparation of the Diagnostic Analysis began with a workshop, held in Campo Grande. The 130 workshop participants examined and confirmed the causal link and the method used. A consultant was hired to prepare the terms of reference for preparation of the Strategic Action Program (SAP). At its meeting in Brasilia in June, the

Steering Committee reviewed the schedule of events and mapped the strategy for involving Bolivia and Paraguay in the project.

Guaraní Aquifer Project. The activities to prepare for the project's launch continued. A technical workshop was held with various representatives of the national institutions of the participating countries to discuss and approved the Project's Operations Program for 2003. Five technicians were contracted, who will form the project's Technical Secretariat. Work was done on the terms of reference of all the activities planned for this year and on preparation of future seminars and workshops. The following activities related to this project were selected and got underway.

Strengthening of Brazil's Water Resources Sector (SRH). In the case of this project, activities got underway to assist the development of policies and technology transfers for management of water resources. Law No. 9433 on National Resources Policy was revised with an amendment introduced in Article 37, which governs the Water Resource Council, under decree No. 4613 of March 11, 2003.

Agreement between the General Secretariat of the OAS and the Japan Water Resources Association (JAWA). The Unit continued coordination of this project's final report, which should go into circulation in late 2003.

Formulation of a Framework for Water Resource Management in the River Plate Basin. The Unit continued execution of this project. A Project Brief was prepared and presented, and was approved by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) for its Block B phase. Preparation of the brief was done with a GEF Block A grant, channeled through the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and with the Unit's technical and financial assistance.

Sustainable Development of the Parnaíba Valley. This project's technical activities got underway with funding from the Government of Brazil and the World Bank.

Guarani Fund with Universities. The Unit launched this new activity in cooperation with the World Bank and the GEF. An advisory committee was formed, with one academic representative from each country to evaluate the more than 30 regional projects presented in 2003. Meetings have been held to evaluate the project proposals. The Unit continued its efforts to make water management part of health policy. The Unit's activities in this area were done in partnership with the Pan American Health Organization, Environment Canada, and other international agencies. The Unit started preparation of a new technical cooperation project to support the Brazilian Amazon region. The project is the result of the activities conducted under the Program of Strategic Initiatives for the Brazilian Amazon (PRODEAM), which ended in 2002.

As an indication of a success story in the area of *Integrated Water Resources Management*, it is relevant to point out that all countries in the Americas are presently updating, reviewing or establishing water laws and institutional frameworks in order to implement integrated water resources management systems. Projects supported by GEF, the World Bank, and the UN, have contributed significantly to this achievement. The next World Water Forum will be hosted in Mexico in 2006. In Brazil, more than 40 river basin organizations at the national or provincial levels have been constituted. At the present time, all Brazilian states have a water law and a water charges system, and have implemented a program to charge for the use of bulk water. In Central America, the GEF and the OAS funded the San Juan River Basin project, which has enabled Costa Rica and Nicaragua to significantly strengthen their institutional framework and legislative instruments for integrated water resources management. Likewise, the countries of the River Plate Basin Treaty and the countries of the Amazon Treaty for Amazonian Cooperation are

embarking on transboundary water projects focusing on integrated water resources management to achieve sustainable development.

Inter-American Water Resources Network

As the Network's Technical Secretariat, the Unit continued to provide support to the IWRN's Executive Committee, to the Advisory Council and to the Foundation for Inter-American Dialogue on Water Management. The Executive Committee and the National Focal Points held meetings in Arequipa, Peru. A planning meeting was held with Brazil's Water Resources Secretariat once the activities under the GEF's medium-size project, in cooperation with UNEP, got underway. The project was presented at the Third World Water Forum in Kyoto, Japan.

Project to strengthen the Inter-American Water Resources Network

The DELTAMERICA project got underway, for Development and Implementation of Mechanisms to Disseminate Lessons Learned and Best Practices in Integrated Transboundary Water Resources Management in Latin America and the Caribbean. The first meeting of the Directing Council was held in Arequipa, Peru, the same city that hosted the meeting that the National Focal Points of the Inter-American Water Resources Network held to launch the project. The First Sub-regional Dialogue was conducted in Brasilia, Brazil, as was a workshop on information systems. A technical coordinator was retained, and technical support personnel for the various activities were found in a number of member countries and hired. Preparations got underway to set up virtual forums in selected sub-regions. The project will last 18 months.

Hemispheric Follow-up Meeting to the Third World Water Forum

The Unit continued to serve as a hub enabling articulation among the National Focal Points of the Inter-American Water Resources Network and as the Organizing Committee for Day of the Americas of the Hemispheric Follow-up Meeting to the Third World Water Forum. The project's specific activities were decided and launched.

Information for making decisions regarding sustainable development

The Unit continued to execute the project on Capacity to Create Information Management Systems to Improve Decision-making for Sustainable Development for the Small Island Developing States of the Caribbean. Execution activities related to this project have included meetings with various international, regional and national organizations to discuss how the project can dovetail with activities either already underway or on the drawing board. The Unit worked with a number of organizations in the region, among them the University of the West Indies.

Activities associated with General Assembly mandates

Human Rights and Environment

In compliance with General Assembly resolution AG/RES. 1926, "Human Rights and Environment," the Unit continued to encourage institutional cooperation in the area of human rights and the environment in the framework of the Organization, in particular between the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and the Unit for Sustainable Development and Environment. It sought coordination between IACHR and USDE to map out a work plan and strategies for mandate compliance; promoted OAS-accredited civil society organizations'

participation in USDE/IACHR initiatives on issue; coordinated with the Inter-American Forum on Environmental Law for an increase in activities related to the issue of human rights and the environment, including civil society participation in the work plan, and provided technical support to the Committee on Juridical and Political Affairs of the Permanent Council in compliance with the mandate in the resolution.

Climate Change

In compliance with General Assembly resolution AG/RES. 1864, “The Socioeconomic and Environmental Impacts of Climate Change on the Countries of the Hemisphere,” the Unit prepared a follow-up project to the “Caribbean Planning for Adaptation to Global Climate Change (CPACC)” titled “Mainstreaming Adaptation to Climate Change (MACC).” External sources of financing were obtained from the Global Environment Facility. The Unit’s role in preparation of the project related to MACC concluded in March 2003 with the acceptance of this document by the World Bank and the CARICOM Secretariat.

The Unit also carried out the development and final execution of a project related to the Establishment of a Multi-stakeholder Consultation on Water and Climate in the San Juan River Basin, Costa Rica and Nicaragua. It also developed projects on water and climate that included a) the establishment of a Caribbean dialogue on water and climate, and b) the development of a Regional Central American Small Valley Flood Alert and Vulnerability Reduction Program.

Adaptation to Climate Change is being mainstreamed into development planning in the Caribbean through an initiative taken by the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) in conjunction with the OAS and the Canadian International Development Agency. The initiative aims to make natural hazard and climate change impact assessment part of the process followed by the Bank and the participating countries to prepare and evaluate projects.

Activities with international organizations

Inter-American Development Bank

Through the Unit, the General Secretariat’s role continued in the official consultation launched by the Inter-American Development Bank to prepare the Bank’s Environmental Strategy in conjunction with other organizations. It provided observations and comments on the Strategy, and will participate in any future consultation that the Bank may hold, as appropriate.

Inter-agency Task Force (IATF) on the Bolivian Summit Follow-up

The Unit continues to chair the Working Group on Mainstreaming Disaster Reduction in Development (MDRD) of the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF). The Unit works closely with the Secretariat of the Summit Process to ensure that the IATF plays its proper role in performance of the Working Group’s mandate within the context of the Summit follow-up process.

United Nations Environment Programme

At the invitation of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Unit made a formal presentation to the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of UNEP at its meeting in Panama City, Panama, in November 2003.

INTER-SECTORAL UNIT FOR TOURISM

Established by Executive Order 96-7, the Inter-Sectoral Unit for Tourism (hereinafter referred to as the Tourism Unit) promotes interdisciplinary tourism development, strengthens and stabilizes practical cooperation with other regional and international organizations, revitalizes the Inter-American Travel Congress (CIT), and directs technical cooperation and training programs that promote sustainable development in the member States.

The Tourism Unit's Annual Work Plan is targeted at fulfilling the mandates and recommendations of the various Summits of the Americas, the Inter-American Program for Sustainable Tourism Development, the Plan of Action of the Inter-American Travel Congresses and the 2002-2005 CIDI Strategic Plan for Partnership for Development.

Support for tourism is based on recognition of the industry's potential as an engine for sustainable economic growth and development and on 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 use the Tourism Unit's scarce human and financial resources to maximum advantage, the Unit's emphasis has been on an exchange of ideas and best practices among member states.

Formulation of policies and plans

Pursuant to its mandate to support member states in their efforts to develop tourism as an integral part of development policy, in 2003 the Tourism Unit provided assistance to the Government of the Bahamas for the hosting of a Sustainable Tourism Development Policy Workshop. Among the workshop's achievements were the identification of sensible and responsible measures to be taken to make the tourism industry's development sustainable, preparation of policy statements and establishment of the procedures for implementing initiatives agreed upon during the workshop.

Among OAS member states, Dominica was one of those hardest hit by the decline in tourism and the world economy after 2001. Given the continuing stagnation of the sector and the island's increasing dependence on tourism, assistance focused on this sector as the main catalyst of recovery. To aid this process, in 2003 the Tourism Unit completed a Tourism Revitalization Plan for the island and began to identify sources of funding to finance the Plan's implementation.

Education and training

One of the Tourism Unit's mandates is to support education at all levels and the development and training of human resources in the tourism industry. In carrying out this mandate, under the USAID-funded Small Tourism Enterprises project (STEP), in 2003 the Tourism Unit continued to work on establishing an infrastructure that helps keep the industry competitive and that maximizes the benefits that accrue from tourism and the contributions it makes to the region's development. To that end, the following activities were undertaken to build up capacity and the institutional underpinnings of the hotel sector:

Training and certification programs for small hotels

In 2003, the Tourism Unit continued to collaborate with partners like the CIDA-CPEC and the American Hotel and Lodging Association (AHLA) to put together and implement training

programs for small tourism enterprises. Thanks to these partnerships, the following activities were completed in 2003:

Skills for Success Training Program - Certification Training of Instructors

In cooperation with CIDA-CPEC, training was provided under the Skills for Success program. Thanks to the program, 41 persons were accredited as Certified Hospitality Department Trainers (CHDT) in 2003. CHDT is a professional certification program that acknowledges the achievements of departmental trainers in the hospitality field.

An additional 125 hotel employees were also trained under the Skills for Success program, which is aimed at staff in the hospitality and tourism services, bringing the number of persons trained to 378 persons.

Other entry level training in various disciplines

During the year, the Tourism Unit also contacted the Culinary Institute of America (CIA) with a view to establishing a partnership with that institution. The CIA is one of the most recognized institutions for vocational and continuing education courses for hospitality industry professionals. This partnership is expected to raise the caliber of the training available to industry workers in participating member states.

Owner/manager training program

The Tourism Unit developed this program and tested it in workshop sessions with hoteliers and food and beverage managers. In 2003, negotiations were held with AHLA to enable the program to issue certificates. As a result, adjustments will be introduced into the program so that the AHLA can issue certificates, after which the Unit will use the course as its main program for training managers and owners of small hotels.

Partnership with CESO

In 2003, the Tourism Unit teamed up with Canadian Executive Services Overseas (CESO) to provide assistance to 109 hotels in the fields of hotel management, general hotel operations and food and beverage operations. A total of 406 persons received training. The assistance was delivered using CESO volunteers.

Security and safety training

Given the potential negative effects on travel and on the economies of those member states that rely heavily on tourism, in 2003 the Tourism Unit paid even more attention to the security issue. Accordingly, the Unit negotiated an agreement with the AHLA's Educational Institute for delivery of a series of security and safety seminars for persons working in the hospitality industry. Two seminars were delivered in 2003 and a schedule developed for more seminars in 2004. The courses are being delivered at a level that will make it possible to issue certificates to participants. In its future activities, the Unit will be devoting even more attention to security and confidence-building measures that serve to stimulate tourism.

Public sector institution- and capacity-building

The Spirit of Hospitality training program, which includes video and supporting instructive materials, was developed under an agreement between the Tourism Unit and the AHLA, which also executed the program. Given that effective implementation of the STEP program depends on the capacity of counterpart coordinators in participating member states, the Spirit of Hospitality training program was conducted for STEP coordinators in the Caribbean during the summer of 2003.

Partnership with the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) – Training and Tourism Awareness

In 2003, the Tourism Unit continued efforts to promote the sustainable development of tourism by fostering public awareness about the importance of the linkages between tourism and the environment. This was carried out in partnership with the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) and laid the foundation for development of working drafts for a Caribbean hosts program and programs to promote careers in the travel business and youth awareness. These programs are aimed at heightening awareness of the tourism industry and improving attitudes toward it. It is expected that once tested this activity will continue to be a major focus of cooperation between the two institutions.

In 2003, the partnership also resulted in the completion of workshops to introduce teachers to instructive manuals for schools and to teach them how to use them. In 2004 the materials developed under this partnership will be shared with other Spanish- and French-speaking member states of the OAS.

Tourism product development

In fulfillment of mandates of the Inter-American Program for Sustainable Development, the Tourism Unit continued its focus on developing and adopting standards for the tourism industry of the Americas to make them consistent with the international tourism market. In particular, the USAID-funded Small Tourism Enterprise Program continued work on developing standards and products for niche markets. During the period under consideration, the program conducted the following activities:

Development of logos and standards for hotels and related businesses in the tourism sector

In 2003, a nature lodging logo was developed providing for certification based on a new international standard developed as a joint venture between Ecotourism Australia and Green Globe 21.

Development of standards for tourism sites and attractions

This project is aimed at helping non-hotel small and medium-scale enterprises to develop and use sites and attractions as part of the tourism product. Work on this component commenced in 2003 by identifying and doing an inventory of 15 attractions in two participating states. The information collected is expected to be the initial input of a database of products, which can be developed and marketed as part of the Caribbean Experiences product.

In its efforts to help communities raise standards of service and quality of the sites and attractions up to international levels, the Tourism Unit also worked on identifying, recording and sharing best practices. In this regard, best practices -selected by issue and business- were examined and the advice given by operators on areas needing improvement were evaluated by a given benchmark.

In late 2003, work got underway to introduce a comprehensive program for development, management and sustainable use of sites and attractions, including forts, botanical gardens, museums, national parks and specialty products which can be offered through tourism operators. In 2003, evaluations were completed of access to over 20 attractions and non-hotel enterprises.

Environmental Management - Partnership with CAST

In 2002, the Tourism Unit worked with staff of USAID and the Caribbean Alliance for Sustainable Tourism (CAST) on an environmental emphasis program for small hotels, designed as the first in a series of initiatives to help small hoteliers with implementation of environmental management systems.

In 2003, over 135 owners of small hotels participated in the hotel environmental management initiative, bringing the total number who had completed the process to 200. Environmental assessments were done of 41 small hotels, and assistance was provided to 18 properties to perform their environmental assessments. Certification programs were conducted at 40 selected properties.

During 2003, 6 new brochures were developed and added to the array of environmental management materials available for distribution in electronic and print format. This material is primarily being circulated through the Resource Centers. Five (5) training courses were held for hoteliers in order to create awareness and provide information about environmental management systems. To sustain this educational component, 5 training videos will be produced as part of the initiative.

Central American small hotels assistance project

This project, which is patterned after the Caribbean Small Tourism Enterprise Project, involves six (6) member States (Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama) and is intended to provide assistance to small hotel establishments in the region in order to improve their performance and competitiveness. The following were some of the activities undertaken as part of the project in 2003:

- Completion of a needs assessment study;
- Preparation of training materials;
- Beginning of a series of training programs in all six member states;

- Preparation of a proposal to be used as a reference document when contacting new potential partners or donors;
- Holding of meetings with Washington-based financial and donor agencies;
- Conclusion of partnership agreements with Canadian Executive Services Overseas (CESO) Canada, Centro para la Promoción de la Micro y Pequeña Empresa en Centroamérica (CENPROMYPE), TACA, the Asociación Costarricense de Profesionales en Turismo (ACOPROT), the Instituto Nacional de Aprendizaje (INA) Costa Rica and ITECAP Guatemala;
- Presentation of proposals to the Inter-American Agency for Cooperation and Development, the Government of Taiwan, the IDB-MIF (Panama) to get the assistance needed to continue the project;
- Convening of a number of meetings with the Consejo Centroamericano de Turismo (CCT) and the Secretariat for Central American Integration (SICA); and
- Design and implementation of the project's Web site.

In other activities, staff of the Tourism Unit visited Costa Rica in May to help tourism authorities prepare the new three-year project proposal to present for consideration and possible FEMCIDI funding. Unit staff also participated in three meetings of the Forum of the Central America Assistance Program in Panama, the coordinating mechanism for the project.

Coffee Tourism Route Project

The goal of the Coffee Tourism Route Project is to generate tourism revenues in the Los Santos region by using a native product like coffee, thus helping the participating communities diversify their predominantly coffee-based economies while also preserving their heritage and strengthening their culture. It will also mitigate the effects of the economic crisis caused by a prolonged period of depressed international coffee prices, by providing alternative revenue streams to Latin America's small coffee growers. The pilot project, which will improve coffee revenues by packaging and marketing the coffee experience as a tourism attraction, is being conducted in Costa Rica but other countries are showing an interest.

In 2003, the first year of activities generated so much interest that the project began to expand into other Central American countries. As a result, meetings were organized in coordination with and with the support of the tourism authorities in Belize, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama. These meetings were designed to enlist the partners' cooperation and commitment and to look at possible sources of technical and financial assistance for the project in these states.

Contacts were also established with Canadian Executive Services Overseas (CESO) and the Secretariat for Central American Integration (SICA). During the last quarter of 2003, plans were finalized for the January 2004 Meeting of Directors of the Coffee Route Project. That first meeting will be in Costa Rica.

Data processing systems and technology transfer

Institution- and capacity-building in the private sector. Delivery of technological assistance. Demand for the program of technological assistance to small tourism businesses continues to be high. In 2003 over 81 properties received technology assistance and 195 persons received technical training administered by volunteers from Net Corps Canada and Net Corps Americas.

The volunteers provided assistance, mainly with creating Websites and in the form of basic computer training.

Development of an Internet-based medium. In 2003, the Tourism Unit held talks with the International Finance Corporation about the possibility of the IFC providing financing for the launch and operation of Caribbean Experiences as a mechanism to provide assistance in the management of small hotels and to monitor the standards for this group. The entity would also allow participating hotels to enjoy the economies of scale that large chain affiliated hotels have.

Development of a virtual resource center on-line “Caribbean Innkeeper.com”. This project offers hotel operators, researchers, students and industry personnel a wide range of information about the operation of tourism businesses which they are able to access over the Internet. During 2003, staff of the Unit regularly maintained Caribbean Innkeeper as a virtual resource centre.

In December 2003, given the similarities and possible synergies to be gained, staff of the Unit began talks with the IFC with a view to taking charge of the management of the IFC’s SME portfolios, which target small- and medium-size enterprises.

Development of Physical Resource Centers. In 2003, work continued on complementing the virtual resource centers by increasing the number of physical resource centers. The centers feature training materials, a video library for small hoteliers created with the cooperation of the AHLA, a TV/Video viewing facility, Internet access and pamphlets and brochures. They also include CAST information about its programs and environmental management brochures prepared for the STEP program.

In 2003, centers were opened on Antigua and Barbuda and Nevis to complement the center opened earlier on St. Kitts. A “mobile” resource center was delivered to the Bahamas. These mobile centers are designed to increase outreach and reception at small hotels away from the main tourism centers.

Development of instructive brochures. The brochures are intended to introduce the best operating and management practices in the industry, and are available in electronic format or in hard copy. Use of the best practices shared in the brochures is expected to increase efficiency and operating profits of tourism businesses. In 2003, 6 new brochures were developed, bringing to 23 the total produced for training within the small enterprise sector.

Summit of the Americas and related activities

The XVIII Inter-American Travel Congress, where the Ministers of Tourism of the hemisphere convene, was successfully held in Guatemala in June 2003. The Congress allowed delegates the opportunity to receive technical reports on several issues related to tourism including the following: the impact of terrorism on the economies of tourism-dependent states and its implications for the medium- to long-term growth and development of member states; the new restrictions and regulations on air and maritime transportation and their implications for tourism-dependent states; health issues affecting international travel, in particular outbreaks of illness on cruise ships and SARS; factors influencing business viability in the tourism and hospitality sectors; development and adoption of technology with an emphasis on technology’s role and its impact on the way businesses in the tourism sector operate; and the increasing importance of eco-tourism and community tourism as niche products and market segments.

The event also provided an opportunity for certain financial institutions to provide information about what they are doing to support sustainable tourism development in the Americas. In addition, delegates received proposals outlining institutional alternatives for the operation and structure of the Inter-American Travel Congresses.

The Congress also approved a Plan of Action that will steer the Tourism Unit's work program over the next three years. It also concurred with the project concepts that were proposed to improve the availability and management of information for tourism purposes and for capacity building in the tourism sector. A comprehensive report of the results of the Congress has been prepared and is available under separate cover.

Project identification, assistance and related partnership activities

The Unit participated in various activities and projects in the region, including the following:

- First Regional Forum of the Central American Small Hotels Project, Panama, February 2003. As word of the activities of this project has spread, the Unit has received a request from Ecuador to help it develop a small-hotel assistance program for the Andean region. Therefore, the Unit will be visiting Ecuador and other countries of the Andean region to confirm the region's interest in the project and explore exchanges of experiences with similar projects in the Caribbean and Central America.
- Seminars on Tourism Satellite Accounts, El Salvador and Barbados, in October, to cooperate with other possible organizations (the World Tourism Organization, CTO/CARICOM, ECLAC/CEPAL).
- Expo Eco-tourism 2003 in Puerto Ordaz, Venezuela, to confirm cooperation and opportunities for projects in eco-tourism development and community tourism.
- The Unit cooperated with tourism authorities in the sub-regions of Central America, South America and the Caribbean to provide assistance with preparation of proposals for consideration and possible selection for FEMCIDI funding. As a follow-up to this involvement, staff of the Unit expect to play a key role in the execution of projects in the Bahamas and Central America.
- XVIII Travel Congress. The Unit prepared a number of papers and presentations, which are listed in the final report of the Congress. A paper was also introduced presenting proposals for the revitalization of the tourism sector in Dominica. During the year, staff of the Unit participated in Board of Directors meetings of the Caribbean Tourism Organization and the Caribbean-Central American Action. At the second of these two events, staff presented a paper titled *Biodiversity in Tourism*.

Financing

The Unit continued its talks with a number of financial institutions about the possibility of support for the Unit's activities. In regard to support for the proposed Tourism Investment Facility, conditional commitments for the facility have been received from the European Investment Bank and Inter-American Investment Corporation.

UTUR Resource Capacity

During 2003, the already limited capacity of the Tourism Unit to address the tourism demands of Member States and carry out mandates for which it is responsible was further constrained by the decision to freeze the second highest level position in the Unit. Also, attempts to ensure that available professional posts were filled with knowledgeable tourism personnel were frustrated. This matter will continue to be highlighted in the coming year.

UNIT FOR THE PROMOTION OF DEMOCRACY

Established through Executive Order No. 90-3, of October 15, 1990, pursuant to General Assembly resolution AG/RES. 1063 (XX-O/90), the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy (UPD) was created to support the member states in their efforts to preserve and strengthen their democratic political institutions and processes. The Unit carries out its work plan under the Program of Support for the Promotion of Democracy, which the Permanent Council approved in its resolution CP/RES. 572 (882/91).

The principal functions of the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy are as follows: i) to assist and support the political bodies of the Organization in their deliberations on the subject of strengthening and preserving democracy; ii) to work with the member states to modernize or strengthen their democratic institutions and processes; iii) to provide the member states with support in generating, disseminating and sharing information about political systems and democratic values; iv) to provide technical and substantive support enabling institutions and experts from the hemisphere to engage in dialogue and share their experiences in areas related to the promotion of democracy; v) to help enhance the transparency of electoral processes in the Organization's member countries by conducting electoral observations missions, and vi) to support the processes of national reconciliation and peace building.

In 2003, the UPD continued to support fulfillment of the democracy-related mandates from the Summits of the Americas, the General Assembly, and other political organs of the Organization, and the provisions of the Inter-American Democratic Charter.

Support to the Dialogue on Strengthening Democratic Governance

In 2003, the central theme of the Dialogue that the Heads of Delegation conducted during the General Assembly's thirty-third regular session was democratic governance in the Americas. To provide support for this Dialogue process, the Permanent Council requested that the various departments and units of the General Secretariat prepare supporting papers. In response to this request, the UPD prepared and distributed a document on the subject (AG/doc.4155/03), which drew comments from the delegations participating in the regular session of the General Assembly held in Chile.

Working in conjunction with the Secretariat for the Summit Process and with the support of the Latin American School of Social Sciences (Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales - FLACSO) in Chile, the Unit organized the workshop on "Civil society and governance: civil society forum in preparation for the OAS General Assembly," held one day before the opening of the regular session of the General Assembly held in Chile. In attendance were representatives of various civil society associations of the hemisphere. The forum laid the groundwork for the Dialogue that the Heads of Delegation had with civil society prior to the opening ceremony of the thirty-third regular session of the General Assembly. It was also an important step toward making that Dialogue with civil society a permanent feature of every session of the General Assembly.

As a result of its deliberations on the subject, the General Assembly adopted resolution AG/RES. 1960 (XXXIII-O/03) which spoke of the procedure for discussion and approval of a Program for Democratic Governance in the Americas. As part of this process, the General Assembly instructed the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy to organize a meeting of experts to prepare an analysis on strengthening democratic governance in the region and to present the analysis,

along with its recommendations, to the Permanent Council to be considered and then transmitted to the Special Summit of the Americas. Participating in that meeting of experts, held at headquarters November 12 and 13, were more than 50 specialists from the hemisphere and international organizations. The final report was presented to the Permanent Council, in keeping with the provisions of AG/RES. 1960.

Inter-American Forum on Political Parties

The Inter-American Forum on Political Parties (FIAPP) is a UPD program launched in late 2001 to take further action on the hemispheric mandates to strengthen and modernize political parties. The member States issued these mandates both in the Plan of Action of the Third Summit of the Americas and in the Inter-American Democratic Charter. Various institutions cooperate in the FIAPP, which brings together political parties, social sectors, academics, election authorities, the media and international cooperation institutions. The Forum's basic objective is to strengthen and reform political parties and party systems in the hemisphere. It does this through dialogue, a sharing of experiences, applied studies, specific advisory services and support.

The Forum's Advisory Council was consolidated in 2003. The Council meets every six months. Representatives of more than twenty-five institutions in various sectors gather to assign responsibilities, coordinate efforts and decide how the available resources can be used to best advantage to modernize political parties. The Council's first meeting (Washington, D.C., March 2003) and second meeting (Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, November 2003) highlighted a number of initiatives. Prominent among them were the High-Level Conference on Financing Democracy in the Americas, held in March in conjunction with the Carter Center, and publication of the *"Money in Politics Handbook: A Guide to Increasing Transparency in Emerging Democracies"* a product of the work being done with the United States Agency for International Development on the subject of disclosure and transparency in politics. The FIAPP also provided technical support to the Summit of Presidents of the Rio Group held in May and worked with the Latin American Parliament (PARLATINO) on the implementation of the guidelines from the "Cuzco Consensus on Democratic Governance and Political Parties." The Forum also participated in activities of international party organizations by attending the Conference of Leaders of the Christian Democrat Organisation of America (ODCA) in Caracas, Venezuela, and the XXII Socialist International Congress, held in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

On the subject of campaign and political party financing, the UPD -working with the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA)- has been preparing an analysis comparing the financing of political activity in the 34 member countries of the OAS. The analysis also makes specific recommendations to the member states on the subject. To get this study done, the UPD held a number of sub-regional workshops on the subject, discussing the manner in which this issue is addressed in Latin America, North America and the English-speaking Caribbean. As part of its input into the chapter of the study that deals with financing and gender, the UPD -in cooperation with the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) and International IDEA- convoked a working meeting to discuss the implications that the financing systems have for women's participation in politics. The working meeting yielded fresh insights into a subject that has, until now, been relatively unexplored.

As for advisory services and technical monitoring of political reform and modernization of the party system, the Forum continued the Political Management and Democratic Values Program, which has been underway now for a number of years in Guatemala, ever since the Peace Accords were signed in that country. In 2003, the Forum continued to support the so-called "inter-sectoral

roundtables” which culminated in passage of a national agenda that the 21 political parties agreed upon and signed.

In cooperation with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and International IDEA, the Forum is completing a comparative analysis of the political parties in Central America and the Caribbean. In partnership with Cataluña’s International Institute of Governability (IIG), FIAPP also conducted a virtual forum on Political Party and Campaign Financing in the Americas.

FIAPP’s most important activity in 2003 was its Third Annual Meeting, held in Cartagena de Indias, November 23 through 25. More than 100 leaders representing 50 political parties in 20 countries of the hemisphere attended, as did representatives of other sectors of society. The discussions focused on three areas: political party and campaign financing, how the parties relate to other sectors of society, and reforms recently undertaken or under consideration in Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Peru and the Central American countries. The meeting was also an opportunity to learn about the work that other institutions are doing in this area, such as the IDB, the major party foundations in Brazil, PARLATINO, International IDEA, the Friedrich Naumann Foundation, the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (IMD), the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, the International Republican Institute, among others.

Program to Support Decentralization and Citizen Participation Processes

As Technical Secretariat of the High-Level Inter-American Network on Decentralization (RIAD), the UPD supported the holding of the Second Meeting of Ministers and High-Level Authorities Responsible for Policies on Decentralization, Local Government, and Citizen Participation at the Municipal Level in the Hemisphere, held in Mexico City, November 24 through 26. The Meeting approved the “Mexico City Plan of Action on the Decentralization and Strengthening of Regional and Municipal Administrations and Citizen Participation.”

As RIAD’s Technical Secretariat, the UPD coordinated implementation of the “Mexico City Plan of Action” with the Network’s Chair and Vice Chair (Mexico and Brazil, respectively) and with the regional vice chairs (Jamaica, Guatemala, Mexico and Peru). It also improved contacts with international agencies in order to form the multi-representative international technical cooperation support group to serve as financial and technical support for RIAD, as called for in the Plan of Action. Also during this period, RIAD’s Website was redesigned and two training activities were devised on the subject of decentralization, in cooperation with the Latin American and Caribbean Institute for Economic and Social Planning (ILPES) of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the Universidad Alberto Hurtado.

The UPD also conducted a number of sub-regional activities on the issue. In the English-speaking Caribbean, the Unit and the United Nations Development Programme helped organize a Forum on Local Governance in Small States, hosted by the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and focusing on the members of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States. In the Andean Community, the UPD teamed up with FLACSO-Ecuador on a publication about decentralization processes in the region. In MERCOSUR, the UPD supported the Specialized Meeting of Municipalities of MERCOSUR (REMI) with studies on decentralization and local autonomy. Finally, a project on “Support for the Strengthening of Political Decentralization Processes in Central America” was implemented with IDB financing.

Program to Support Strengthening of Legislative Institutions

Most of the activities conducted under the Program to Support Strengthening of Legislative Institutions (PAFIL) in 2003 focused on strengthening legislative support for the strategic topics on the hemispheric agenda. The Unit helped organize the Second Meeting of the US-Venezuela Inter-Parliamentary Forum, known as the Boston Group. The latter is the result of a combined effort of the UPD, the Permanent Mission of the United States to the OAS, the House Subcommittee on Hemispheric Affairs of the United States Congress, and the National Assembly of Venezuela.

As Technical Secretariat Pro-Tempore of the Inter-Parliamentary Commission of the Forum of Presidents of the Legislative Branches of Government of Central America and the Caribbean Basin (FOPREL) and with financial support from the Government of the United States, the Unit executed the project titled "Legislative Action to Combat Terrorism." Under this project, an ambitious plan was established to support ratification of the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism and modernize the relevant laws in the Central American countries and the Dominican Republic. El Salvador was the venue of the "First Central American and Caribbean Basin Inter-Parliamentary Forum on Combating Terrorism" and discussions moved forward to being legislative action in this field in the MERCOSUR countries.

In the anti-corruption field, support was provided to the meeting on "Parliaments and Control of Corruption: Political Challenges in Latin America," organized by the World Bank in Sao Paulo, Brazil. During that meeting, the Latin American Chapter of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (PLACC) was formed. At the request of Costa Rica's Legislative Assembly, the UPD provided technical cooperation to the Central American Inter-Parliamentary Committee on Drug Trafficking and Corruption (CICONA).

In the field of international trade negotiations, the UPD, FOPREL, and MERCOSUR's Joint Parliamentary Committee (CPC) teamed up to begin an analysis of the role of legislatures in matters related to trade treaties. In response to a request from the CPC, the UPD moved forward on arrangements to work in the field of inter-parliamentary integration. The Unit provided support to the presidents of the Central American congresses in conducting inter-parliamentary activities on the subject of security.

The UPD also supported the work of sub-regional inter-parliamentary institutions. With Canada's financial support the UPD provided technical cooperation to the Inter-Parliamentary Forum of the Americas (FIPA) for the holding of its second annual meeting. It also provided permanent technical support to FOPREL, assisted with the work being done by the CPC, and began talks with the Andean Parliament for specific joint measures on strategic issues on the inter-American agenda.

In the area of institutional strengthening and modernization of parliamentary institutions, the UPD worked on preparations for the First Inter-American Forum on Legislative Modernization, to be held in 2004, and began to design a project to strengthen political control and budgetary oversight for the Paraguayan Congress. As part of the Program in Political Management for Lawmakers, two high-level courses were held, one in El Salvador and the other in Paraguay. Finally, as part of the UPD's foray into the field of e-congress, the design of a new Website was completed. Its purpose is to help improve the performance of lawmakers in the member countries and make them more efficient.

Program for Promotion of Democratic Leadership and Citizenry

The UPD conducted the Third Regional Course on Democracy and Political Management for Young Leaders of MERCOSUR (Joinville, SC, Brazil- July 2003) and the First Andean Regional Course on Democratic Governance for Young Women Leaders (Quito, Ecuador, August 2003). The course conducted in Brazil was done in conjunction with a number of private and state academic institutions and foundations of the major political parties in Brazil, and with the support of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation-Brazil and the Christian Democrat Organization of America (ODCA). The course in Quito was given in conjunction with CIM, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the Program for the Support of Women's Leadership and Representation (PROLEAD) and the IDB's Inter-American Institute for Social Development (INDES). With financial support from the IDB, the Program of National Training Courses for Young Democratic Leaders (CALIDEM) ran six courses on democratic institutions, values and practices. The courses were held in Chile, Ecuador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama and Paraguay.

The UPD also continued to strengthen the course follow-up mechanism and the institutions from which the course participants come. As part of this mechanism, technical cooperation was provided to the Secretariat for Social Action of the Office of the President of Paraguay, to develop the general guidelines for the institutional communication strategy.

In 2003, the UPD stepped up its cooperation with the General Secretariat's Unit for Social Development and Education, to provide member states with assistance on cultivating the culture of democracy and education for democracy, central themes of the Inter-American Democratic Charter. In this connection, the UPD and the Unit for Social Development and Education assisted the Permanent Council as it prepared for a special meeting on "Promotion of Democratic Culture through Education" to be held in 2004. Also held was a Seminar on Teaching Democratic Values and Practices in the Formal Education System, in Montevideo, Uruguay, in association with the UDSE, the Ministry of Education, the National Administration of Public Education of Uruguay, and the United States Center for Civic Education.

Strengthening Electoral Systems and Modernization of Civil Registries

In 2003, the Unit for Promotion of Democracy continued the programs to strengthen and modernize the electoral institutions in Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala and Paraguay. To that end, the UPD maintained special programs to promote the use of more modern tools and procedures in the field of election organization, promotion of citizen participation and application of modern election technology.

In Guatemala, Honduras and Paraguay, the UPD conducted civil registry programs to modernize the procedures, security controls and training in citizen registration and registry security.

As part of the activities conducted to share success stories and horizontal cooperation initiatives, the UPD strengthened cooperative relations with the electoral authorities of Brazil, Canada, Panama and Paraguay with whom the General Secretariat signed horizontal cooperation agreements. Special mention should be made of the second experiment in horizontal cooperation between electoral institutions in the hemisphere (Brazil-Paraguay): this experiment in horizontal cooperation succeeded in computerizing 50 percent of the voting in the presidential elections held in Paraguay in April. Another horizontal cooperation initiative was the First Inter-American Meeting of Electoral Authorities, which the UPD held in March with the support of the Superior Electoral Tribunal of Panama. Representatives of 22 electoral institutions in the member states of the Organization attended this meeting, which discussed issues related to the use of technology in organizing elections and formed the Inter-American Electoral Technology Network (RITE).

In 2003, the UPD conducted a number of workshops and seminars in Guatemala, and disseminated publications there, all to foster a culture of democracy and assist the electoral process held in Guatemala in November and December.

In 2003, the UPD focused on ensuring that electoral processes would increasingly become the most reliable, direct and efficient means for individuals to participate and legitimize their opinions and political decisions by exercising their civic duty and right to vote. Working meetings were held with the election authorities of Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador and El Salvador to discuss technological advances and the efficiency of the electoral processes.

Promotion and Dissemination of the Inter-American Democratic Charter

This new inter-American instrument is vital to strengthening and collectively defending democracy in the hemisphere. Therefore, in keeping with the stated interest of the member states, in 2003 the UPD launched a series of activities to promote and publicize the content of the Inter-American Democratic Charter. It designed a distance education program to instruct teachers in how to teach the principles, values and practices of democracy, in accordance with the principles of the Charter. The courses and seminars that the UPD has developed and executed for some years now on the subject of democratic culture and political management –in combination with the other activities of the Unit- have become a vehicle to teach the Charter’s principles to young leaders of the hemisphere and other sectors that shape public opinion, such as political parties, the media, civil society organizations, academic institutions, and so on.

In cooperation with the Department of Public Information, the UPD did a television spot on the Charter, as part of a series of spots to be produced about this instrument. The UPD also worked with the Inter-American Children’s Institute (IIN) on production of a television spot about the Charter, this one targeted at children. Both initiatives are intended to create greater public awareness of the importance of the Inter-American Democratic Charter and to publicize the OAS’ mandate to consolidate democracy in the hemisphere.

Finally, the Inter-American Democratic Charter was reprinted, this time in passport size. This version has been widely circulated in programs and activities conducted by the Unit and the Permanent Missions to the Organization, among others.

Information and Dialogue on Democracy

In order to efficiently circulate the most important news related to the development of democracy in the hemisphere, and information on specific UPD activities, the Unit strengthened its capacity to generate and disseminate that information by electronic means and in print materials. In 2003, the UPD concentrated its efforts in this area on updating and adapting the information contained on the Unit’s Web page, in order to better respond to the growing demand for information about its activities.

The Unit continued to collaborate with Georgetown University’s Center for Latin American Studies on development of the “Political Database of the Americas.” This database is an important source of academic materials, primary documents and statistical data on political issues in the hemisphere. The database was therefore updated regularly throughout the year, to add the latest available information on such topics as cabinets, comparative studies, decentralization, election laws, constitutions, election results and political parties.

The Unit also worked on production of the e-bulletin *UPDate*, various reports on electoral observation missions, special reports and final reports on the UPD's activities and seminars.

Special Program on Promotion of Dialogue and Conflict Resolution

The Special Program made headway on implementing the Central American Program for Strengthening Democratic Dialogue (PCA), working with an institutional framework laid out in conjunction with the countries of the region. Among the activities conducted under this sub-regional program, the Special Program provided technical cooperation to help the process of National Dialogue instituted by the Government of Honduras and plans ongoing collaboration in the process of monitoring the scope of the national dialogue in that country.

The Special Program also launched efforts to support the Government of Bolivia with design and implementation of a program to prevent and settle conflicts. The Program also established a permanent presence in the country to provide the follow-up and advisory services that these topics require.

The Program "Culture of Dialogue: Development of Resources for Peace building" (PROPAZ) ended in March 2003, thus concluding one of the UPD's most successful and important efforts to support the peace process, political dialogue and growth of democracy in Guatemala. The ProPaz Foundation -a new, autonomous Guatemalan institution- has been established in the program's place and will continue to support dialogue and social consensus-building in Guatemala, drawing upon the PROPAZ experience.

In coordinating its activities with other multilateral organizations, the Special Program took active part in the Democratic Dialogue Project headed up by the UNDP, to build shared methodological platforms for analyzing and applying dialogue practices in the region. The Special Program helped organize the Workshop on Experiences in Dialogue in Guatemala, which was an opportunity for institutions that encourage democratic dialogue in the country to share their experiences and lessons learned. Generic guidelines were formulated to improve future institutional measures in democratic dialogue; and finally, the Special Program also helped create a model for how organizations active in the area of dialogue can cooperate with one another.

Electoral Observation Missions

The Organization's Electoral Observation Missions (EOMs) are one of the UPD's most visible activities and have a greater immediate impact in terms of tangible support for the democratic processes in the member states. In 2003, the UPD organized and conducted two Electoral Observation Missions (Guatemala and Grenada). The UPD also conducted missions to follow the electoral processes in the following countries: Argentina (2), Colombia and Costa Rica. It conducted a Technical Monitoring Mission in Paraguay on the occasion of the presidential elections, and a joint OAS/Carter Center mission to observe signature collection in Venezuela.

Comprehensive Action against Antipersonnel Mines (AICMA)

In discharging its mandate to support national reconciliation, peace building and compliance with the Convention of Ottawa by its States party, the AICMA Program continued to support activities against antipersonnel mines in the hemisphere. Specifically, the AICMA assisted Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Peru in 2003. With assistance from the AICMA, by the end of 2002 Costa Rica was able to declare itself free of antipersonnel mines. The essential elements of this effort continued to be to provide and coordinate funding,

with the support received from various donors and the technical advisory services received from the Inter-American Defense Board (IADB).

Under the humanitarian demining component, the program collaborated directly with the beneficiary member States in removing more than 48,000 mines. As a result, Nicaragua –the most severely affected country in Central America- has completed 70 percent of its goal of eliminating all the antipersonnel mines planted in Nicaragua during the internal armed conflict there. In Honduras, the Program's activities are wrapping up and should be finished during the first quarter of 2004. Plans are to complete the programs in Guatemala and Nicaragua in 2004 and 2005, respectively. In 2003, coordinated operations were conducted on both sides of the border between Peru and Ecuador. As a result of these operations, in October 2003 the National Police of Peru, with the Program's assistance, completed the removal of the antipersonnel mines planted in the vicinity of more than 600 power towers in the country.

The OAS' leadership in supporting the Ottawa Convention was self-evident, as it assisted the States party from the region with the preliminary preparations necessary to properly participate in the First Review Conference scheduled for November 2004 in Nairobi, Kenya. To that end, the UPD held the first of two regional seminars in Lima in August 2003, and programmed the second for Quito in June 2004. As part of the program's support for the Convention, AICMA also helped various member states destroy their mine stockpiles. In the last three years, stockpiles totaling 650,000 mines have been destroyed in Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Peru. In March 2003, the Government of Colombia signed a framework cooperation agreement with the Organization, covering the areas of preventive education, assistance to victims of antipersonnel mines and establishment and maintenance of a database. Later in the year, Argentina and Chile signed agreements with the OAS to obtain support in destroying mine stockpiles.

To help serve the needs of the affected population, the Unit continued to provide its support to the Assistance Program for Victims of Unexploded Mines and Ordnance. This program has helped more than 500 victims in Central America, most in Nicaragua. In 2003, the assistance to mine victims continued to grow with the introduction of a post-rehabilitation job training program, in cooperation with Nicaragua's National Institute of Technology (INATEC), which has trained more than 100 people since its establishment. To enable mutual cooperation in this area, the AICMA organized a regional seminar on assistance to mine victims, held in Bogota in November 2003. Participating in the seminar were representatives of a number of member states, international organizations and nongovernmental organizations.

With the support of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining in Switzerland, the AICMA program fine-tuned installation of the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) in Nicaragua. It also installed the system in Ecuador and Peru. IMSMA is a primary data bank for prioritizing demining activities, preventive education, and efforts to assist victims. At the present time, the program has this system in Colombia, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Ecuador and Peru.

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL

Under Article 115 of the Charter of the OAS and in keeping with the policy and practice decided by the General Assembly and with the respective resolutions of the Councils, the Office of the Assistant Secretary General is the Secretariat of the Permanent Council, provides advisory services to the Secretary General, and is in charge of the other activities that the Secretary General entrusts to it.

The Office of the Assistant Secretary General provided technical and operational support for the thirty-third regular session of the General Assembly in Santiago, Chile. It also coordinated technical and operational services in preparation for the thirty-fourth regular session of the General Assembly to be held in Quito, Ecuador, in June 2004.

Pursuant to Executive Order 97-2, the office coordinated, supervised and provided follow-up to the activities of: the Secretariat for Conferences and Meetings, the Executive Secretariat of the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM), the Columbus Library, the Inter-American Children's Institute (IIN), the Art Museum of the Americas, the Inter-American Emergency Aid Committee, and the Offices of the General Secretariat in Member States. It continued to orchestrate cooperative arrangements with the United Nations and its specialized agencies, the organs of the inter-American system, the Association of Caribbean States, and the Central American Integration System (SICA), among others. It also performed specific functions involving coordination with the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) with respect to the situation in Haiti.

The office continued to support the efforts of the Secretary General in seeking solutions to the political and institutional crisis afflicting Haiti, in accordance with the expressed desire of member states of the Organization. It maintained close coordination with the head and the deputy head of the Special Mission, and with the OAS Special Envoy for promoting dialogue in Haiti.

It organized and participated in meetings of the Group of Friends of Haiti, and participated in the meeting of the working group to recommend adjustments to the mandate of the OAS Special Mission for strengthening democracy in Haiti.

The Office of the Assistant Secretary General also continued to support the work of the Office of the Secretary General in negotiating a peaceful settlement to the territorial differendum between Belize and Guatemala. On February 7, 2003, the Ministers of Foreign Relations of Belize and Guatemala, together with the OAS Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary General, signed an Agreement to Establish a Transitional Process and Confidence-building Measures between Belize and Guatemala.

That agreement established a new framework, called the "Transition Process", under which the Parties agree to work constructively and in good faith until they reach a final just, equitable, honorable, and permanent solution to their territorial differendum. The framework outlines the responsibilities of the Parties and also assigns duties and responsibilities to the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States, and to the international community through the establishment of a "Group of Friends" to support the peaceful resolution of the Belize-Guatemala territorial differendum. The Group of Friends held its first meeting on October 6, 2003 at OAS Headquarters.

Central to the framework is the establishment of an Office of the General Secretariat in the Adjacency Zone, which opened for business on July 1, 2003. The Office's principal functions are to monitor the Parties' compliance with the confidence-building measures, designed to reduce tensions in the Adjacency Zone, and to encourage respect of human rights of the inhabitants in the area.

In September 2002, the President of El Salvador, Francisco Flores, and the President of Honduras, Ricardo Maduro, committed themselves to completing the demarcation of the land frontier between their two countries within 18 months. All outstanding sections of the frontier were established by a ruling of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in 1992, but technical difficulties with the interpretation of the ruling prevented completion of the demarcation process. As a result of these difficulties, and the decision to expedite the demarcation of the frontier, the two governments requested the technical assistance of the OAS General Secretariat and the Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH). The General Peace Treaty signed in 1980 by the two countries contains provisions that assign specific responsibilities to PAIGH for appointing a third arbitrator to resolve technical differences between the parties with respect to demarcation of the frontier.

In April 2003, the Office of the Assistant Secretary General and the General Secretariat of PAIGH responded positively to the application naming Mr. John O. Gates of PAIGH as the third arbitrator. Mr. Gates' task is to arbitrate all differences of a technical nature, i.e. purely engineering questions submitted by the two countries such as, for example, in case of inconsistency in the geodesic coordinates and the "geographic features" mentioned in the ICJ ruling of 1992.

Since July 2003, Mr. Gates, accompanied by an adviser to the Assistant Secretary General, has been conducting visits to the border zone. On the basis of these on-site observations, the text of the ICJ ruling of 1992, documents prepared by the El Salvador-Honduras Special Commission of Demarcation, satellite imagery, and other technical tools, the third arbitrator has been offering definitive solutions, respected by both countries, to the technical problems encountered by the Commission. It is expected that demarcation will be completed within the time limit established by Presidents Flores and Maduro.

The Assistant Secretary General, in his capacity as Secretary of the Permanent Council and its subsidiary organs, cooperated with representatives of member countries and observers in preparing and conducting its 24 regular meetings, 10 special meetings, 6 protocolary meetings, and one joint meeting of the Council with CEPCIDI and with the Presidents of the Permanent Council. He also monitored the work of the commissions and working groups of the Permanent Council, in the course of approximately 150 meetings.

OFFICES OF THE OAS GENERAL SECRETARIAT IN THE MEMBER STATES

The Offices of the OAS General Secretariat in the Member States assist with the preparation, execution, and evaluation of the OAS' technical cooperation programs in their respective countries. They represent the General Secretariat, provide support to the Organization's other activities, and help publicize its purposes.

The Office of the Assistant Secretary General supervised Coordination of the OAS Offices in the Member States, which continued to assist the various areas of the General Secretariat in discharging the mandates received from the governing bodies.

A number of the OAS' offices, especially the OAS/Haiti, OAS/Venezuela and OAS/Bolivia offices, deserve special mention for the support they provided during the period covered in this report, and that they continue to provide to the Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary General to facilitate resolution of the political problems besetting those countries. Similarly, the OAS offices in Belize, Guatemala, and Nicaragua have been particularly helpful in providing assistance to the Secretary General in his role as a witness of honor in the settlement of the territorial *differendum* between Belize and Guatemala, as has the OAS office in the adjacency zone between the two countries. On a number of occasions, the directors of these three offices have played important roles in facilitating the Secretary General's work by dealing with any difficulties that came up while the Secretary General was performing his functions as a witness of honor. Similarly, the OAS offices in Honduras and El Salvador have been particularly helpful to the Assistant Secretary General in his role of facilitator in the demarcation of the borders between the two countries.

The OAS offices in Grenada and Guatemala provided invaluable assistance to the OAS' Electoral Observation Missions (EOMs) in those countries. In Guatemala, the Office assisted the EOM in the two rounds of the presidential elections and provided it with support. It did all the necessary coordination work and provided invaluable support to the Mission's chief, while keeping officials at headquarters apprised of events in the country.

Also, pursuant to the mandate contained in resolution AG/RES. 1974 (XXXIII-O/03), for the second consecutive year the Secretariat presented a document containing the work programs and a report on the funds or subsidies that each office received from its host government.

An important step was taken to enhance the administration of the offices when the Assistant Secretary General sent a memorandum to the directors of the National Offices, dated October 31, 2003. Its purpose was to: (i) underscore the need for staff members of the Offices of the General Secretariat in the Member States ("GS/OAS Offices") to comply with the General Standards, the Field Financial Manual, Budgetary and Financial Rules, the Budgetary and Financial Manual, Executive Orders, Staff Rules, Administrative Memoranda, Directives and other administrative issuances of the General Secretariat ("GS/OAS"); (ii) seek collaboration in addressing certain issues/problems, identified by the Inspector General in recent audits of GS/OAS Offices; (iii) inform staff members of the implementation of a system of "spot-checks" at GS/OAS Offices, and (iv) remind directors and other staff members that the failure to comply with GS/OAS rules and regulations as set out in the above-mentioned legal instruments regarding performance of their fiduciary responsibilities would have serious consequences.

The following are some of the most important activities either undertaken or supported by the Offices of the General Secretariat this last year:

Administrative and logistical support provided to the organs of the OAS

The OAS Offices in the member states provided extensive administrative and logistical support to the various organs and departments of the General Secretariat at headquarters, which included: negotiation of arrangements for meetings, seminars and other activities, travel plans, procurement of local and support services, and participation in project planning activities.

In particular, the OAS Offices performed the following functions:

- Administrative functions associated, for example, with assisting the Secretariat of Conferences and Meetings with preparation of various ministerial-level meetings, including the Special Conference on Security held in Mexico in October 2003.
- Representation of the General Secretariat at various workshops, conferences, and symposia, as the Organization's institutional presence in the member states.

Cooperation-related support

The OAS Offices in the member states have actively promoted integral development through their role in the activities in partnership for development administered by the Inter-American Agency for Cooperation and Development (IACD) and other areas of the OAS General Secretariat. Working in cooperation with the Agency, the OAS Offices provided OAS technical cooperation services to the member states. Most of the Offices provided direct assistance with preparation of projects to be submitted to the IACD seeking funding. They were also instrumental in the support that the General Secretariat provides to the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). The Offices conducted negotiations related to seminars, workshops, and training sessions on the subject and provided support to the activities conducted by the IACD's Department of Information Technology for Human Development, the Office of Cultural Affairs, the Office of Science and Technology (OST), the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD), the Inter-American Telecommunications Commission (CITEL), the Trade Unit, the Unit of Social Development and Education (USDE), the Unit of Sustainable Development and Environment (USDE), the Inter-Sectoral Unit for Tourism, the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy (UPD), the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM), the Inter-American Children's Institute (IIN) and the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development (SEDI). The following activities are of particular note:

- **Combating drugs:** The OAS offices assisted CICAD with the efforts undertaken to prepare and/or modernize national anti-drug plans. They also provided their support to facilitate the member states' participation in the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism (MEM).
- **Promoting women's human rights:** under the cooperation programs conducted by the CIM Executive Secretariat, the OAS offices in the member states were instrumental in staging the seminars and workshops held as part of the program to promote equal treatment for women in the public and private sectors.
- **Strengthening democracy:** Working in cooperation with the UPD, the OAS Offices in the Member States were instrumental in increasing citizen participation in the political process by the support they provided to the EOMs, the peace processes and strengthened democratic institutions. A number of offices have also worked with the UPD and the Department of Public Information to circulate information about the Inter-American

Democratic Charter, in compliance with mandates from the General Assembly and the Permanent Council. The OAS Office in Uruguay, for example, organized a seminar in Montevideo on the Inter-American Convention against Corruption. One of the speakers was the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Uruguay, His Excellency Didier Operti.

- Promoting free trade: In cooperation with the Trade Unit and under its supervision, the national offices helped facilitate the member states' participation in the FTAA negotiations and the related technical cooperation.
- Support provided in connection with the Inter-American Convention against Corruption. In cooperation with the Secretariat for Legal Affairs, a number of OAS offices in the member states, including the office in Suriname, helped with arrangements for regional seminars to apprise government officials and members of the judiciary about how the Convention operates and the obligations it presupposes.
- The internship program organized by the OAS Office in Uruguay builds upon the Office's experience and work, and gives Uruguayan citizens the opportunity to learn from that experience. The annual evaluation seminar run by the OAS Office in Ecuador is another important activity.

Exchange of information

In partnership with the Department of Public Information and the Office of External Relations, the OAS Offices served as the principal agents of information exchange in the member states. Information was constantly being shared back and forth between the OAS Offices in the Member States and (local, regional, and international) governmental agencies, NGOs, and news agencies. The OAS Offices also regularly announced seminars and workshops in their respective countries, to publicize the OAS' various technical assistance programs being carried out in the countries. The Offices in the Member States also followed political events and economic developments in their respective member states and reported their observations to the pertinent areas at headquarters, in the form of reports and informative bulletins.

The Office of the Assistant Secretary General will work with the Department of Public Information to produce articles and documentaries publicizing the work of the OAS Offices in the Member States.

Cooperation with other donors

Most if not all OAS Offices in the Member States stayed in regular contact with the local offices of international donors and other multilateral organizations to strengthen coordination inside the local donor community and facilitate execution of current and future projects. In many instances, the OAS Offices also took part in the monthly or quarterly meetings held by the local donor community and, when requested, cooperated on the informative meetings held for donor missions visiting the country and officials of other governments. In some cases, the OAS offices organized those meetings.

The coordination with donors was perhaps more intensive in the case of entities of the inter-American system in those areas where the cooperation programs that the OAS conducts in the member states were exceptional or of considerable importance to those countries.

Mandates from the Summits

Most OAS Offices in the Member States continue to provide headquarters with support in executing the mandates from the Summits of the Americas. Just half the offices are participating

in measures to support the General Secretariat's activities as an "institutional partner" in the Summit Process. It is evident that more guidance is needed from the pertinent areas of the Secretariat in order to use the Offices in the member states to greater effect when executing the Summit mandates. The Secretariat for the Summit Process has recognized this and, working in collaboration with the Office of the Assistant Secretary General, will design specific activities and initiatives that use the Offices more efficiently and effectively to facilitate execution of Summit mandates. One possibility now being examined is the support that the Offices might be able to provide to civil society in each member state to enable it to participate in the work of the OAS.

SECRETARIAT FOR CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS

The Secretariat for Conferences and Meetings was created in March 1997 by Executive Order No. 97-2, pursuant to General Assembly resolutions AG/RES. 954 (XVIII-O/88) and AG/RES. 1381 (XXVI-O/96). Its mission is to identify, integrate, administer, and modernize the conference services that the General Secretariat must provide to the OAS' governing bodies. The Secretariat for Conferences and Meetings is composed of the Office of the Director and three divisions, whose functions are to provide and coordinate conference services, services in the official languages, and production and distribution of documents and information.

In the period covered in this report, the modernization process provided for in Executive Order 97-2 continued and expanded. Some of the remodeling work in the General Secretariat buildings was completed, and services for Organization meetings were improved and modernized. This process was done in coordination with the Department of Technology and Facility Services (DTFS) in order to minimize the impact of the remodeling and modernization on space needs.

Management of conferences and meetings

The Office of the Director of the Secretariat for Conferences and Meetings (SCR) continued to implement the policy of modernizing the simultaneous interpretation equipment, a process that began the previous year in order to make all that equipment digitally compatible. The financial support provided by the Permanent Council for the renovation process will make it possible to pursue this policy throughout the renovation process recently started on the General Secretariat's Main Building. Specialized purveyors of conference service equipment and the DTFS will also be providing technical support throughout this process as well. The new digital equipment, in combination with the conventional meeting services, provides a package of integrated "multimedia" services that are compatible with those of the Department of Public Information. "Multimedia" provides the needed flexibility and immediate facility for holding the Permanent Council's meetings and deliberations, while allowing the remote, real-time presence of other participants with audio-video conferences and simultaneous interpretation services in the OAS' four official languages.

With technical support from the Secretariat for Management, the Secretariat for Conferences and Meetings continued to hammer out administrative procedures for managing the financial resources for the Organization's meetings using the OASES system. In developing and operating computerized systems, the Secretariat continued to expand and broaden the cooperation between the SCR and the DTFS to fully integrate the computerized platform of conference services. Simpler and more user-friendly Internet access to these services is now available to all users and to the general public through remote access. Users are now able to use this medium to obtain the official documents on the agenda of the meetings. The information stored in a database of references accessible to the public can also be consulted through remote access.

Conference Services

The Secretariat for Conferences and Meetings provided logistical support to organize and hold approximately 576 meetings. Some 531 meetings of the governing and technical bodies, the Permanent Council and its subsidiary bodies, CIDI and its subsidiary bodies and the other organs and specialized agencies of the inter-American system, such as the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM), the Inter-American Telecommunications Commission (CITEL), the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) and the Inter-American Children's Institute (IIN) were held at headquarters, whereas 45 high-level meetings were held in the member states, including the regular session of the General Assembly, the XXXIII and XXXIV regular sessions of the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD), technical meetings of the IACHR, CITEL, CICAD and others. For the meetings held in the member states, human and technological resources had to be mobilized from OAS headquarters and taken to the countries hosting the meetings. During this period, the Secretariat updated a six-month calendar of OAS meetings as a tool to use the equipment and personnel required for conference services to maximum advantage.

Language Services

The Secretariat continued its policy of updating equipment and procuring software in the four languages. One important step was the effort made to initiate and maintain professional and functional contacts with language services divisions in other international and domestic organizations, with a view to sharing terminology and glossaries. The e-library has been updated with the addition of documents recently published by the OAS.

The SCR's List of Contract Translators and Interpreters has grown significantly as the names of professionals from everywhere in the Hemisphere have been added. A particular effort has been made to find more translators and interpreters in the member states, as they represent a sizeable savings in the costs of providing language services at meetings held away from headquarters.

Documents and Information Division

The Documents and Information Division played an important role in the production and distribution of official General Secretariat documents and helped the permanent missions of the member states and the permanent observer states locate reports and information produced within the framework of the OAS' governing bodies. The following figures give an idea of the volume of work the Division produced in the period covered in this report.

- Printing and distribution of 4,450 classified documents in the four official languages of the OAS, for a total of 3,241,768 pages. This volume of work has meant a considerable savings on the costs of printing and distributing documents needed for policy discussions.
- Printing and distribution of 17,800 invitations for the Art Museum of the Americas and the Protocol Office.
- Use of computerized systems and databases for managing production, storage, and documents management using the IDMS system.
- Supplying needed information and technical support to the Permanent Council, its committees and working groups, the CEPCIDI and its subsidiary bodies, and all the permanent missions of the member states, the permanent observers, and other organs and agencies of the inter-American system that requested information services and official OAS documents.

- The volume for the period from December 2003 to February 2004 can be calculated at 5% of the above-mentioned figures.

By the end of the period covered in this report, the output of internally printed documents was at its highest level of production efficiency thanks to the modern, sophisticated and high-speed equipment that the SCR has acquired over the last ten years.

The next step in this modernization policy will be to change the obsolete distribution equipment, replacing it with faster machines. The new machines, which will cost less to maintain, offer enormous advantages for purposes of distributing documents, publications, invitations, and the like.

Model General Assembly

The Secretariat for Conferences and Meetings provided support for the “Edgar Maya” Model OAS General Assembly for Universities, held April 13 through 18, 2003, in Washington, D.C. The Model General Assembly is held under the joint auspices of the Inter-American Institute of Diplomacy, a nonprofit foundation whose Faculty Council is made up of faculty members from colleges and universities with a long history of association in this field.

The MOAS Inter-American Studies Foundation has reiterated its interest in providing support to the activities of the Model General Assembly Program and the General Secretariat has been giving the Foundation logistical support in the form of an office, a computer, and a printer.

The twenty-second regular session of the Model OAS General Assembly for Secondary Schools was held at OAS headquarters, December 3 through 6, 2003. Some 325 students and 39 professors from 27 high schools in the United States and Puerto Rico participated. Among their activities was an interaction between the students and the representatives of the member states in which the students were able to get guidance directly from the various permanent missions to the OAS.

Co-sponsored by the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México and with support from the Government of Mexico, Querétaro, Mexico was the site of the twenty-second regular session of the Model OAS General Assembly for Universities from March 23 through 28. More than 20 universities participated.

ART MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAS

The Art Museum of the Americas was created by an OAS Permanent Council resolution in 1976, to stimulate the study of and interest in the art of the Americas, increase inter-American exchange and promote artistic creation in the Hemisphere. With its exhibits, collections, educational programs, and reference services, the Museum is a vital center promoting and documenting the art of the Hemisphere.

Exhibits

Temporary exhibits serve to expand awareness of the many currents of artistic expression in the Americas, and to stimulate cultural interchange. During this period a total of eight exhibits were organized, three of them in the Museum: "Selections from the Museum's Permanent Collection"; "Public Responsibility: 15 Photographers of the Americas"; and "Roberto Matta of Chile: an Architect of Surrealism". The other five were held in the Gallery: "Under Constant Pressure", featuring Claudio Fantini; "Soundings from Home", with Carolyn Jean of the United States; "Order in an Interior World", by Francisco Majia of Colombia; "The Island and the Continent", by Julio Valdés of the Dominican Republic; "The Best of the Worst" by Vladdo of Colombia; and "Life and Miracles of the Invisible Man", by Eduardo Tokeshi of Peru.

In addition, the exhibit "Order in an Interior World" was sent out as a traveling exhibit with showings at the Latincollector Gallery in New York and as part of the arts program of Gensler Architecture in Washington DC. Several exhibits were reviewed in the local press, including "Selections from the Permanent Collection" (The Washington Post, June 19, 2003), "Soundings from Home" (Georgetowner, July 7, 2003), "Public Responsibility" (The Washington Post August 1, 2003 and September 18, 2003), "The Best of the Worst" (Latin American Times of September 19, 2003) and "Roberto Matta" (DC Art News, November 14, 2003).

Renovations to the Simon Bolivar Room entailed the closure in December 2003 of the Art Gallery in the main building, which since the 1940s had hosted exhibits by the most important artists of the Hemisphere. Exhibition activity in the Gallery has been suspended until temporary space becomes available.

Permanent collection

Since 1949 the Museum has been collecting, preserving and documenting the work of leading artists in the Hemisphere. During the period under review in this report, another 35 new works were added to the Permanent Collection. A number of albums, graphics portfolios, and special editions were transferred from the archives of the old Visual Arts Unit to the Museum's permanent collection, including material relating to the Mexican artists Roberto Montenegro, Rufino Tamayo, Diego Rivera, Jose Guadalupe Posada and artists of the *Taller de Grafica Popular*, Carlos Mérida of Guatemala, Rene Portocarrero of Cuba, Carlos González of Uruguay, Genaro Ibañez of Bolivia, Raquel Forner of Argentina, and Leo Matiz of Colombia. Donations from outside sources included: a wooden sculpture by Naul Ojeda donated by Philomena Ojeda, a painting of Lola Fernández of Costa Rica donated by L. Ronald Scheman, and an engraving of Ana Mercedes Hoyos of Colombia donated by the Friends of the Museum. The Museum also received donations from various artists who participated in temporary exhibits, including Francisco Mejia and Luz Elena Castro of Colombia, Claudia Andujar of Brazil, and Claudio

Fantini of Costa Rica. Internally, 60 works from the permanent collection were lent to headquarters offices as part of the "Art in the office" program, and 53 works were made available for the Museum's temporary exhibits program. Externally, a painting by Alberto Dutary was lent to the Cultural Center of the Inter-American Development Bank for its exhibit, "A Century of Painting in Panama." 77 works from the collection were reproduced in the book "Art and Letters of Our America," published by Villegas Editores.

Conservation and preservation

With the help of the Department of Technology and Facility Services, conservation work (cleaning of the paint surface, application of protective coating, stabilization, construction of stretchers) was performed on 26 paintings and sculptures from the permanent collection that were lent out as part of the "Art in the office" program, including works by Enrique Arnal, Coqui Calderon, Enrique Careaga, Edgar Guinand, Graciela Rodo Boulanger, Humberto Jaimes Sánchez, Eduardo MacEntyre, Vicente Martín, Ariel Mendoza Baños, Miguel Ocampo, Taty Rybak, Cecilio Sánchez Franco, Rogelio Polesello, Nicolás Esposito, Héctor Navarro, Venancio Shinki, Tabo Toral, Tomie Ohtake, Danilo de Prete, Rafael Vadia, Raúl Valdivieso, Armando Villegas, Aníbal Villacís, Jesús Antonio Zelaya, Víctor Mena and Carlos Zerpa. Ten works on paper by Carlos González were also treated.

Art archives and audiovisual materials

The Museum's Art archives represent a unique source for the study of Latin American and Caribbean art. The Museum continues to collect materials to enrich this collection, and it provides reference services to students, researchers, and collectors through this documentation. With respect to its audiovisuals programs, the Museum received \$4,300 during the period from the sale of films and slides and from the rights to reproduce works from the permanent collection in various publications. Also, 340 new slides were taken of the works in the temporary exhibits, for use in publications, the press, and at the Museum's web site.

Education

To make the exhibits a more profound educational experience, four exhibit catalogues and eight virtual brochures for the Museum web page were produced. With support from the Organization of Women of the Americas (OMA), the artist Carolina Mayorga offered three art workshops for children at the Museum in late July and early August 2003, exploring themes of identity in conjunction with the exhibit on "Public Responsibility." In collaboration with the Commission of Women (CIM) and the OAS Art Group, the Museum presented three children's workshops in May, to create a mural on the topic of "women's achievements." The Museum also cooperated with the organization "Turning the Page", in presenting a series of educational programs in October, entitled "Literacy through Photography," for Merritt Educational Center and Kenilworth Elementary School (public schools in the District of Columbia). Two adult workshops in drawing were presented in cooperation with the Staff Association, and the artist Luis Scotti gave a series of workshops in silkscreen printing in February, March, and May 2004 in the Museum.

The Museum continues to offer, on a regular basis, guided tours for university and high school groups, cultural organizations and the like.

Special activities

The Museum earned a total of \$8,750 from rental of its premises to outside groups, and \$4,700 from the sale of catalogues, graphic works, posters, and other materials. To finance the cost of temporary exhibits during the year the Museum was able to count on the valuable support of participating artists and of various external entities, including the Hirshhorn Museum, Jerome Walker Fine Art, Latincollector Gallery, Gensler Architecture, the Embassy of Chile, the Mission of Chile, Asoex, Santander Santiago, Arauco, Ramirana, and Riggs Bank. As well, the missions of Colombia, the Dominican Republic, and Chile cooperated by hosting receptions for the exhibit openings. As a member of the "Neighbors to the President" consortium of museums, the Art Museum of the Americas participated in the annual "DC Open House," and collaborated in producing an online guided visit of member museums that are part of the National Registry of Historic Sites, for the consortium's web page. Technical assistance was also provided to the Staff Association for the "Fifth Annual Art Exhibit".

From January to November 2003, there were a total of 270,576 "visits" and 5,804,937 "page views" at the Museum web page, and approximately 14,000 people visited the Museum in person.

COLUMBUS MEMORIAL LIBRARY

The Columbus Memorial Library was established by the First International Conference of American States on April 18, 1890. The Library operates as a modern information and documentation center that makes vital information available to the permanent missions, the General Secretariat, the diplomatic community and the general public. It is also custodian of the institutional history of the Organization of American States, its predecessor the Pan American Union, and the inter-American system over the last two centuries. Over the years, the Columbus Memorial Library has been able to evolve from a traditional library program, and has added the General Secretariat's Archives and Records Management Program. It is also the custodian of all OAS documents.

CP/RES. 831 (1342/02) "Use of Excess Resources of the Reserve Subfund for Capital Investments and to Meet OAS Mandates"

In 2002, the Permanent Council resolved to appropriate US\$300,000 of the Reserve Subfund to the Columbus Memorial Library for the purpose of making its documents and archives accessible electronically. In 2003, work began on the Documents Catalog Retrospective Conversion Project with the scanning of 18,497 catalogue cards of OAS publications. On completion the records would appear in standard OCLC MARC format to be made available on the Library's On Line Public Access Catalog (OPAC) and to reach a larger client base via the Internet and the Organization's website. In addition companies were identified for the Preservation and Digitization Project to provide digital images to a select group of resolutions and declarations of the Permanent Council and acts and documents of the General Assembly.

Automation

The Library's new web page was uploaded in August 2003. Among the new features are: Ask a Librarian Service, full text of highly requested information on Cuba and the OAS, White Helmets, the applications of the TIAR, Pan American Day, Malvinas Islands, Bolivia and an outlet to Sea, full text finding aids on the Gabriela Mistral Papers, Rare Books Catalog and a new finding aid on Haiti.

The On-line Public Access Catalog (OPAC) gives researchers access to 33,100 publications and documents cataloged by the Columbus Memorial Library since 1980.

Acquisitions

Donations continued to supplement the Library's inadequate Acquisitions Budget. Donors included the Missions of Argentina and Brazil and the OAS National Office in Antigua and Barbuda. 2,064 publications from different offices of the General Secretariat were received by the Documents Control Unit.

Cataloging

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

Reference Services

The demands for reference services continue to increase as the Columbus Memorial Library provides access to resources that support the vision of the OAS. The Library is supporting current research needs and the Archives is documenting and providing access to historical actions already taken.

The Reference Unit circulated 13,456 books and 4,559 periodicals, and responded to 5,025 information requests, 160 c.f. of historical photographs were used to respond to the requests; the Documents Control Unit also had an increase in requests and responded to 1,795 requests, and the Records Management Unit 289. 8,047 photocopies were made for the General Secretariat, the Missions and outside users.

Reference service capabilities have increased with the addition of more databases. The Library subscribes to First Search and is able to deliver information from 70 databases that cover a wide range of subject areas with access to the holdings of thousands of libraries worldwide, 5.9 million online text articles from 9,000 serials, including 3,500 electronic journals.

The searchable web version of the Hispanic American Periodicals Index (HAPI) provides worldwide information about Central & South America, Mexico, and the Caribbean, the US-Mexico border region and Hispanics in the US. The Library continues to access WorldCat, UN 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

A total of 46,400 documents were received, processed and distributed. The Documents Control Unit compiled, published and distributed the "General List of OAS Official Documents, 2000".

The Unit compiled two issues of the Permanent Council's official publication in Spanish, "*Síntesis de las decisiones tomadas en las sesiones y textos de las resoluciones y declaraciones aprobadas*" for the years 2000 and 2001.

During the report period the Library continued to assist with alleviating the problems encountered with the closing of the OAS Bookshop. All mail related to OAS documents and publications were sent to the Library. The Library received 359 requests for OAS publications and mailed out 233 packages. The Librarian continues to serve as Technical Secretary of the Publications Board.

Preservation

The Library processed, microfilmed and distributed OAS Official Records Series for 1999 to University and Specialized Libraries. Sales contribute to the Library's complying with the mandate to seek external sources of funding, resulting in deposits to the Hipolito Unanue Account in the amount of \$35,411.

Archives and Records Management Services

Collaboration continued with the GSB Remodeling Team as offices in the General Services Building proceeded with the renovation process and the transfer of records to the Records Management Center.

The number of boxes stored with an outside contractor was 4,311. 315 boxes of obsolete records were destroyed. The Records Management Center received 670 boxes of semi-active records for storage; sent 275 empty boxes to offices for transfer of records; processed permanently valuable records and accessioned them into the Archives. ARMS has custody of 9, 971 cu ft of General Secretariat records.

Exhibits

Nine exhibits were mounted by the Columbus Memorial Library including Pan American Day Celebrations, Columbus Memorial Library's Anniversary, Main Building of the OAS, OAS Meetings in the Caribbean and Literary Caribbean, Women of the Americas, Simon Bolivar: Hero of the Americas, Legacy of Dr. Leo S. Rowe, Costumes of the Americas. The Library also prepared an exhibit on the Democratic Charter "Democracy: from AG resolution 1080 to the Democratic Charter" for the thirty-third regular session of the General Assembly.

Visits to the Columbus Memorial Library

Several visitors and researchers interested in the inter-American system came from various institutions including John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center- Fort Bragg, North Carolina, Corporación Andina de Fomento, World Bank Info-Center and Info shop, Universidad Torcuato Di Tella (Argentina), students participating in the Model OAS and from different universities and colleges in the USA.

Interns and Volunteers

The Columbus Memorial Library has benefited from the use of interns and volunteers assigned to specific projects to relieve the personnel shortage. The interns come from high schools and universities from the US, Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as from some of the Permanent Observer countries. Several guides and bibliographies have been completed with their assistance.

COORDINATION AND COOPERATION WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

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

Pursuant to the mandates from the regular sessions the General Assembly held in Bridgetown, Barbados and Santiago, Chile, and resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at previous sessions, the General Secretariat continued to coordinate with other organizations and regional entities. The coordination and cooperation were most intensive with the Secretariats of the United Nations, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), and the Secretariat of CARICOM. In the case of the United Nations and CARICOM specifically, one of the most important areas of cooperation continues to be resolution of the political difficulties in Haiti.

CARICOM

The partnership between the Secretariats of the OAS and CARICOM worked hardest on finding a solution to the political difficulties in Haiti, a member state of both organizations. In March 2003, Senator the Honorable Julian Hunte, Minister of External Affairs of Saint Lucia and then Chairman of the Council for Foreign and Community Relations (COFCOR), teamed up with OAS Assistant Secretary General Luigi Einaudi to head the OAS/CARICOM High-level Delegation to Haiti, which also included the Assistant Secretary-General, Foreign and Community Relations, CARICOM Secretariat. The CARICOM Secretariat assisted the OAS' efforts to arrange the delegation's visits and subsequent discussions and negotiations involving the political parties, civil society, and other Haitian entities. From that time forward, Minister of External Affairs Julian Hunte and the Assistant Secretary-General, Foreign and Community Relations, CARICOM Secretariat, have kept in regular contact with Assistant Secretary General Luigi Einaudi and other high-level OAS/GS officials, participating in the meetings the High-level Delegation held in Miami and in the special meeting the Permanent Council held on April 30, 2003, to hear the report of the High-level Delegation. The Secretary General attended and participated in the Conference of Heads of Government of CARICOM, held in Montego Bay, Jamaica, July 3 through 5. This meeting was an opportunity to talk with the Heads of Government about hemispheric issues and events, including the Haitian situation. The talks with the Heads of Government of CARICOM were undoubtedly one of the reasons why in August the OAS Secretary General decided to appoint a special envoy to promote dialogue in Haiti. It is important to note that CARICOM's five ministers of foreign affairs participated in the meeting of the OAS Secretary General's Group of Friends on Haiti, held on November 18, 2003.

The two secretariats continued their working relationship with a meeting between CARICOM's Secretary-General and the Assistant Secretary General of the OAS, where the two shared their thoughts about Haiti and their views on other regional issues, and discussed matters between the two secretariats.

The OAS General Secretariat and CARICOM also continue to conduct joint activities in the area of partnership and technical assistance. These involve a number of the units and departments at headquarters. Cooperation in the following areas has been particularly active: (i) reducing natural disasters, with joint activities by the OAS Unit for Sustainable Development and Environment (USDMA) and the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CEDERA); (ii) tourism development, between the Inter-Sectoral Unit on Tourism (UTUR) and the Caribbean

Tourism Organisation; (iii) the environment, featuring activities and projects conducted jointly with the Unit for Sustainable Development and Environment, and (iv) integral development, through the IACD.

United Nations

Uppermost on the agenda of cooperation between the United Nations and the OAS in the past year was again the efforts to find a solution to the political difficulties in Haiti. Information has been shared with the official in charge of OAS affairs at the United Nations and the Director of the Americas Division. In August, the OAS Special Envoy, Terence A. Todman, traveled to New York and met with the UN's Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs and other UN officials to discuss what the previous experience had been with similar missions in Haiti. A representative from the United Nations attended the thirty-third regular session of the OAS General Assembly in Santiago, Chile. The OAS General Secretariat has also kept up the cooperation between sector-specific departments of the OAS General Secretariat and their counterparts at the United Nations. As a result, projects have been conducted with the United Nations in a number of institutionally related areas, including assistance on a number of environment-related projects, which are supported by the Unit for Sustainable Development and Environment, and projects in the area of landmine removal, governance, and democracy, which are supported by the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy (UPD). The Secretary General attended the meeting of regional organizations that UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan organized. In fact, Secretary General César Gaviria chaired parts of this meeting during the month of July. The Organization of American States and the United Nations have also worked together to find a solution to the political difficulties in Venezuela, and on implementation of the Peace Accords in Guatemala.

Other organizations

The Organization of American States (OAS) has continued to look for programs and projects in partnership with other regional organizations with which it has formal cooperation agreements. These include the following: the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA); the Association of Caribbean States (ACS); and the Secretariat of the Central American Integration System (SICA). In the case of the ACS, the support has been reciprocal and both institutions have sent representatives to each other's annual meetings. Pursuant to a resolution adopted by the General Assembly, the OAS has partnered with the ACS on joint initiatives in substantive areas of cooperation. There were talks with ACS officials on the occasion of the regular session of the General Assembly held in Barbados. PAHO, IDB, IICA, and the Pan American Development Foundation take active part in the Inter-American Committee on Natural Disaster Reduction and partner with the GS/OAS in responding to natural disasters and reducing natural hazards, which has made the cooperative activities and the inter-American system as a whole that much more effective.

**EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT FOR INTEGRAL DEVELOPMENT/
INTER-AMERICAN AGENCY FOR COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

Under Article 98 of the Charter of the Organization, the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development (SEDI) is entrusted by the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI) with programs, projects, and activities in partnership for development. The Inter-American Agency for Cooperation and Development (IACD) is a subsidiary body of the CIDI, which determines the IACD's policies and guidelines at its regular and special meetings and at the sectoral meetings at the ministerial or equivalent level in its areas of competence. The IACD was established by the General Assembly in June 1999 and was launched in January 2000. Its purpose is to promote, coordinate, manage and facilitate the planning and execution of programs, projects and activities in partnership for development in the OAS, in accordance with the Strategic Plan for Partnership for Development.

In 2003, the IACD continued its efforts to build its capacities to implement high-quality development projects that are responsive to the vital development needs of the member States, and to better position the countries to raise external financing and to be more resourceful and effective in managing their resources.

The following activities are representative of the main thrusts of activity during this period: the successful initial phase of the Educational Portal of the Americas, to bring distance learning opportunities to the poorest and most underserved rural areas of the Hemisphere; the growth of the Fellowships and Training Program, which saw a large increase in the number of fellowships awarded in 2003; consolidation of the Government Best Practices Program, whose purpose is to encourage horizontal cooperation among the governments of the region; various agreements with the private sector; and the strengthening of the Special Multilateral Fund of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (FEMCIDI).

Another area of responsibility is development policy. There, the IACD continues to work with the units of the OAS General Secretariat on their joint commitments to provide support to the ministerial meetings held under the umbrella of CIDI. It was particularly involved in the preparations for and conduct of the regular meeting of CIDI, the meetings of the Inter-American Committees, and the Ministerial Meetings in the areas of tourism, labor, education, culture and social development.

The Trust for the Americas also falls under the IACD umbrella. The Trust is a non-profit foundation with 501c(3) status. 2003 was a particularly successful year for the Trust, as it raised around two million dollars for social development projects across the hemisphere. These funds are contributions and donations from the public and private sectors. More detailed information about the Trust for the Americas is available in its section of this report.

Technical Cooperation

Special Multilateral Fund of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (FEMCIDI)

FEMCIDI Execution 2003. A total of 154 project profiles were received in the 2003 FEMCIDI programming round. As of May 31, the deadline for the member States to make their contributions and specify how those contributions were to be divided among the accounts, pledges to FEMCIDI for 2003 totaled US \$8,228,916.61. As in years past, the number of projects submitted and the amount of funding requested far exceeded the amounts pledged, which meant that some projects had to be left out, not just because their technical quality was not up to standard but also because the resources to fund them were lacking.

The project profiles that met the established selection requirements were sent on to the members of the Nonpermanent Specialized Committees – CENPES 2002 and to the specialized units and offices of the OAS General Secretariat, to request their technical opinions on the proposals. The Executive Secretariat took those opinions and the pledge level available in each sector account to identify those project profiles that, judging by their technical merits, could best serve the development needs of the member States. The result was that 134 projects submitted by 33 countries were included in the Preliminary Proposed Programming. The VI Meeting of the CENPES then examined the proposed programming, giving 100 projects a favorable recommendation.

At its Eleventh Meeting, held November 20, 2003, the IACD Management Board approved the Programming of Activities in Partnership for Development FEMCIDI 2003. That programming includes 98 of the projects recommended by the CENPES, plus one more project whose addition was approved by the Management Board. The total amount approved for project execution was US \$9,226,346, distributed as follows:

SECTOR ACCOUNT	NO. OF PROJECTS	APPROVED AMOUNT (US\$)
Trade	10	798,602
Social Development	13	937,289
Education	27	3,026,117
Culture	4	131,843
Science and Technology	22	2,047,984
Democracy	6	382,569
Tourism	6	761,406
Environment	10	1,012,842
TOTAL	99	9,226,346

FEMCIDI Execution 2002. In the first months of the year, execution got underway on the 93 projects recommended by the CENPES at their meeting of October 2002 and approved by the IACD Management Board in November 2002, for a total of US \$6,549,094. The following itemizes the distribution of those projects by sector account:

SECTOR ACCOUNT	NO. OF PROJECTS	AMOUNT APPROVED (US\$)
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Trade	8	695,000
Social Development	18	848,712
Education	23	1,631,565
Culture	5	153,518
Science and Technology	21	1,598,245
Democracy	5	412,373
Tourism	4	438,316
Environment	9	771,365
TOTAL	93	6,549,094

New Cooperation Mechanisms (Best Practices)

One of the objectives targeted under the IACD Business Plan is to institute new project-development procedures by applying the best practices that exist in the countries of the Americas and elsewhere. The new procedures must also open avenues to private sector and civil society participation in the inter-American initiatives in technical cooperation and training.

The programs that have been developed target the following objectives: helping governments identify opportunities to take action, lessons learned and best practices in government procurement, electronic government, municipal development and occupational health and safety – corporate social responsibility; the development of technical cooperation and training programs with the best practices institutions; preparation of projects that apply best practices; finding co-funding to build up institutional capacities and to prepare projects that apply best practices, working with institutions in the public and private sectors.

The IACD's efforts to forge partnerships with the private sector began to bear fruit in the form of sizeable contributions from private entities that helped to further the development objectives of the OAS member States. The contributions went directly to the governments as contributions in kind (services, product licenses, training, and so on), valued at some US\$ 11.12 million. Salient among these are the following: the agreement with Microsoft (a grant of some 6 million) on issues relating to municipal development, government procurement and tele-center management; the agreement with Stewart Tile (US\$1.5 million) for issues related to cadastre, property registration and property taxation; the agreement with Axesnet (for just under US\$ 1 million) on municipal development.

E-Government and Government Procurement Program

The IACD-OAS E-Government Program serves as a catalyst for initiatives in e-government in Latin America and the Caribbean and provides the governments of these regions with comprehensive support at every stage of the process of introducing electronic government. In 2003, more than 200 people were trained in the basics of e-government via the Educational Portal of the Americas. Through its E-Gov Best Practices Forum, the IACD and directors and leaders of e-government in Chile, Canada and Brazil have shared their successes and the lessons learned.

Thanks to support from FEMCIDI and in partnership with the Institute for Connectivity in the Americas, representatives of various countries in the region got an in-depth understanding of Chile's e-government and government-procurement practices. Finally, steps were taken to begin implementing the agreement with Microsoft to offer municipal portals to strengthen the e-

government capability of various municipalities in the region and to offer State-procurement solutions patterned after the Brazilian experience.

Municipal Development Program

This program's objective is to provide technical assistance and training to municipalities in the member States, to improve the administrative and technical means they have available to provide services related to cadastre and registration and electronic government.

On the subject of e-government, partnerships have been cultivated with businesses in the private sector –specifically Microsoft and Axesnet- to promote the use of e-government tools, particularly municipal portals and procurement systems. Support has been provided to a number of institutions to help them devise an e-government strategy. A number of municipal officials from the region took part in the e-government course that the IACD gave via the Educational Portal of the Americas. There has been a direct exchange among institutions on the subject of property registration and more than 100 participants took part in a regional workshop conducted for municipalities in the Andean region. As a result, a number of the participating municipalities have put together profiles for modernization projects, forming a portfolio upwards of US\$ 31 million. The activities in the Andean region have been carried out with the support of the Andean Development Corporation (ADC).

Occupational Health and Safety – Corporate Social Responsibility

In conjunction with the Unit of Social Development and Education, the IACD is developing a program aimed at helping the Ministries of Labor in the region modernize services provided to workers and make those services more efficient.

At the XIII Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor (CIMT), a portfolio was presented consisting of 16 consolidated occupational health and safety programs that are based on potential international cooperation activities. With this in mind, the IACD and the USDE have been called upon to coordinate a workshop on occupational health and safety in the context of regional integration processes. The workshop will be held in San Salvador in April 2004. On the partnership front, the IACD has also established a dynamic relationship with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) and the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EASHW) with which the Agency signed a cooperation agreement under which the OAS becomes part of EASHW's sophisticated information network. The first project is to develop a joint Web page that will serve as a focal point of occupational health and safety in the Americas.

The program developed by the IACD and *Foro EMPRESA* on corporate social responsibility was approved by the IDB's Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF) and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). The program will build up expertise and infrastructure in this area in four pilot countries of the region (Brazil, Peru, El Salvador, Chile) and will begin in 2004. The IACD also organized a session on corporate social responsibility during the XIII CIMT to inject this issue into the ministers' political dialogue. The IACD also co-sponsored a seminar in the Caribbean region to further this issue.

Development Of Human Potential

Fellowships and training

Through the IACD the OAS administers one of the region's largest multinational programs for postgraduate and undergraduate fellowships and fellowships for specialized professional refresher training, in educational and training centers in the OAS member States and permanent-observer States. In 2003 this program, which is managed by the Department of Fellowships and Training, provided more than 1200 fellowships for classroom or distance education, which went to deserving individuals in the OAS member States.

New Initiatives: To increase opportunities for educational and professional development, the Department of Fellowships and Training has introduced a number of new initiatives designed to expand the traditional OAS fellowship program by using its resources more resourcefully and to greater effect and marshaling external resources. The introduction of electronic fellowships for distance studies, the ecology fellowship program conducted in conjunction with the Fulbright Program, alliances with universities in the member States and permanent observer States of the OAS have significantly lowered the cost of each fellowship that the OAS awards, which has in turn generated a greater number of educational and professional-development opportunities. To lower costs even more, efforts are being made to establish alliances with any national fellowship programs that might exist in the member States, to increase contributions from the observer States' development agencies, to raise funding through grants and to establish partnerships with corporations in the member States.

Consortium of Universities. One of the most effective initiatives implemented has been the formation of a broad consortium of universities that collaborate with the OAS in co-sponsoring fellowships and training programs. This has multiplied the OAS fellowship program's funds by leveraging them with the resources of the universities that participate in this consortium. To date, agreements have been signed with more than 40 universities in Brazil, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, the United States, Uruguay and Venezuela. Negotiations are currently in progress with universities in Argentina, Guatemala and the University of the West Indies.

Capital Fund for the OAS Fellowship Programs. Establishment of a capital fund for the fellowships program and approval of the Statutes of the Capital Fund for OAS Fellowship and Training Programs, based on resolution AG/RES. 1460 (XXVII-O/97), is another important OAS initiative to open up opportunities for educational and professional development. This fund is designed so that the interest generated will be used to support the objectives, procedures and practices of the OAS Fellowship Programs. The fund currently has US\$5.5 million, consisting of OAS resources and contributions from member States. When the Statutes for this Fund were approved the OAS' Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI) instructed the General Secretariat to set up other fellowship funds, with contributions from external sources. It also instructed the General Secretariat to encourage the member States and the observer States to make contributions to finance growth of the OAS Fellowship and Training Programs – including, *inter alia*, contributions to the Capital Fund for OAS Fellowship and Training Programs.

Corporate Fellowships Program. In response to the mandate to raise funds from outside sources, the Department of Fellowships and Training designed the Corporate Fellowships Program –created to establish partnerships with the private sector by enlisting them in activities that underscore corporate social responsibility. The program is innovative and highly flexible, as it combines the Organization's vast administrative network with resources from corporations and individuals, in a training effort that takes into consideration the countries' development needs and the interests of the participating corporations. In June 2003, the OAS Secretary General and the President of Chile signed a cooperation agreement to promote this initiative with Chile's private sector. This has opened doors to new contacts in that sector and is the first of a series of similar initiatives that the OAS plans in other countries.

Fellowships for Academic Studies. Every year, the OAS Fellowships and Training Program maintains over 500 fellowships for long-term academic studies and research in universities throughout the region. The studies are to be in the priority areas of the OAS and CIDI, namely: Social Development and Generation of Productive Employment, Economic Diversification and Integration, Open Markets and Market Access, Scientific Development and the Sharing and Transfer of Technology, Strengthening of Democratic Institutions, Sustainable Tourism Development, Sustainable Development and Environment, and Culture.

a) Postgraduate Fellowships: This Program grants fellowships for postgraduate studies (master's or doctorate) in institutions of higher learning in the region. The number of students pursuing advanced degrees who have been recipients of these OAS fellowships has been increasing steadily. Nevertheless, the demand for educational opportunities to provide the human resources needed to strengthen institutional capacities in new areas is growing exponentially. This issue is one that the Summits of the Americas have devoted particular attention to, and has also been addressed in OAS mandates. In 2003, the OAS awarded a total of 505 fellowships for postgraduate on-campus studies in institutions of higher learning: of these, 333 were new fellowships and 172 were extensions of existing fellowships. That represents a 45.1% increase over the 2002 figure.

b) Undergraduate Fellowships: This program awards fellowships to eligible students to complete the last two years of undergraduate education for a bachelor's degree or the equivalent and applies to the English-speaking countries of the Caribbean. Resolution AG/RES. 1387 (XXVI-O/96) extended the benefits of this program to Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Bolivia, Ecuador and Paraguay, provided funding from outside sources was obtained. In 2003, the OAS awarded 49 undergraduate for on-campus undergraduate studies: of these 25 were new fellowships, while the remaining 24 were extensions.

Professional Development Fellowships. The professional development fellowships are opportunities to update one's professional expertise in areas of specialization related to the priority areas of the OAS and CIDI. These fellowships are offered by the governments of the member States and permanent-observer States of the OAS, regional or international organizations, public and private agencies, and institutions of higher learning, through and with OAS co-funding.

These fellowships are either for on-campus or distance training, in programs offered on educational institutions or online, either through the Educational Portal of the Americas and other institutions.

Professional development fellowships are also offered to perform specific programs of studies proposed by the OAS Committees and Inter-American Commissions or by technical units of the General Secretariat to further their respective activities. This type of fellowship is most common in the area of telecommunications, international law, human rights and journalism. In 2003, the OAS awarded a total of 660 fellowships for professional development.

Leo S. Rowe Fund. The Leo S. Rowe Pan American Funds provides interest-free loans to eligible students from Latin America and the Caribbean for undergraduate, graduate and professional development courses in the United States. The Fund also provides loans to OAS staff and their dependents. In 2003, the Fund Committee provided 112 loans to students, for the sum of \$747,264, and 33 loans to OAS staff, for the sum of \$187,959.

In accordance with its Statutes, the Rowe Fund is administered by a Committee of the Permanent Council. Efforts have been made to make management of the loans more efficient and the loans more accessible to deserving students. The Rowe Fund has considered and worked with applicants who have not been able to put up the traditional type of guarantee and that have offered institutions in their countries as guarantors of the loan. In the largest operation of this kind, the General Secretariat signed an agreement with Ecuador's Foundation for Science and Technology (FUNDACYT) and LASPAU, enabling 18 students from Ecuador who came to study in the United States to receive loans from the Rowe Fund.

Training of human resources using new information technologies

In 2003, the IACD helped to train 2,850 students from the region through online and multimedia courses, programs and workshops. The assistance to finance these events –in the form of either total or partial aid- was awarded to 2,600 of the students who participated in the programs, which were offered by way of the Educational Portal of the Americas or the Institute of Advanced Studies of the Americas (INEAM). During this time, approximately US\$ 1,999,900 was received, in cash and in kind, from public and private institutions to promote distance education and professional training in the region.

Educational Portal of the Americas (www.educoea.org). Launched in September 2001, the Educational Portal of the Americas is a tool to strengthen and diversify the training of human resources in the Americas by using the Internet system. The Portal promotes the use of distance education and gives the citizens of this hemisphere access to educational and training opportunities offered by high-caliber institutions. To date, the Educational Portal of the Americas has had just over 100 million visits from 185 countries in the world. Since the time it was launched the number of users has increased at a rate of 18% monthly.

In May 2003, the Portal introduced its Virtual Classroom, a virtual and interactive environment that allows users to participate in educational activities and services similar to those they would have found at a traditional academic institution. Since then, the Virtual Classroom has trained 578 elementary- and secondary-school teachers and principals in a Spanish-language course called "Calidad de la Educación Básica," and another 474 teachers and principals in the Portuguese-language version of the course. Some 210 government officials received instruction in a course titled "Introduction to the Concepts of Electronic Government."

During the year, work got underway on the instructional and multimedia design of other courses to be offered in 2004, including: "Quality in Basic Education" (English version), "Teachers as counselors," "Food Education," and "Mathematical Intelligence." Courses are also being developed in conjunction with the Young Business Trust and with the Inter-American Development Bank.

In the second half of the year, the digital version of *La Educación: Revista Interamericana de Educación Superior* was designed. It will be published online twice yearly and initially will be offered free-of-charge to the users of the region, starting in early 2004.

Negotiations also got underway and/or continued with a number of universities and academic institutions throughout the region, to coordinate activities to strengthen education and professional training in the Americas by using information technology, and to request resources to support training activities for the region. Special emphasis was placed on training activities for the Caribbean region. Specifically, a technical meeting was held with representatives from the

English-speaking Caribbean to formulate strategies for the “Quality in Basic Education” course to be offered via the Portal’s Virtual Classroom in mid 2004.

The Portal received more than 11,000 inquiries, which were answered promptly.

Institute of Advanced Studies for the Americas (INEAM). The Institute of Advanced Studies for the Americas (INEAM) is an IACD initiative to better train our human resources by using the new information technologies. Specifically, INEAM is a virtual campus that offers education and professional training that takes a multisectoral and interdisciplinary approach.

In 2003, the OAS Institute of Advanced Studies for the Americas (INEAM) established its Board of Directors (*Consejo Directivo*), composed of the following members: Patricio Aylwin Azócar, former President of Chile; Eugenio Beaufrand, Vice-President of Microsoft for Latin America; Cristovam Buarque, former Minister of Education of Brazil; Lawrence D. Carrington, Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Director of the School of Continuing Studies of the University of the West Indies, Jamaica; Leonel Fernández, former President of the Dominican Republic and President of the Global Fund for Democracy and Development (GFDD); Rafael Rangel Sostmann, President of the Technological and Higher Studies Institute of Monterrey (ITESM), Monterrey, Mexico; Viviane Senna, President of the Ayrton Senna Foundation, San Paolo, Brazil; and Fernando Villalonga, President of the Telefónica Foundation, Madrid, Spain.

INEAM also installed the Inter-American Committee for Educational Evaluation and Accreditation to advise the Inter-American Organization of Higher Education and the IACD regarding the academic quality of the distance education programs offered by universities and higher education institutions in the region, so that they can be recognized and certified by INEAM. This committee comprises persons of high academic standing in the field of inter-American education and accreditation.

Within the INEAM framework, the IACD sponsored Virtual Educa 2003, the Fourth International Conference on Education, Professional Development, and New Technologies. The Conference was held in Miami, Florida, in June 2003 and was attended by 1,215 participants from Latin America, Europe, and the United States. It afforded educators and business leaders an opportunity to analyze the impact of ICTs and e-learning on education and society. Preparations also got underway for Virtual Educa 2004, to be held in Barcelona, Spain in June.

A major effort was also made last year to elicit external funding from public sector and private sector donors in order to guarantee the sustainability of the Portal. This involved preparing financing proposals, letters of intention, communications, as well as visits to over 150 foundations, NGOs, and other private sector entities. However, to obtain external funding there has to be a strong group of experts in this field. Consequently, efforts were made to establish a 501c3, a structure similar to that of a donor foundation to attract and foster the participation of leading specialists in this area and to facilitate the making of grants for the activities of both the Educational Portal of the Americas and the Institute of Advanced Studies for the Americas (INEAM)

SECRETARIAT FOR LEGAL AFFAIRS

The Secretariat for Legal Affairs assists the Organization's organs by preparing studies, documents and legal opinions and by providing technical secretariat services. It collaborates in the preparation of treaties, agreements, and other international instruments and is in charge of legal procedures related to the signing of those agreements and deposit of the instruments of ratification when the General Secretariat is depository. It also provides technical and secretariat services to the Inter-American Juridical Committee and to the Administrative Tribunal. The Secretariat was reorganized under Executive Order No. 96-4 of May 13, 1996. It now focuses on three areas: development of public and private international law, cooperation activities on law-related matters, and information and dissemination in matters of law. On July 31, 2002, the Secretary General of the Organization issued Executive Order No. 02-08, related to the establishment of a "Technical Secretariat for Legal Cooperation Mechanisms," to replace the Department of Legal Cooperation and Information. Therefore, the Secretariat for Legal Affairs is now composed of the Executive Office of the Assistant Secretary, the Department of International Law, the Technical Secretariat for Legal Cooperation Mechanisms and the Secretariat of the Administrative Tribunal.

Executive Office of the Assistant Secretary for Legal Affairs

The Executive Office of the Assistant Secretary for Legal Affairs focused on its main functions of supervising, planning, providing advisory services and coordinating and managing the legal affairs area. One of this Office's main functions and responsibilities is to help develop and codify all areas of international law in the inter-American realm by formulating recommendations, conducting studies and legal activities. This Office thus contributed to the codification of international law and to development in the area of legal cooperation and information.

The Office supported and supervised the administration of the Secretariat of the Administrative Tribunal (TRIBAD). As indicated in the Secretary General's Annual Report for 2002, the Secretariat for Legal Affairs was reorganized under Executive Order No. 02-08. The fundamental purpose of the reorganization was to adjust the functions of the then Department of Legal Cooperation and Information by establishing the Technical Secretariat for Legal Cooperation Mechanisms, which is charged with providing legal services to the various mechanisms created within the Organization to provide services and strengthen legal cooperation activities that the member States conduct through various entities or mechanisms. These include the Meetings of Ministers of Justice or of Ministers or Attorneys General of the Americas (REMJA) and the groups of government experts, whose conclusions and recommendations it helps to implement; the Follow-up Mechanism for the Implementation of the Inter-American Convention against Corruption (Anti-corruption Mechanism); the Consultative Committee of the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and Other Related Materials (CIFTA Committee), and the Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism (CICTE).

In the activities it carried out related to its function of contributing to the development and codification of international law, this Office has participated in a number of conferences and meetings held on issues that figure on the OAS' own juridical agenda, and has prepared a number

of publications and papers aimed at highlighting the constant juridical development work that the OAS conducts.

In the period covered in this report, the Office of the Assistant Secretary published an article in Fordham International Law Journal on the Inter-American Convention Against Terrorism: "Preventing, Punishing and Eliminating Terrorism in the Western Hemisphere: A Post 911 Inter-American Treaty," 26 Fordham Intl L.J. 1619 (June 2003). Other papers included:

"In Defense of Democracy," an article slated for publication in 2003 in the University of Miami's Inter-American Law Review.

The New Inter-American Themes in Private Law in the Area of Commercial, Financial, and Environmental Law: Results of the OAS' Sixth Inter-American Specialized Conference on Private International Law, currently being edited and to be published in early 2004.

Presentation at the First Meeting of National Points of Contact of the Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism, held in Washington, D.C., in July 2003.

Some Trends in International Law in the Early XXI Century, International Law Workshops, Lima, Peru, November 2003.

- The Organization of American States (OAS) and the Struggle against Terrorism: The Inter-American Convention Against Terrorism and the Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism (CICTE), October 2003.
- The Inter-American Experience in Modernizing and Improving Justice in the Americas, April 2003, Panama City, Panama.

To that same end, i.e. furthering the development and codification of international law, this Office has taken part in a number of international events to publicize and promote the OAS' activities in the area of law and to disseminate its juridical activities through that kind of participation and through activities carried out in coordination and cooperation with other international organizations and domestic organizations in the member States.

The Executive Office of the Assistant Secretary attended and provided legal services to the plenary and General Committee of the thirty-third regular session of the General Assembly, held in Santiago, Chile, June 2003.

The Office provided technical support to the first regular session of the Inter-American Juridical Committee, held in Rio de Janeiro in March 2003, and its second regular session, held in August of that year. At those sessions, legal advisory services were provided on topics related to the Committee's agenda: applicable law and competency of international jurisdiction in cases involving extra-contractual civil liability; cartels under competition law in the Americas; the Seventh Inter-American Specialized Conference on Private International Law – CIDIP-VII; improvement of the systems for the administration of justice in the Americas; access to justice; the International Criminal Court; juridical aspects of inter-American security; application of the Inter-American Democratic Charter; preparation of a draft inter-American convention against racism and all forms of discrimination and intolerance; freedom of information: access to and protection of personal data and information; and legal aspects of compliance within the States with decisions of international courts or tribunals or other international organs with jurisdictional functions.

The Office of the Assistant Secretary participated in the International Law Workshops held in Lima in November 2003. There it presented the document titled "Some Trends in International Law in the Early XXI Century" and another on the results of the workshops.

This Office participated in various meetings and seminars, including the following: the Fourth Preparatory Meeting of the Third Regular Session (CICTE), January 21 to 25, 2003, San Salvador, El Salvador; Meeting on Modernization of Panama's Justice System, April 9 through 13, 2003, Panama City, Panama; OAS Meeting on Mutual Legal Assistance in the Hemisphere, Ministers of Justice, April 30 – May 2, 2003, Ottawa, Canada; Meeting of the Group of Government Experts on Cyber-Crime, June 23 and 24, 2003, Washington, D.C.; First Meeting of the National Points of Contact of the Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism (CICTE), Washington, D.C., July 15, 2003; Symposium on bijuralism, Department of Justice, Toronto, Canada, October 16 and 17, 2003; Special Conference on Security, Mexico, D.F., October 27 and 28, 2003; United Nations – Sixth Committee, Legal Matters, New York, November 3 through 5, 2003; National Conference “Inter-American Convention Against Corruption and its application in Suriname,” Paramaribo, Suriname, December 13 through 15, 2003; and the I Congress of Culture and Comparative Legal Systems, Mexico, D.F., February 9 through 14, 2004.

This Office also provided advisory assistance on specific matters to various bodies of the OAS Permanent Council. The following are mentioned by way of example: amendment of the Statute and Rules of Procedure of the Permanent Council; amendment of the Statute and Rules of Procedure of CICTE; the work of the Committee on Hemispheric Security; coordination between the Secretariat for Legal Affairs and the Justice Studies Center of the Americas; and the Working Group on Terrorism.

The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Legal Affairs renewed the agreement to continue liaison between the OAS and the American Bar Association's Section on International Law and Practice. It also agreed to maintain a formal relationship with the Council of Europe's Legal Affairs Office.

Lastly, the Office of the Assistant Secretary has maintained contacts, cooperative relations, liaison activities and exchanges with numerous institutions, including the following: Georgetown University, George Washington University, American University, American Society of International Law, American Law Institute (ALI), the World Bank's Legal Counsel, the Inter-American Bar Association, the North South Center and the American Bar Association, International Law and Practice Section, *Panel “Visión Futura de América Latina”*, the CATO Institute, and the Annual Meeting of the American Society of International Law. This Office has always cooperated actively with the General Secretariat's Internship Program and has selected a number of attorneys.

Department of International Law

Advisory services to the organs, agencies and entities of the Organization

In 2003, the Department of International Law provided advisory and legal services in the field of public and private international law to the General Assembly at its thirty-third regular session, held in Santiago, Chile in June 2003, to the Permanent Council and its Committees on Juridical and Political Affairs (CAJP) and Hemispheric Security, and on the statutes, regulations and rules of procedure governing those bodies.

The Department of International Law advised the CAJP with regard to the American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Human Rights Defenders, the Inter-American Program for the Development of International Law, the follow-up activities on the Model Inter-American Law on Secured Transactions and Uniform Through Bills of Lading for the International Carriage of Goods by Road, preparations for the Seventh Inter-American Specialized Conference on Private International Law, the study on the rights and the care of persons under any form of detention or imprisonment, prevention of racism and all forms of discrimination and intolerance, protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, access to public information and strengthening democracy, the international program of cooperation to prevent and remedy cases of international abduction of minors by one of their parents, the study on individuals' access to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights and the evaluation of the performance of the inter-American system to protect and promote human rights so as to improve it and strengthen it.

Special note should be made of the advisory assistance that the Department is providing on the preparations for the next Inter-American Specialized Conference on Private International Law (CIDIP-VII) convoked by the General Assembly at its most recent regular session. It has been particularly helpful in the process whereby the agenda topics that that meeting will address begin to be determined. Extensive studies have been done that organize the current status of the *travaux préparatoires* of the American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

In the Committee on Hemispheric Security, this Department provided advisory assistance with preparations for the Special Conference on Security held in Mexico, October 27 and 28, 2003, in particular the final report, the final declaration and the reports of the rapporteurs of the General Committee and the Plenary. The frame of reference of these advisory services was the *Declaration of Bridgetown: The Multidimensional Approach to Hemispheric Security*, adopted at the thirty-second regular session of the General Assembly, held in Barbados in June 2002.

As Secretariat of the Inter-American Juridical Committee, in 2003 the Department of International Law provided technical and administrative support during the two regular sessions the Committee held in 2003, the first in March and the second in August. It prepared the annotated agenda for each session, in which it did a history of each item included on the Committee's agenda. It also drafted documents containing a summary of the General Assembly's mandates to the Committee. The Department provided its assistance when the respective draft resolutions were drawn up. It collaborated in publishing the reports presented by the Committee members and compiled summaries recounting the proceedings of the Committee's meetings. It was also charged with preparing the Committee's Annual Report to the OAS General Assembly. During the Committee's recess, the Department assisted with the work of the rapporteurs in developing their respective topics; it organized the Committee members' participation as observers at various forums and carried out the mandates contained in the Committee's resolutions and decisions. It collaborated on all matters related to the organization of the Committee's centennial, which will be in 2006, and on implementation of the Agreement

between the Government of Brazil and the OAS General Secretariat granting a portion of the space in Itamaraty Palace to the Inter-American Juridical Committee. The Department of International Law also assisted the Permanent Council's Committee on Juridical and Political Affairs with preparation of its observations and recommendations on that body's annual report of its 2002 activities. It collaborated in the organization of the Fifth Joint Meeting with the Legal Advisors of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the OAS Member States, held during the Inter-American Juridical Committee's LXIII regular session, August 25 and 26, 2003.

Development of International Law

In compliance with the mandates regarding the Inter-American Program for the Development of International Law and acting within the boundaries of the competencies and functions of the Department of International Law, the latter organized and/or participated in the following activities during the period covered in this report.

International Law Course. The Department of International Law, in conjunction with the Inter-American Juridical Committee, organized the XXX International Law Course, held from August 4 through 29, 2003. In attendance were some 24 professors from various countries of the Americas and Europe, 29 OAS fellowship recipients chosen from over 70 applicants, and 25 students who paid their fees out-of-pocket. The course's main theme was "International law and maintenance of international peace and security". The course was held at the *Centro Empresarial Rio*, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The Department of International Law prepared the course announcement and program, contacted the respective professors and arranged their transportation and stay in Rio, selected the fellowship recipients, provided them with all the information needed to participate and with academic and personal support during their stay in Rio, and evaluated their performance to obtain the respective certificate of completion.

International Law Workshops. From November 17 through 20, 2003, Lima, Peru was the site of the International Law Workshops. The Department of International Law organized the event in conjunction with the Peruvian Foreign Ministry's Diplomatic Academy.

Participating in the workshops were 13 professors of international law from Peru and abroad. The work program featured the following topics: private international law; public international law; challenges on the XXI century horizon (integration, human rights, the inter-American system, general public international law) and looked at the method of instruction used in programs in public and private international law and how these programs should be modernized.

Legal Publications

During the period covered in this report, the Department of International Law edited, published and circulated the following volumes pertaining to the activities described here:

- *XXIX International Law Course*, held in August 2002. Its central theme was "Natural Resources, Environment and International Law." The volume is composed of 15 papers (554 pages).
- *International Law Workshops*, Florianópolis, Brazil, December 2002. This is a collection of the papers presented and the subsequent debates among the professors of public and private international law, and the final conclusions and recommendations (520 pages).
- *Thematic Series on International Law Courses: Private International Law in the Americas (1974-2001)*. This volume contains the lectures delivered from 1974 to 2000 on the inter-American system. The volume is in two parts and has five articles grouped

by author. A chronological index and a topic index appear at the end of the second part (the volume has 2278 pages).

Information online and on CD-ROM

Information online

The Department of International Law inaugurated its Internet page with relevant information on the Department's areas of work and the activities of the Inter-American Juridical Committee.

Spanish:www.oas.org/dil/esp/Departamento_de_Derecho_Internacional.htm;

English:www.oas.org/dil/Department_of_International_Law.htm

CD-ROM

A third edition was put together of the CD-ROM containing information on the activities of the Secretariat for Legal Affairs (Office of the Assistant Secretary, Technical Secretariat for Legal Cooperation Mechanisms, the Administrative Tribunal and the Department of International Law) and the Department of Legal Services.

Model Assemblies

The XXII Regular Session of the OAS Model Assembly for universities was held in Querétaro, Mexico, March 23 through 28, 2003. The Department of International Law sent an attorney as part of the team of consultants in charge of reviewing the draft resolutions and following the debates. The Department also participated in the XXIII Session of the Model Assembly for Secondary Schools, held in Washington, December 3 through 6, 2003.

Participation in international forums

The attorneys from the Department of International Law gave presentations at a variety of forums. Their purpose was to describe the juridical activities carried on within the Organization:

- Meeting of the Central American and Caribbean Basin Inter-Parliamentary Commission on International Issues, Economic Matters, Regional Integration and Peace (San Salvador, El Salvador).
- I Meeting of the Inter-Parliamentary Forum of the Americas, Special Group on Terrorism (Mexico, D.F.)
- XI South American International Meeting on Law (Florianópolis, Brazil)
- Annual Seminar of the Mexican Academy of Private International Law (Tijuana, Mexico)
- Annual Meeting of the International Law Section of the American Bar Association (Washington, DC)
- Course on the International Standards in Search and Seizure, *Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México* (Mexico, D.F.)
- OAS Model Assembly, Querétaro, (Mexico, D.F.)

Inter-American Treaties and Bilateral Cooperation Agreements

Under Article 112.f of the Charter of the Organization, the General Secretariat is depository of the inter-American treaties and agreements and of their instruments of ratification. Also, under Article 112.h, the General Secretariat is to establish relations of cooperation, whenever the

General Assembly or councils so decide, with the specialized organizations and other national and international bodies.

Under Executive Order No. 96-04 of May 1996, concerning reorganization of the Secretariat for Legal Affairs, one of the functions of the Department of International Law is to be the depository of the inter-American multilateral treaties, which is one of the General Secretariat's responsibilities under the Charter of the Organization.

The Department of International Law is also depository of the bilateral agreements that the organs of the OAS conclude with the member states or with other inter-American agencies or national entities in the member countries or observers, as well as agreements signed between member states where the General Secretariat is the designated depository.

In the case of inter-American multilateral treaties, in the 2003 the Department made certain that the formalities and procedures required for signature, deposit of instruments and/or accession, formulation of reservations and other statements, denunciation and other legal actions such as designation of the central authority vis-à-vis inter-American multilateral treaties, were observed. The procedures carried out involved taking requests from the member states, reviewing the documents presented (full powers, instruments of ratification and/or accession), coordinating with the Protocol Office, the Secretary General's Office, the Office of the Assistant Secretary General, and the Public Information Office for purposes of the respective ceremony, preparation of minutes and speeches, making a record of the act, and notifying the member states and interested organs and agencies.

Legal advisory services were provided to representatives of the member States and to the organs, agencies and other entities of the Organization on the question of the formalities and procedures involved. In 2003, the Department participated in 2 signings, 28 deposits of instruments of ratification and accession, and 9 designations of central authorities.

The Department also prepared certifications and supplied up-to-date and complete information on those treaties (their texts, current status of signature and ratification, and so on) at the request of the governments of the member states, the permanent missions and observers to the OAS, organs, agencies, and entities of the Organizations, offices of the OAS General Secretariat in the member states, other governmental and nongovernmental international organizations and private individuals in general and also by way of its Internet page.

In the case of bilateral agreements, in 2003 the Department of International Law registered 122 cooperation agreements concluded during the period, in a variety of areas. In most cases, the Department did a final review of the bilateral cooperation agreement before it was signed.

During the period covered in the present report, changes have been recorded in inter-American treaties for which the General Secretariat serves as depository. They appear in Annex C of the present report.

Technical Secretariat for Legal Cooperation Mechanisms

During the period covered in this report, the Office of the Assistant Secretary, Technical Secretariat for Legal Cooperation Mechanisms continued to serve as advisor and technical secretariat of the organs, agencies and entities of the OAS, particularly the Permanent Council's committees and working groups, in those areas within its competence.

Advisory and technical secretariat services were provided to carry out the recommendations of the Meetings of Ministers of Justice of the Americas. The IV Meeting of Ministers of Justice or of Ministers or Attorneys General of the Americas (REMJA) recommended that a number of groups of experts be convened on the subjects indicated below. The first of these groups is the group of government experts in mutual legal and judicial cooperation in criminal matters, including the central authorities for the inter-American treaties on legal and judicial cooperation in this field. That group met in Ottawa, Canada, April 30 through May 2. The second group of experts convened for the Third Meeting of the Government Experts on Cyber-Crime, held at Organization headquarters, June 23 and 24, 2003. Thirdly, the first meeting of the authorities responsible for penitentiary and prison policy in the member States of the OAS was held at Organization headquarters, October 16 and 17, 2003.

A number of documents were adopted as a result of these meetings, containing recommendations or action plans on each topic discussed. Those will be presented to the next REMJA. During those meetings, decisions were made to create and/or strengthen electronic networks for sharing, via the Internet, information and cooperation on the subjects of cyber-crime, mutual legal and judicial cooperation, penitentiary and prison policies and extradition. The Secretariat also created a Web page on REMJA topics, its working papers, decisions and the measures conducted to carry out the recommendations that come from these meetings.

The area continued to serve as Technical Secretariat of the Follow-up Mechanism for the Implementation of the Inter-American Convention against Corruption. This mechanism was adopted by the States parties on June 4, 2001, on the occasion of the OAS General Assembly. The Committee of Experts created as one of the organs of this Mechanism has successfully held its first four meetings. As part of the work slated for the first round of analysis, it approved eight reports from member countries of the Mechanism, on the implementation of those provisions of the Convention that were singled out for this first round.

In addition, the Technical Secretariat has been actively involved in the cooperation activities that support the work being done within the framework of this Mechanism. Particular mention should be made of the activities related to the General Secretariat's program, which is analyzing the laws in effect in every participating country so as to help bring them in line with the commitments undertaken in the Inter-American Convention against Corruption. During the period covered in this report, this program focused on the Caribbean countries and Brazil. Similar forums have been organized in more than 12 South and Central American countries.

The Technical Secretariat has been providing similar support to the Consultative Committee of the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and Other Related Materials (CIFTA). To assist this Committee's work, advisory and technical secretariat services have been provided to CIFTA and its Secretariat Pro Tempore, especially on those matters aimed at promoting the signature and ratification of the Convention and its implementation in the corresponding domestic laws. A document was prepared, titled "International legal standards and sub-regional juridical instruments related to the provisions of the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and Other Related Materials." The Technical Secretariat also participated in the Preparatory Conference of the States Parties of CIFTA, organized by the Government of Colombia and held on September 10, 2003, and is currently preparing the working papers for the next Conference of the CIFTA States Parties.

In compliance with the mandates of the Inter-American Program for the Development of International Law, General Assembly resolution AG/RES. 1921 (XXXIII-O/03), the Inter-

American System of Legal Information, which operates via a Web page on the Internet, is continually updated and modernized. Its importance is evidenced by the increasing number of visits it receives. In addition to the databases that are part of this system, featuring the complete texts of inter-American treaties and conventions, the status of their signature and ratification, and the various resolutions issued under the OAS system, networks have been created for exchanging information and cooperation in the following areas: extradition, mutual legal assistance, cyber-crime, and prison and penitentiary policies.

In the area of international humanitarian law, the Secretariat and the ICRC participated in a regional workshop on development of legislation on international humanitarian law, which took place in La Antigua, Guatemala, August 27 and 29, 2003. That workshop examined how the national committees for the implementation of international humanitarian law (IHL) were operating, in order to come up with solutions that would make them more effective. The meeting also gave these committees an opportunity to share information and experiences. Also examined there were the current main themes relating to national application of international humanitarian law, such as the implementation of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, with a view to analyzing and strengthening the contribution the national committees make in that area.

In collaboration with the ICRC, preparations are underway for the next special meeting held within the framework of the Permanent Council's Committee on Juridical and Political Affairs, which will take up the topic of international humanitarian law and the International Criminal Court.

SECRETARIAT FOR MANAGEMENT

The Secretariat for Management is in charge of the planning, organization, coordination and general oversight of the administrative activities associated with the program-budget, financial management, personnel management, procurement of goods and services, data processing, buildings and properties, communications, security, assets and management of the General Secretariat's systems and procedures. Under Executive Order 02-7, of July 24, 2002, the Secretariat's services are currently provided by way of the departments of: Financial Services; Management Analysis, Planning and Support Services; Human Resource Services; Technology and Facility Services, and Procurement Management Services.

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Management

The activities of the Secretariat for Management are explained in detail in the report from each of its five departments. Summarizing, however, the principal activities of the Secretariat involved coordinating with Deloitte & Touche Consulting Firm, which conducted a management study; the start of the renovations to the Bolívar Room and the space previously used by the Columbus Memorial Library to store archives; continued cooperation with the member States to find ways to strengthen the Organization within the limits of the budget; and efficient management of the enormous increase in functions associated with specific funds.

Department of Financial Services (DFS)

The financial situation of the OAS is shown in the financial statements that appear at the end of this report, in Appendix E, which includes: a) the Operating and Reserve Subfunds of the Regular Fund, whose budget is approved by the General Assembly, and b) the Specific Funds financed by unilateral or multinational contributions for extra-budgetary activities.

The financial situation of the Organization of American States (OAS) in the following funds, is summarized in the attached statements:

The Operating and Reserve Subfunds of the Regular Fund, whose budget is approved by the General Assembly:

Table 1: Combined Statement Comparing Assets, Liabilities and the Fund's Balance, which shows the Organization's financial situation as of year's end.

Table 2 Combined Statement of Changes in the Fund's Balance, reflecting the results of the financial activity during the year.

The Specific Funds financed by unilateral or multinational contributions for extra-budgetary activities:

Table 3 Statement Comparing Assets, Liabilities and the Funds' Balance, which shows the Organization's financial situation as of year's end, and the Statement of Changes in the Funds' Balances, reflecting the results of the financial activity during the year.

As of December 31, 2003, the financial situation of the Regular Fund remains solid. The Fund's balance dropped from a record US\$44.5 million in 2002 to an US\$18.9 surplus by the end of 2003. This decline is due to execution of resolution CP/RES. 831/1342/02, "Use of excess resources of the Reserve Subfund for capital investments and to meet OAS mandates," approved

by the Permanent Council on November 6, 2002, for US\$21 million and the annual operating deficit of US\$4.6 million.

The following analysis compares the budgetary authorization (appropriations) of the General Assembly and the Permanent Council, the financing provided by the member States and the levels of execution during the year.

Appropriations: At its thirty-second regular session, the General Assembly authorized the General Secretariat to execute \$76 million corresponding to the regular budget, made up of \$73.7 million in member States' quota assessments and \$2.3 million in other income.

Financing and Execution: As of December 31, 2003, the Regular Fund had collected \$71.7 million: \$69.4 million in member States' quota assessments and \$2.3 million in other income. By the close of the period, the General Secretariat had executed activities totaling \$76.3 million, which represents the full approved budget. The net operating effect was a deficit of \$4.6 million.

Financial impact: At the start of the period, the Regular Fund had a total of \$10.6 million in quotas and \$73.7 million in quotas from 2002, for a total of \$84.3 million. After receiving \$69.4 million in quotas, \$69.1 million in quotas from 2003 and \$.3 in quotas from previous years; the member states' debt rose from \$10.6 million to \$14.5 million.

Contributions to the Specific Funds totaled \$70.7 million in 2003.

The Regular Fund remains on a solid financial footing, with a balance of \$18.9 million in the Reserve Subfund, equivalent to 25.0% of the assessed quotas. This is 5% lower than the 30% statutory requirement.

Department of Management Analysis, Planning and Support Services (MAPSS)

Budget

Services continued to be provided to help with the analysis, coordination and formulation of the proposed program-budget, and the Department served as technical secretariat for the Permanent Council's Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Affairs (CAAP). During the analysis and discussion of the program-budget, the Department produced follow-up reports that ultimately led to the draft resolution on the 2004 budget. As required under the General Standards, periodic reports were prepared on execution of the 2003 budget of the Regular Fund. In 2003, quota collections –both current and in arrears- totaled US\$ 69.7 million, significantly below the 2002 level of US\$94.6 million, and more in line with prior years.

Mandates

In compliance with resolution AG/RES. 1974 (XXXIII-O/03) and Article 87(a) of the General Standards, the areas received information online about the mandates. The information covered the period from 1997 to 2003. The areas articulated the results of those activities and the links between the mandates, the activities undertaken and the results obtained.

Management Study

In keeping with resolution CP/RES.831 (1342/02), the Department presented quarterly reports to the Permanent Council on the funds available to finance the management study called for under AG/RES. 1909 (XXXII-O/02) "The program-Budget of the Organization for 2003; Quotas and contributions for the Voluntary Fund for 2003". It also provided the firm of Deloitte & Touche, LLP with technical, administrative and logistical support so that it would be able to effectively compile the needed information. A total of US \$750,000 were paid in fees, plus another US\$20,000 to cover expenses associated with telecommunications, translation and printing of documents, as well as the travel of one consultant to the thirty-third regular session of the General Assembly in Chile.

Management System (OASES)

To support the administrative activities and respond to the needs of those using the OASES system efficiently and promptly, new reports were improved and implemented. The process of integrating the National Offices into the OASES system continued. The migration to the new version of the OASES system and its testing moved forward. It will be implemented in early 2004. The architecture of the system was improved, as were security and auditing mechanisms.

The manuals and procedures employed in administrative analysis and training of General Secretariat staff in the use of the OASES continued to be revised and updated. The Department focused on training needs, so that classes would be included to give instruction on manuals and procedures, including the "Discoverer" tool for preparation of financial reports. A total of 62 training sessions were conducted with 196 staff participating. Some 24 officials from the national offices were trained in the financial applications of OASES. An OASES-based solution was also devised and introduced for service contracting done in connection with conferences and meetings.

Department of Human Resources Services (DHRS)

The DHRS has experienced a substantial increase in requests for assistance from throughout the General Secretariat. It has been able to meet those requests with the resources available. With the increase in the resources in the specific funds, the number of General Secretariat staff increased from 674 to 718 in 2003, generating a significant increase in the volume of operations that the DHRS handles, such as recruitment, competitions for vacancies, classifications, fellowship awards and renewal of insurance. In 2003, there were more than 3,000 such operations.

In addition to the improved efficiency in handling recurring functions, the following are some of the more recent special initiatives.

- The GS/OAS Student Interns Program continued to grow; this year, the Department received approximately 463 applications. Of these, the various units and departments of the General Secretariat selected 181.

- The Department continued providing assistance with the personnel evaluation system, in the form of training for supervisors in personnel management, communications and planning.
- In the case of training programs, a new reimbursement system was put into place that has increased the maximum educational subsidy for a staff member from US\$ 400 to US\$ 1000. The staff of the General Secretariat has taken advantage of the new rule to get training in computers, language, and project management. With the new educational reimbursement system in place, 88 applications were processed from staff at headquarters and in the national offices. The budget for the staff training program in 2003 was US \$47,417.00.
- The Health Services Unit had around 3,216 visits in 2003 and the physician on duty, contracted through Johns Hopkins University, conducted some 75 medical examinations.
- Human Resources' Oracle module continued to be modernized. During this period, improvements were made to the staffing system and the 11.5.7 version was introduced. In February 2004, the 11.5.8 version will be installed. The designs of programs to computerize all the personnel records have been completed. This is also a pilot experiment for the eventual creation of a "data warehouse" covering the entire General Secretariat.
- This year, the Department completed execution of the project to incorporate a gender perspective into the Organization's institutional policies and programs, which the Government of Canada sponsored. All the objectives were achieved.
- The first competition for continuous contracts was held this year. Some 106 eligible persons applied, and 45 were selected. With this the General Secretariat completed the transition from the old career service to this new mode of contracting.

Department of Technology and Facility Services (DTFS)

The Department of Technology and Facility Services focused its efforts and time on integrating the information technology services, adapting them to fit the physical infrastructure of the buildings of the General Secretariat.

It completed the remodeling of the General Secretariat building on "F" Street, which was officially inaugurated on December 3. While the work was in progress, the regular activities of the General Secretariat were never disrupted and more than 650 users were relocated in their new offices without affecting their work.

The "F" Street building has three modern conference rooms: the Padilha Vidal, the Gabriela Mistral and the Rubén Darío. They are outfitted with simultaneous interpretation equipment in four languages. As part of the remodeling work, handicap access was added and the security system modernized. Part of the third floor is leased to the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA); the second floor will be leased sometime in the future. On the first floor is commercial space; the OAS Credit Union is already using part of that space.

The remodeling of the Main Building (17th Street and Constitution Avenue) poses significant architectonic and construction challenges because of its age and historical status. The area that the Columbus Memorial Library once used for storage (the north side of the building) was cleaned up and a second floor was added. The first floor will be a room for informal meetings, and will have telephone, fax and computer access and Internet connection. The second floor will be a multi-purpose room, thereby adding to the amount of space that can be used for meetings in

the Main Building. The Information Technology Division (ITD) is overseeing installation of a high-capacity Ethernet network and wireless networks and services.

The planning for the remodeling of the Simón Bolívar Conference Room got underway. Milner and Associates was awarded a contract to be in charge of the project.

ITD provided technical services for automated monitoring, control and management of cases and petitions received by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. Fulfilling its mandate of safeguarding information technology resources, ITD worked to strengthen the defenses around the data networks to protect them from viruses and other threats to the security of the information.

Department of Procurement Management Services (DPMS)

The DPMS negotiated sizeable offers from the PADF and the Development Gateway Foundation to occupy space on the second floor of the GSB and for the commercial space at the corner of 19th Street and F Street.

The Department negotiated multiple contracts with a number of firms to do the remodeling of the old archives of the “Columbus Memorial Library” and the Simón Bolívar Conference Room.

It also was in charge of the following tendering: selection of the provider of office supplies for the entire Organization; providing access to the services that the travel office currently manages to an independent agency; selecting the firm to ship and store the personal effects of repatriated staff members.

The Fixed Assets Division did an inventory of over 20,000 pieces of Organization property; it recorded more than 1,100 transactions that, combined, totaled more than \$9,400,000, including the acquisition of over 700 pieces of property and the elimination of over 350 because of disuse; for better control of assets, it implemented the practice of having the National Offices report to the DPMS any procurements of goods costing more than \$500. It also did an inventory of the vehicles registered in the General Secretariat’s name and assigned to operations away from headquarters. It found their registration and insurance to be in proper order.

As for the OASES-related activities, the following stand out during 2003:

- It generated approximately 24,700 lines on purchase orders based on requisitions. This is an increase over the previous year, since the 2002 figure was inflated by the fact that many purchase orders predating the conversion were keyed in again.
- It launched an aggressive system of periodically reviewing obligations, which allowed it to clear more than 10,000 lines of orders. This will lessen the workload at year’s end.

In other activities, the DPMS was instrumental in crafting the procedures for the Secretariat for Conferences and Meetings (SCM); it updated the procurement manuals and participated in training both at headquarters and away. As for the training at headquarters, four procurement courses were given on a regular basis. CPR procedures courses and a course for those who purchased the SCM were created. As for training away from headquarters for directors and administrative officers, a DPMS representative was included in the group of OASES trainers. Officials at 10 national offices were trained and certified.

Finally, the DPMS headed the OASES Coordinating Group and has taken active part in its focal groups, to solve pending system issues and coordinate future activities.